Betty Selects Her Silver Pattern

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The Homemaker's Books


This book is probably the first attempt made to give the housewife an unbiased guide as to what she should seek in the articles she is buying for her daily and seasonal needs.

The housewife, it is said, spends 85 percent of the family income. She has but little time to study the highly technical discussions on phases of household economies, so this book, simply written, is well suited to her needs. The subjects covered in the book are: floor coverings, furniture, house furnishings, china and glassware, silverware and jewelry, leather goods, textiles, wearing apparel, toilet preparations, and package groceries.

There are discussions on cash, charge, and installment buying, on the kinds of stores, and on sales and bargains. The housewife may turn to any of the chapters and learn the classification of different kinds of goods as to durability, appearance, and price. She will know just what she is to look for when she goes shopping, and she will understand about the manufacture of the article.

There are few people who have not at some time regretted a purchase. The book will help to eliminate such disappointments, for the buyer who knows what she wants and needs stands little chance of being led into a foolish purchase.

The good is always beautiful, the beautiful is good!—Whittier.

Betty Selects Her Silver Pattern

By Clara Loewenstein, Graduate Student

Betty: Oh, Aunt Ellen, the girls want to know what silver pattern I have selected, so I have come to ask you for some advice. I have looked at silverware in the little jewelry shop here, and I want to visit some jewelry stores in the city tomorrow.

Aunt Ellen: I have decided that it would be better to have some inlaid silver to use for everyday, so that I can keep my sterling silver free from scratches. I know there will be times when I will be in a hurry to go to a party, or for a ride with Bob, and won't want to take time to wash our few dishes, then. If I were using sterling silver I would not want to leave it until it had been carefully washed and put away.

Aunt Ellen: How many pieces are you going to buy?

Betty: Six each of sterling and six of inlaid to start with. Don't you think I can get along with that number if I choose patterns that are somewhat similar?

Aunt Ellen: Betty, don't you think it would be more convenient to have a set of eight sterling silver pieces? And you could get along easily with four inlaid pieces for everyday. Why do you want inlaid instead of plated silver?

Betty: Indeed I do like the idea of having eight sterling and four inlaid pieces of each. The jeweler told me about inlaid silver. It will wear much longer than plated wear, and there is so little difference in their cost. Inlaid silver has a piece of solid silver set in where there will be the most wear. In a spoon, there will be silver inlaid at the base of the bowl and the handle, where they touch the table.

Aunt Ellen: Yes, Betty, the inlaid silver will be the best purchase. Have you decided upon your pattern for either one?

Betty: I have found two patterns I like. They are not elaborate, but they have a good general shape, with good proportion for every piece in the set. Here are pictures of them. (Hands the pictures to Aunt Ellen.) There is a similarity design around the edge of the handle. The knives have stainless steel blades. They are sharp, too. Do you like them?

Aunt Ellen: Yes, I do, Betty. Do you remember the silver Ann has? She told me she is so tired of her elaborate pattern. And she said it takes her hours to clean it with a brush before she uses it. Then she said the handles are so heavy and awkward to hold.

(Enter Mary)

Betty: Hello, Mary, I am so glad you have come. Aunt Ellen is helping me to select my silver pattern. What suggestions do you have?

Mary: My silver is very plain, with just a bit of design at the end of the handle. It had a lovely frosted appearance when it was new, but it is all scratched now, and looks as though I had used it twenty years, instead of only two. I cannot take time to wash and dry each piece separately. I regret that I did not get a few pieces of plated ware for everyday.

And I think the handles of my knives are too small in proportion to the blades. It spoils the looks of the whole set. Really, the general shape of the silver is important. Conventional designs are much more artistic and attractive than realistic designs, and one does not tire of them easily.

Aunt Ellen: There is very little difference in the price of the different sterling patterns, and if one chooses a standard design, one can always buy a few pieces, or even one piece, at a time. I think that is a decided advantage. One does not usually select a silver pattern often enough in a lifetime, so one certainly should do it with great care.

Betty: That is true, and the reason I am asking your advice. I have learned a great deal about silverware, and the different silver patterns from our local jeweler, too. The city jewelers may have more patterns in the actual silver to show me, but they may not have much more information. I have pictures of many of the patterns which our jeweler gave to me. Mary, don't you think that these two patterns will look well in our home? (Hands pictures to Mary.)

Mary: I like the inlaid and the inlaid pattern you chose. They are in keeping with the simplicity we feel essential in our modern American homes. A knowledge of good design and great care in selection are indeed necessary in the selection of silverware; for one uses it so long a period. It is not like a hat, that one wears out in a season.