"P's" and "Q's" in China Selection

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WHILE away from Ames this summer on my vacation, a letter from a former student was forwarded to me. The writer of the letter is a graduate of Iowa State, who has been teaching for several years. She is now thinking of marriage and is much interested in the choice of dishes for her new home. Since she wanted a dinner set, I was asked to advise her as to the best China to buy.

I can buy for the money I receive to keep them in their best condition. I will try and give her some information about dishes, is quality. They require care, however, in their use. As was mentioned before, they chip easily. You will also check if much heat was used in baking. Beautiful semi-porcelain dishes are made in England and also in America. There isn't anything more beautiful to use than the lovely shapes of the dishes made by Wedgwood, Royal, Doulton, Spode, Copeland and others in England. They also make chinaware.

The development of the potters art can be traced thru China, Japan, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, England, America—each country adding something to its evolution. Today some of the finest and best china is made in America.

**Watch the Semi-porcelain**

China, or chinaware, is porcelain. Porcelain is called china or chinaware, because it was manufactured first in the country of China. For centuries it was exported from there to other countries until the secrets of its composition were discovered. Ever since then China has been exported from the Orient in quite a large amount. Porcelain, while made by potters, is separate and distinct from pottery. Porcelain is the highest, the most wonderful and the most valuable expression of the potters' art.

Dishes we find on the market are not all China. There is a class also that is called semi-porcelain. Semi-porcelain may be very beautiful but it is always opaque. It differs from china or porcelain in that when it is made, the heat used in baking is not as intense as that used for china. The glaze is cracked thru or chipped off, greasy dishwater and any other dirt is absorbed into the dish. Beautiful semi-porcelain dishes are made in England and also in America. There isn't anything more beautiful to use than the lovely shapes of the dishes made by Wedgwood, Royal, Doulton, Spode, Copeland and others in England. They also make chinaware.

Have you noticed that some of your dishes were chipped or cracked and become discolored? You do not like to use these ugly dishes for you feel that you cannot wash them clean. You are right. They are not clean and can't be made so. The semi-porcelain dish is porous beneath the glaze. It has not been heated enough to melt the substance. Consequently when

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In China, Japan, Germany, Austria, France and Italy, porcelain is dipped translucent for this quality is a characteristic of all china. In England and America the dish is vitrified before it is dipped into the glaze. Then it is dipped into the glaze. After it is dipped in the glaze it is again heated very hot, but not to as high a temperature as was used before. This makes the china glaze very tight to the dish.

You can notice this when your dish is broken or chipped. The glaze shows as a separate layer. Dishes that show this are always made in America or in England. These dishes are apt to be very durable.

Bone China Is Popular

In general, all dishes contain different clays. The mines from which these clays come might determine their value for certain purposes; also their quality. In addition to the quality of the ingredients, the amount of care used in purifying them, sifting and getting them into a very fine state will also influence the product. The skill, the art, and the ideals of the potters themselves will put a further value on them.

England is the only country that uses bone ash with the clays. This is called bone china. Bone china is very beautiful and very durable, but may be quite expensive. Since America is a young nation compared with others, dishes have not been made here for as long a time as they have been made in Europe. During the colonial period, our merchants used to get the potteries in England and France to make the American trade. It has only been within the last thirty-five or forty years that fine dishes have been made in America.

You may be interested to know that the present State Dinner Set in the White House was made here in America. It is a Belleek ware, made in Trenton, New Jersey, and a lovelier or finer china than Lenox is not made anywhere in the world. It is the result of an ideal of perfection that one man had. Nothing but perfect pieces are sold. Consequently one reason for the high price. This china for the White House was purchased in 1918 during the Wilson Administration. Other chinoras had been used in the White House before this, that had been made in France and England, for none fine enough for such a purpose had been made formerly in America. There are 1700 pieces in the new set, and up to about a year ago, there had been just three pieces broken. It is very durable, very beautiful in design and colors, and very expensive.

There are other very lovely chinoras made in America also; china that is less expensive than the Lenox but is excellent and durable, also very beautiful. The Old Ivory China of one of our largest potteries in Syracuse, N. Y. is very beautiful, and is suitable for any purpose.

America, especially in the east central states, has many potteries. Dishes of every kind are now manufactured here, dishes that will meet the need of the lean purse, dishes that can be purchased for a moderate price and dishes for those who feel that they can pay any amount to satisfy their love for the beautiful.

One does not need to waste any tears over not being able to buy the Lenox ware. There are artistic designs and good color used on other dishes also. You will need to look and shop around. Get all the information you can as to durability, style and how long the design will stay in.

A thin China dish will not stand the wear and tear of heavy service—neither will a semi-porcelain dish. This kind will chip and check, then discolor. Must we buy a 100 piece set when we buy? No, not unless you want that number. If you buy from an open stock pattern, you can buy just the number of dishes you will need for a year. Then add to them as you can afford. Before you do this, find out how long the pattern chosen will be made.

One of the most recent fads or styles in regard to dishes is to have a different kind of dish for each meal from what you have for the dinner course. You might use a third kind of dish for the dessert if you choose, for many hostesses are now having a different pattern for each course.

We Look for Durability

Buy china if you want a dish that will wear. If it is very thin china you will need to take special care of it, as we did with our thin Haviland. Durability is dependable upon the proportion of the different clays used; upon the thickness of the product; and upon the amount of heat used in firing. Some china is more durable than semi-porcelain, though you may not like it so well. If you buy semi-porcelain you will need to be very careful of it. You would wish to be careful of any dish you bought, but the semi-porcelain requires more care.

American made dishes are more easily obtained when one wishes to replace broken pieces or to add to what one already has.

AN “IMPROVED” ROAD

What care I for the broad highway?
Giveme a road that leads thru May,
With songs in its trees
And a coaxing breeze,
A home at its end—and the likes of these.

—M. Rae Tourtelot.