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NOTES ON SHIPPO.
NOTES ON SHIPPO

A SEQUEL TO

JAPANESE ENAMELS

BY

JAMES L. BOWES,

Author of Japanese Pottery,
Etc.

LONDON:
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO. LIMITED,
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHARING CROSS ROAD.
1893.
THE information given in the following pages was originally intended to form the material for a Paper to be read before The Japan Society, but it will be seen that the length to which it has extended rendered it unsuitable for that purpose, and I have, therefore, thought it best to bring the subject before the Members of the Society in its present form.

In doing so I venture to invite their attention to a branch of art which cannot be without some interest to them, and, I think, is worthy of more attention than it has hitherto received.

I have already, in the text, expressed my acknowledgements to some of those who have furnished me with material for this essay, but I must tender my special thanks to two friends, Mr. Kawakami and
Mr. Kowaki: to the former, for his ever-willing and patient aid in searching for information in Japan, and to the latter, a member of our Society, for the invaluable assistance he has rendered me by his translation of numerous documents and native books, and for his kindness in drawing the Japanese characters which appear in the text.

J. L. B.

Liverpool.

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INTRODUCTION.

Of all the art works of Japan with which Western countries have become familiar during the last thirty years, none has attracted the critical attention of collectors so little as that of cloisonné enamelling upon copper bases; the classification of pottery, the beauty of lacquer and metal wares, and of the pictorial and other arts, have each found collectors who have devoted themselves to the study of these subjects, and have embodied the information they have gathered, and the conclusions they have arrived at, in works to which all may refer for guidance.

But beyond the Essay upon the art of cloisonné enamelling which I issued in 1884, nothing has been done to draw attention to the beauty of the works, or to elucidate the mystery which still enshrouds their origin, and the object of these Notes is to record the information which has come into my possession since the date named, and to correct the misconceptions which have from time to time gathered around the subject. The authentic data at present available respecting this important branch of Japanese art work are, I feel, so imperfect, that it is desirable to stimulate enquiry and research, and, in offering these disjointed and incomplete remarks, I invite from all quarters information which may modify or corroborate the views set forth.

It may facilitate the right understanding of the matter if I briefly repeat the leading points embraced in the Essay referred to, and recapitulate the theories which I ventured, with great reserve, to enunciate. I commenced by saying:—

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NOTES ON SHIPPO.

The Japanese themselves designate these works as Shippo ware, meaning that they represent the Seven precious things, namely, gold, silver, emerald, coral, agate, crystal, and pearl; and those who have had an opportunity of studying the choicest works of the Japanese artists will acknowledge that this description does not appear over-strained or inappropriate.

The origin, the time and place of manufacture, the processes employed in the fabrication of these marvels of dexterous workmanship, and the uses to which the vessels were put, appear to be now unknown in Japan, and the records of the country, so far as they have become available to us, are silent upon all these points but one, although they afford ample information regarding lacquer, pottery, and other art works. All that is said about enamel working is—that the art was introduced from China towards the close of the sixteenth century."

Attention was drawn to the two principal kinds of enamel, the cloisonné and the champlévé:

"In cloisonné, or walled, enamels the designs are formed upon metal by fine ribbons of the same material, soldered by one edge to the basis, and so projecting as to form a multitude of cells in which the enamel pastes of various colours are placed, and, after being vitrified by repeated frings, are finally ground and polished to a smooth surface. In champlévé, or sunken, enamels the metal base required to form the design is hollowed out, leaving the divisions in relief, and the pastes are filled in as already described in the kindred process of cloisonné enamel."

I then remarked that the art had undoubtedly been practised in China in early times, and drew attention to the characteristic features of the works of the different periods. The earliest ware, it was stated, with which we are acquainted, was produced during the Ming dynasty, 1368–1643 A.D., and was distinguished by its somewhat rude workmanship, heavy cast metal grounds, and the low toned colours, the most prominent being deep reds and blues; the ware subsequently made, during the Th'ing dynasty, which commenced in 1643, showed more careful manipulation, and the brighter colours and more refined designs exhibited in the porcelain of the Khien-long and the Kea-king periods, 1736–1821; the third class, that which has been made for Europe since the sacking of the Summer Palace at Pekin in 1860, is of coarser execution, and the colours employed are generally crude and garish in tone. Suggestions were then advanced as to the resemblance between these works and those which I supposed or knew to have been produced in Japan, and I went on to state that—

"The latter may be divided into three clearly marked classes, which may be described as the Early, the Middle-period, and the Modern [which term I applied to the wares made for export]." So far as these broadly-marked divi-

* A Japanese antiquarian chides me for my classification of enamels into the periods of Early, Middle and Modern. He writes: "It is well to divide the periods of Japanese enamels into three classes, namely, Ancient, Middle and Modern. But Japanese chronological divisions differ much from those of Mr. Bowes, and they may be stated thus:

**ANCIENT PERIOD:** From Emperor Jimmu, 660 B.C., to Emperor Kwonin, 770–781 A.D. i.e., the end of the Nara Court.

**MIDDLE PERIOD:** From Emperor Kwannon, 782–805 A.D., who removed the Court to Heian (Kioto), to Emperor Antoku, 1181–1185 A.D., immediately preceding the institution of the office of Shogun.

**MODERN PERIOD:** From Emperor Gotoba, 1184–1198 A.D., to the downfall of Tokugawa Shogunate, 1868 A.D., and including the Meiji period which then commenced and still continues."

My friendly critic goes on to say: "Seeing that Mr. Bowes, in his work, commences with the Ashikaga period, 1335–1573 A.D., and does not trace further back than then, it appears to me that what he terms Early and Middle-period are nothing more than modern articles."

"Japanese enamels developed during the ancient period, declined during the middle period, and revived during the modern period. Thus the mirror of Emperor Shoumu belongs to the ancient period, and the origotu of Chomei to the middle period."

In answer to this reproof, I may point out that I did not use the word "ancient," but confined myself to the term "early," without regard
sions go, the distinction between each is perfectly clear, but the information at present available does not permit of a more minute classification being made, nor of a sub-division of the diversified and beautiful Middle-period ware into the various schools of which it doubtless consists: There is an entire absence of information as to the time when they were made, and the varied excellence of the workmanship clearly indicates that a wide interval must have elapsed between the time when the Early ware was made and the production of the most perfect works of the Middle-period.

"The Early ware is executed upon the beaten copper* grounds of extreme thinness which form one of the features of Japanese enamels; and, in this respect, they are in marked contrast to all Chinese works. Both schools are represented in the colouring, the deep reds and blues of the Ming period being used in the ornamental designs, in many examples dis-

to definite epochs, for when I framed the classifications referred to I had no data on which to form an idea of the time when the objects were made. The classifications I ventured to make were merely relative, and were framed for the purpose of separating into three divisions the objects which I had before me; and I explained that the term modern was applied to goods that were made for export, as distinguished from those of pure native taste.

But in view of my friend's remarks, I may point out that his divisions are somewhat fanciful as applied to enamels, for, without personally calling into question the statement of the accession of Jimmu in 660 B.C., I may remark that the best authorities† agree that "the popular chronology is clearly fictitious down to the end of the fourth century A.D., and the earliest documents are not older than the beginning of the eighth. But the Japanese mind draws no distinction between mythology and history." And, further, it appears to me to be the very extravagance of antiquarianism to assign within the category of Modern all the productions of Japanese art during the past seven centuries, which comprise the Kamakura period, 1185-1333; the Ashikaga era, 1338-1573; the age of Taiko; and the splendid developments during the Tokugawa Shogunate, 1603-1868. No; let us agree to apply the term Modern to the goods which have been made for export since the rebellion in 1658.


* Some pieces, I have since discovered, are executed upon brass grounds.

Résumé of "Japanese Enamels." played upon the green grounds, which, in the deeper shades, form one of the distinguishing features of the Japanese school proper. Some of the designs are of Indian and Persian character, and it has been suggested that these works may have been made in those countries, but the connection between them and the developments of the art in China and Japan strongly confirm the view that they are the earliest efforts of the Japanese enamel workers."

In confirmation of this view, I referred to an interesting Chinese dish, upon which there is a date mark which may safely be accepted as authentic for it is rendered in cloisons, and states that it was made during the Wan-li period, 1573-1619 A.D., of the Ming dynasty. The colouring of this dish links it with the works which I designate as Early Japanese, and the ground is powdered with small curled forms, representing clouds, rendered in metal cloisons which, slightly altered, enter largely into the decoration of the works referred to; this figure also affords a link connecting the Early with the Middle-period ware, in which it is found in a refined and modified form; the transition between the Chinese and the Japanese renderings is shown in the following tracings:

![Tracings of Chinese, Japanese Early, and Middle Periods]

Coloured and monochrome plates are also given in Japanese Enamels illustrating Chinese and Japanese examples of various periods.

Attention was then drawn to the statement, already referred to, that the art was introduced from China, which
I remarked was not without significance, for it is one of the few arts which were not introduced into Japan through Corea, and I quoted Mr. Alabaster,* who stated that the taste for this art was confined to the north of China, either from a prejudice on the part of the southerners against an art introduced into their country by their Tartar conquerors, or from its failure to harmonise with the sense of the beautiful of the more effeminate natives of the provinces of the south. However this may be, it is desirable to keep the point in view, owing to the statement in Japanese works that Hirata Donin learned the art from a Corean artist, early in the seventeenth century, to which reference will be made later on.

The difference between Chinese and Japanese enamels, and some of the characteristic features of the latter were referred to:

"There are two points in which the Early and the Middle-period ware resemble each other and differ from all Chinese works. These are the excessive thinness of the metal foundations, and the frequent use of green as the colour for the grounds. There is no trace in either of the thick, beaten, or cast foundations used by Chinese artists of every period; and in nearly all the examples of the Early ware, whilst the deep red of the Ming epoch is used, the blue grounds of the same period have given place to the green which have since become so marked a feature in the Japanese ware. In the Middle-period enamels, all trace of Chinese feeling is lost."

I further remarked that the Early ware, although of very skilful manipulation, bears evidence of an undeveloped art which afterwards reached its culmination in the Middle-period works which I described as being executed upon copper foundations (in a few instances the foundations and cloisons are of white metal), often not exceeding one-sixteenth of an inch in substance, which in many cases are enamelled upon both sides, and referred to the delicacy of the brass cloisons by which the minute, diversified, and beautiful designs are formed. And I went on to quote the opinions expressed by others as to the designs, colouring, and accuracy of manipulation displayed in these works, to which attention will be drawn in subsequent sections of these Notes.

I have already said that at the time I wrote there was an entire absence of information as to the time when Japanese enamels were made, and I may now refer to the suggestions which, with all reserve, I offered. I ventured, in opposition to the views which then generally obtained, to suggest that the most splendid period of Japanese art was coincident with the rule of the Tokugawa family which assumed office in 1603, and, after referring to the development which occurred in the arts of lacquer, pottery, metal works, and so forth, during the seventeenth century, I remarked:

"It is not unlikely, therefore, that the last century was the most brilliant epoch of Japanese art, and it may be correct to assume that the choicest examples of cloisonné enameling belong to that period."

After referring to certain examples, of which I shall speak later, I concluded by saying that:

"Further than this it is, at present, impossible to go in fixing the time when these works were produced. The examples gathered together in this collection present marked differences of workmanship, design, and merit, and it is a matter of great regret that the almost complete absence of makers' marks or signatures upon them renders it impossible for us to classify them in the manner which the abundant information of this kind, stamped or written, upon pottery has enabled us to accomplish for that branch of the art works of Japan."

After reference to the composition and quality of the various enamel pastes, the character of the ornamental designs, and the forms of the vessels, I drew attention to the specimens in my collection which presented exceptional

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*Catalogue of Chinese Objects in the South Kensington Museum, by C. Alabaster, 1872.
features or illustrated special points, some as being remarkable for the delicacy of the cloisons and perfect vitrification of the enamel pastes, others for brilliancy and diversity of colouring and accuracy of manipulation, others again in which the intense hardness of the enamel made it susceptible of an unusually brilliant polish; and attention was drawn to certain examples which were characterised by coarse workmanship and crudeness of design and colouring, and these exceptions will be again referred to when we consider the information since obtained.

The time of the arrival of these works in Europe was then recorded. Amongst the earliest examples received, in 1865, were three basins and plates and a dish;* a few more pieces were included in the collection displayed at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, which afforded us the first complete revelation of Japanese art. Further examples reached Europe in 1868, the year of the rebellion, and the remainder appeared at intervals from that time till 1872, when the supply ceased. It is important in view of subsequent arrivals to keep these dates in mind.

Attention was also drawn to the character of the ornamental forms employed in the decoration of the Middle-period ware, and especially to the presence of the Imperial badges which appear upon some of the finest examples, notably upon several pieces† in a group comprising flower vases, dishes and bowls, and the subject of the Imperial badges, and the various methods of drawing them, were referred to at length.‡ In connection with this, a theory was advanced as to these and other objects having formed part of the furniture of certain Buddhist temples, presided over by the Imperial Relatives, which were destroyed by fire or disestablished during the disturbed times from 1868 to 1871. It is not necessary in this place to follow up this conjecture, as

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*Specimen No. 22 in the Catalogue of examples appended to Japanese Enamels.
† Nos. 36-41, 96 and 97, 129 and 130, in the Catalogue.
‡ Examples are given in the Appendix.

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM.

RÉSUMÉ OF "JAPANESE ENAMELS." 9

the arguments in favour of it are fully set forth in Japanese Enamels.*

Having thus referred to the older works, we may add the remarks which were made about the Modern wares, and these are of some interest in view of the pretensions since advanced by the makers of such goods, of which mention will be made in subsequent pages.

"Probably the earliest attempts to imitate the old works were made shortly before 1869, and the first essays appear to have taken the form of applying the process to porcelain, instead of the customary metal, grounds. Four examples of these works were brought to this country by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh in the year named, and in 1870 a specimen of this ware came under our notice and was included in this collection. The earlier enamels upon porcelain were made clearly in imitation of the ancient works upon copper, the dark green grounds having been closely copied; but the pastes used were very soft, the nature of the foundation requiring that they should be vitrified at a low temperature, and the surfaces show none of the brilliant polish which is found upon the genuine ware. Some of these modern works are marked with the Chinese year-periods of the Ming dynasty.

"This branch of manufacture has largely developed during the past ten years, and immense quantities of porcelain partially, or entirely, covered with cloisonné decoration have been sent to Europe and America. At the Paris

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*A Japanese friend, having read these remarks, supposes that they might have been suggested by the following circumstance which he relates: I was not, however, acquainted with the tradition referred to when I wrote, and my arguments in favour of the theory propounded were based upon different premises. He mentions that when an embassy was sent to Europe, about the end of the sixteenth century, some of the envoys are said to have acquired a knowledge of shippe working, or to have brought back with them specimens of the ware, which were preserved in a temple called, for this reason, Shippo dere. But, he adds, the entire story is a mere tradition, and even the existence of the temple itself is quite problematical.
Exhibition of 1878, the Shippo Kuwai-sha, or the Enamel Company, of Owari, exhibited a great number of vases, flower pots, and so forth; but in these works the green grounds had been discarded, and others of light turquoise, and similar brilliant colours, substituted.

"The earliest specimens of the modern work upon copper foundations reached this country in 1872. They also were in imitation of the old works, as regards the thin copper grounds upon which they were executed, and the employment of the dark green grounds, powdered with the Kara kusa, but it was plain that the workmen of the present day had lost the traditions of the art, for their productions entirely lacked the perfection of finish and delicacy of colouring which characterise the early works. Nearly all the examples are coarse in execution, blotchy in colouring, and, although some show traces of the ancient designs, none of them presents any evidence of the exquisite and delicate effects produced by the fertile imagination and artistic treatment of the mediæval craftsmen."

The inferiority of these imitations to the works previously received was so manifest as not to deceive even the unwaried, and, as they did not meet with buyers, the manufacture was discontinued, and I stated that:—"In more recent years the production of even these base imitations has ceased, owing probably to the great cost of working upon the thin beaten grounds, and the recognised impossibility of producing satisfactory results, and, in their place, works similar in character to those now made upon porcelain have been produced. At Yokohama, at Nagoya in the province of Owari, and, I believe, at Kioto also, the industry is now carried on upon a large scale by native workmen, but mainly under the supervision of French directors, who, studying what they suppose to be the requirements of the European market, have produced works deficient alike in beauty of form, colouring and workmanship. Cabinets, jewel cases, flower vases and dishes, some of the latter of large size, as much as 40 inches in diameter, have recently been made in great numbers. The metal grounds of these works are much thicker than those used in the older specimens, and they are frequently cast instead of being beaten, and the cloisons are thick and heavy. Large spaces are covered simply with the enamel pastes, the workmen of the present day being deficient in the patient skill of the artists of a bygone age, who loved to cover the entire surface with designs of faultless beauty wrought in a delicate network of cloisons. The colours generally employed in these works are brilliant turquoise, yellow, black, and brown; diaper patterns, often of great exactitude, are used in the borders, but the principal mode of decoration is by means of medals, fan-shaped or circular, which are filled with flowers and birds rendered in their natural colours, and, in some instances, the figures of warriors are introduced. One of the principal makers, or exporters, of this coarse and meretricious ware is named Seizaburo Goto, who carries on his trade at Yokohama.

"Closely following upon the first appearance of Japanese enamels in Europe, French and English artists endeavoured to imitate them. Perhaps the first to attempt this was M. A. Falizé ainé, of Paris, who presented three small tablets, illustrating the process, to the South Kensington Museum in 1869. Subsequently MM. Christofle & Cie, and M. Barbedienne, also of Paris, and Messrs. Elkington & Co., of Birmingham, endeavoured to master the art, but as their efforts were not successful, the attempt has been abandoned, and now the champlex process only is followed."

Having thus epitomised the information available ten years ago, and the opinions which I then ventured to express, I proceed to the consideration of the facts and statements since gathered.
SHIPPO.

GLASS MAKING.

The art of shippo working is so intimately associated with the industry of glass making that some notice of the latter, as practised in Japan, is necessary before we approach the main subject.

That glass was made in Japan in very early days is certain. In the Appendix to these Notes, extracts from native works are given, from which it will be seen that specimens of glass have been found in the tombs of the Emperors Nintoku and Ankan, who lived in the fourth and sixth centuries of our era. Glass beads were made in the time of Emperor Shomu, in the eighth century, and specimens of this date, or even of an earlier period, are preserved in Japan. In the tenth century, or before, we read of works in the province of Izumo, in which ceremonial glass beads were made for presentation to the Court. It is probable that about this time the industry decayed, and perhaps became extinct, for although we hear of the use of ruri, which may be taken as meaning glass, in the twelfth century, it is not clear whether the objects referred to were of native manufacture or were imported.

However this may be, a revival occurred in the first year of the period of Genki, 1570, when a Namban* artist settled in Nagasaki, and taught the natives there how to blow glass; and in the period of Kwanrei, 1624–1643, the arrival of Chinese artisans at Nagasaki gave the industry a great stimulus. They taught the Chinese methods of blowing glass, and the art, spreading throughout the country, was practised at Kioto, Osaka, and Yedo. It is not necessary at this stage to pursue the matter further, but it will be seen later on that it has a material bearing upon our subject.

THE MIRROR OF SHOMU.

The earliest example of Shippo in Japan is a mirror said to have belonged to Emperor Shomu, whose reign commenced 724 A.D. It is known as the kinkin junyo, the mirror with twelve leaves of gold and silver, the back of which is of shippo yaki.

This mirror is still preserved in the Shosoin, or Imperial treasure house, at Nara, where it was deposited when the Court was removed to Heian, the present Kioto, in 794 A.D. It may be mentioned here that Nara was the ancient capital, and that the court resided there from 710 to 794 A.D.; on its removal to Kioto, the Imperial treasures were deposited in the Shosoin, a wooden building, which is still in existence, having been inspected and restored at the beginning of each cycle of sixty years.*

I am fortunately able, through the kindness of Count Matsura, who procured for me a drawing of it, to illustrate the mirror. It will be seen from the accompanying plate that the back of it is in the form of twelve leaves outlined in wire and filled in with glass. Mr. Kosugi has favoured me with the following description of it:—The back has a frame of gold wire in the form of a flower which is filled up with various coloured glass (shippo nagashi); in another part of his letter he describes the back as being of shippo kan, or inlaid shippo. The colours, as shown in the drawing from which the plate is copied, are blue, yellow or gold colour, green, and usu sumi iro or black wash.

* The term Nambas, meaning Southern barbarians, included Dutch, Portuguese and other Europeans, and also Indians, but did not apply to Chinese or Coreans.

The figures shown in the plate are about one-half the dimensions of those in the original drawing [the exact diameter of the mirror is 7\(\frac{1}{4}\) inches]. The reproduction is by no means satisfactory, the nature of the process employed rendering the use of a background necessary, the result being that the surface has the appearance rather of a tissue than of glass as in the original.

The inscriptions on the plate read:—(1) The back of the mirror, of shippo nagashi, which is preserved in the Imperial treasure house at Nara. The various colours of the shippo dei* are shown upon this rubbing† of the back. (2) The sketch of the object in reduced size. (3) The back. (4) The thickness. (5) All these lines on the original, which at first sight appear to be of shinchu (brass) wire, are probably of kinsen (gold) wire. (6) Of gold colour [referring to these parts of the ground].

The authenticity of the mirror is accepted implicitly in Japan, and the idea that it was imported from Corea or India is discredited. Professor Kurokawa, who compiled the official work known as Kogei Shirô,‡ and other connoisseurs, feel no doubt that it is of Japanese workmanship, and that in it we have the earliest example of Japanese shippo.§ and it is

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* Dei means mud, and the inference is that shippo dei means opaque, as distinguished from translucent or transparent, enamel.
† The original text is suri kata, suri meaning to rub, and kata a copy; the drawing therefore is a full-sized copy of the original.
‡ Kogei Shirô, compiled by Mayori Kurokawa, assisted by Noriatsu Murayama, published roth Meiji (1877), Official edition, Tokio.
§ In Japanese Enamels the word shippo was defined as representing the Seven precious things, namely gold, silver, emerald,†† coral, agate, crystal and pearl. This is the definition given by Hepburn,§ and accepted in Japan in a general sense. It is not implied, however, that the metals and jewels named are actually used in making enamels; the term rather suggests that they indicate the beauty and variety of the colours of the enamel pastes employed in the work.

In various books we find different characters used indifferently to

†† Another authority substitutes for emerald rus, which may mean either glass or green gem.
accepted as an evidence that the art of ornamenting metal surfaces with designs outlined in metal wires, and filled in with fused glass of various colours, was practised in that country as early as the eighth century of our era. I know of only one European who has seen the mirror, which, indeed, was exhibited for the first time in 1875.* Dr. Dresser, who at a somewhat later date visited the treasure describe cloisonné (and, no doubt, champlevé) enamel. For instance: shippō alone, or shippō yaki, meaning shippō ware, those being most commonly employed. Shippō nagashi is also frequently used, and this is the most significant of them all, because nagashi means to “let flow, to float” and when applied to glass may be taken to mean “fused.” Shippō kan is also used; the word kan may be translated as “inlaid,” and probably may be accepted as covering any kind of mosaic work; its full meaning is expressed by the word kame, which Hepburn renders as “to fit anything into its place.”

The term shippō occurs in another and figurative sense when joined with sogon, for shippō sogon means decoration with some or all of the seven colours represented by the jewels named; the literal meaning of sogon is gaudier or sublimity. A writer in *The Japan Mail of January 7th, 1893, signing himself “A Japanese Art Student,” gives some instances of the application of the word in this sense. In referring to a short note read by Mr. Dixon before the Asiatic Society of Japan, at its annual meeting in 1892, in which it was stated that the pillars of the temple Konkjido, in the province of Oshu, built 1109 A.D. are of shippō ware, the writer pointed out that the decoration was really shippō sogon, being a kind of mosaic of mother of pearl and gold lacquer; he also mentions that the earliest use of the word shippō in Japanese literature is to be found in the Utsuo monogatari, supposed to have been written in the ninth century, and in the Ytga monogatari, in the chapter entitled Anamidori, describing events which occurred in the year 1118 A.D., but the word as used in these works does not, he says, appear to mean shippō ware, but merely seven treasures.

The characters for the various terms referred to are given below:

| 七聖 | Shichi ho or Shippō. |
| 七聖焼 | Shichi ho yaki or Shippō yaki. |
| 七聖焼戯 | Shichi ho nagashi or Shippō nagashi. |
| 七聖焼戯 | Shichi ho sogon or Shippō sogon. |
| 七聖焼戯 | Shichi ho kan or Shippō kan. |

* *The Japan Weekly Mail, June 12th, 1875.*

From the eighth to the eleventh century, no mention appears to be made of shippō ware in Japanese records, but in the twelfth century we find an example in the origoto of Kamo Chomei, who lived during the second half of that century. This instrument is now preserved in the Imperial Museum at Tokio, and although doubts have been expressed as to its authenticity, there is no question that it is an ancient work. Judging, however, from the illustration of it which, again by the kindness of Count Matsura, I am able to give, shippō is but sparingly introduced into its decoration, and whatever interest may attach to the instrument follows upon its associations, rather than to its illustration of the art of enamelling at the epoch referred to.

From the drawing it will be seen that it is a koto, the harp of Japan, made so that it may be folded for convenience in travelling—hence the name origoto, or folding koto; the woods employed in it are described in the inscriptions on the plate, and the measurements are given, from which it will be found that the instrument is 544 inches long. It will be seen that it is decorated with lacquer, gold and silver, and with precious stones, and that shippō is used upon two parts of it, but of the character of the shippō work...
no indication is given in the drawing or description further than this, that the designs are, one of mosaic, and the other a screen pattern.

Mr. Kosugi, in sending the drawing, speaks of this work in the following terms:

"It appears rather too new in its appearance, and too perfect in its workmanship, to be of the period named; but perhaps it may be wrong to altogether discredit the age assigned to it; possibly it is a genuine copy of the original."

To whatever period the object may belong, it is certain that it is an example of Japanese work and highly esteemed in Japan, or it would not have been accorded a place in the Imperial Museum, nor would it have been so prized by the descendants of Kami Chomei as the following family records, for copies of which I have to thank Mr. K. Mayeda, show it to have been:

"ON ORIGOTO
[THE ESTIMATED FOLDING KOTO]."

I.

"The family records and ancient books mention that when our ancestor, Kikutuya Chomei, retired from active life, he often devoted himself to playing on the koto.

"The Hirai family, residing in Naniwa (Osaka), have possessed from ancient times a koto, which they have carefully preserved, believing it to have once belonged to Chomei."

"It has been so renowned amongst the lovers of curious and ancient works that many have desired for an opportunity to see it."

"Fortunately, this desire has been gratified.

"On seeing this instrument, once touched by our ancestor, upon the occasion of his six hundredth anniversary, my saddened thoughts fly back to him, and my tears bedew my sleeves, already wet by the rain of May.

"The ninth year of Bunkwa (1812), May,

"KAMO CHOI,
"Of the twenty-first generation of the Kamo family."
II.

"As elegant in taste as Genji," who carried his koto with him when he went into exile in Suma, so Chomei never parted with the origoto which, for convenience, was made to fold so that it might be shortened when he carried it.

"My relationship, as a descendant of Chomei, and my friendship for Mr. Hirai, impel me to write this statement.

"It may be questioned whether the ornamentation in gold and silver is of the time of Chomei, but the appearance of the lacquer suggests a great age.

"In any case, however, it may be considered a treasure without an equal.

"First year of Bunsei (1818),

"19th August,

"KAMO SUYETAKA."

FOREIGN INFLUENCE DURING THE XV AND XVI CENTURIES.

Apart from the mirror and the origoto, we find few references to the art in the writings up to the middle of the sixteenth century; indeed, the following only have come under my notice.

Mr. Kosugi mentions a diary written in the year 1462, in which the gift of a pair of flower vases by Ashikaga Yoshimasa is recorded; they are described as being of shippo ruri, and it is also mentioned that the Chinese works imported at that time met the fancy of the Japanese. A writer named Soami, in his work dated 1517, states that shippo ruri was then, although little known, held in much esteem.

It is by no means clear what ruri means. It was freely used in a general sense for all kinds of glass; some authorities considered it to signify "emerald" or "green gem";

*Prince Genji is the hero in the Genji Monogatari, a romance written by Murasaki Shikibu, in the tenth century of our era, which illustrates the Court life of the period.

and, again, we find it joined with other words without any special value or apparent reason. But it is always used in connection with glass, and perhaps we may safely assume that when found in connection with shippo, the objects referred to may be shippo yaki.

Another writer, Shuyen, a Chinese who lived during the Ming dynasty, 1368-1643, mentions a ware called Futsuro-kan as being known in Daishoku-koku; and a Japanese work, the Kiyu Shoran,* speaks of a kind of foreign† ware of copper grounds, very minutely painted in five colours (go sai), and glazed (yogaki), known in China as Daishoku-ko. This ware is referred to in a book, quoted in Kiyu Shoran, entitled Tenseki Benran (probably a Chinese work), which says: "Daishoku-ko is the name given to a ware with the ground made of copper, decorated with flowers in five colours, glazed, and much resembling Futsuro-kan; it is also called Kikoku-ko," and the writer of Kiyu Shoran says that this ware is probably shippo nagashi. The author of Tenseki Benran adds: "I have seen incense burners, flower vases, cups, etc., which, not being sufficiently elegant for the use of gentlemen, are employed for inferior purposes."

In considering these extracts, it is necessary to determine the meaning and significance of the various terms used in connection with the ware with copper grounds, and decorated in such a manner as to lead the Japanese writer to compare it with shippo nagashi.

The word Futsuro signifies "Frankish," and may be accepted as indicating a foreign origin. The same idea is expressed in the other names applied to the ware, for Daishoku and Ki may be respectively translated as "Great-eater" and "Demon." Koku signifies country; yo, furnace; and kan, inlaying. We thus find that Futsuro-kan is the name

*Kiyu Shoran [an account of miscellaneous subjects with extracts from various books], compiled by N. Kitamura. Published in the first year of Tempo, (1839).
† The word used is Sriy, meaning Western Ocean = European.
given to foreign inlaying; that the ware known as Daishoku-yo and Kihoku-yo was the product of the furnaces of some foreign countries, the names of which being unknown to the writer were, after the fanciful fashion of Orientals, described as the countries of the demons or the great-eaters.

From this it seems reasonable to infer that the ware mentioned by the Chinese writer Shuyen and by the writer of Tenseki Benran, and compared by the Japanese author of Kiyu Shoran to shippo nagashi, was really shippo ware, and as Shuyen lived during the Ming dynasty, we may assume that the remarks apply to the enamels known in China at that time which we have described in the Introduction as being of rude workmanship and executed upon heavy cast grounds, corresponding in these features and, as we know, also in the forms of the vessels, with the opinion of the author of Tenseki Benran, who speaks of "incense burners, flower vases, cups, etc., which, not being sufficiently elegant for the use of gentlemen, are employed for inferior purposes."

It has been said that the writer in Kiyu Shoran describes these objects as foreign (seiyo) ware. Adopting Hepburn's translation of seiyo, it would appear that the art was of European origin, but we know how indefinite the knowledge of the Chinese and Japanese was about foreign countries, and that the latter applied the terms Namban and Oranda indiscriminately to all foreigners except the inhabitants of China and Corea, and, as regards Oranda, perhaps, to those of India; in view of this it may be suggested that the art was of Tartar, rather than European, origin, for as was pointed out in the Introduction "the taste for this art was confined to the north of China, either from a prejudice on the part of the southerners against an art introduced into their country by the Tartar conquerors, or from its failure to harmonise with the sense of the beautiful of the more effeminate natives of the provinces of the south."**

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**Mr. Alabaster does not give the date of the introduction of the art into China by the Tartars, and it may be mentioned that there were three Tartar dynasties in China, (1) Kitan or Liao, 907-1124 A.D., (2) Kin, 1115-1234 A.D., and (3) Yoon, 1206 or 1260-1367 A.D., but as the rulers of the first two dynasties occupied only a portion of the northern territory of the empire, and never conquered China proper, indeed, were driven out of the country, we may perhaps assume that the art was introduced during the Yoon dynasty, which occupied the entire country until the advent of the Ming dynasty which ruled from 1368 to 1628 A.D., when (or in 1643) the Tartars again came into power as the Thising, or Manchurian, dynasty, which still rules.

* For example: specimens Nos. 4, 5, and 6, and several others, in the Catalogue appended to Japanese Enamels.

† The Mikado's Empire, by William Elliot Griffis, New York, Harper and Brothers, 1876.
NOTES ON SHIPPO.

paraphernalia of their religion and specimens of European art.

We have no record of what these consisted, nor do we know that examples of cloisonné enamels were amongst them, but, in connection with the revival of glass making in Japan, and especially with the development of the industry in after years, we may suppose that these earlier visitors, or the returning envoys, brought with them specimens of glass wares from Europe. This view is confirmed by the Japanese records extracted from the Soken Kisho* and Kogei Shirio, shortly to be quoted, and also set forth in the Appendix to these Notes, as well as by the discovery,† three years ago, in a church at Venice of a stone tablet commemorating the visit to that city, in 1585, of the young nobles whose mission to Europe has been referred to; for at that time the art of ornamental glass making in Venice was at its zenith, and the descriptions given of the ojime, or beads, subsequently made in Japan, forcibly suggest that specimens brought by the young envoys furnished models for those who, as we have shown, had been taught glass blowing by the Namban artizan who settled in Nagasaki in 1570.

JAPANESE SHIPPO WORK OF XVI AND XVII CENTURIES.

Passing by these considerations, we now record what we find said in Japanese works about the progress of the art of glass making and shippo working in that country.

The following examples of shippo, belonging to the closing years of the sixteenth century, are mentioned as being still preserved in Japan:

An ornamental sword (kazari tachi) which once belonged

to the noble house of Kikutei, and is now in possession of the Imperial Household. Shippo yaki is used in the furniture of this sword.

The armour worn by Kobori Totomi-no-Kami,* who served Taiko Hideyoshi and also Ieyasu. The crests on this are of shippo yaki. It is preserved in the Imperial Museum.

At a rather later date we read of a fusuma, or sliding screen, in Katsura palace at Kioto, the catches of which are of shippo yaki, and are said to have been designed by the above-named Kobori Totomi-no-Kami in the time of Hideyada, the second of the Tokugawa Shoguns, who ruled 1605–1622.

In a room of Nagoya castle there is another example in the form of a screen, the catches and nail covers of which are ornamented with the Aoi crest (doubtless the Tokugawa crest is referred to) rendered in shippo upon a ground of shakudo. This portion of the building was added at the time when Iyemitsu, the third Tokugawa Shogun, visited the castle in the period of Kwaye, 1624–1643.

All these examples can with certainty be accepted as being of Japanese workmanship, and may not be classed with "the imported wares" already referred to, and also mentioned in the extracts from native works which are given later.

REVIVAL OF GLASS MAKING IN JAPAN.

We may here give at length the information found in the Kogei Shirio as to the revival of glass making in the sixteenth century, before we touch upon subsequent developments.

"The Governor of Nagasaki, Omura Risen, acceding to the request of Namban, permitted the port to be opened in the first year of Genki, 1570, whereupon a Namban artizan came to Nagasaki and introduced the art of glass making, thus inaugurating its revival in Japan.

* Soken Kisho, written by Inaba Michitatsu; published in Osaka, first year of Tenmei (1781).

* This noble died in 1647, at the age of 69; Hideyoshi died in 1598; and Ieyasu in 1616.