

This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1899 Excerpt: ...Chinoise, page 224): The modern period, up to the present day at least, is little worthy of our attention; the art is dormant, and holds itself aloof, disowned, abandoned, dishonored. Cheapness attracts the buyer. The fatal consequence is a common product; quality is incessantly sacrificed to quantity. The hour of decadence struck a hundred years back, and there is no sign by which to foresee any serious renaissance near at hand.

CHAPTER XVII. THE FORMS OF PORCELAIN OBJECTS AND THEIR USES IN CHINA. THIS is a wide subject, on which there is opportunity here for only a few desultory remarks. An extensive collection of Chinese porcelain exhibits a long series of objects of multitudinous shapes and sizes, removed from their original habitat, and far from their usual surroundings, so that the proper use of some of the things can hardly be guessed by the uninitiated. Images of Buddhist and Taoist divinities, torn from their temple shrines, are grouped with profane figures, and sacred ritual vessels, intended for ancestral offerings of food and wine, are mingled promiscuously with common utensils of daily life. A seated representation, for instance, of Maitreya, the Buddhist Messiah, with rosary in hand, whose smiling features and luxuriant figure have earned for him in France the traditional title of the Pousa or god of content and sensuality, is placed close to the reclining figure of Li Tai-po, the celebrated poet, who has fallen, overcome with wine, and is embracing his capacious wine-jar, designed to hold water for the ink-pallet of a modern emulator of his genius. An ecclesiastical vase from a Buddhist altar, like the one of a pair, illustrated in Plate XX, should be distinguished from an ornamental flower-vase or a perfume-sprinkler; and a sacr...

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