

CLOISSONNE WARE

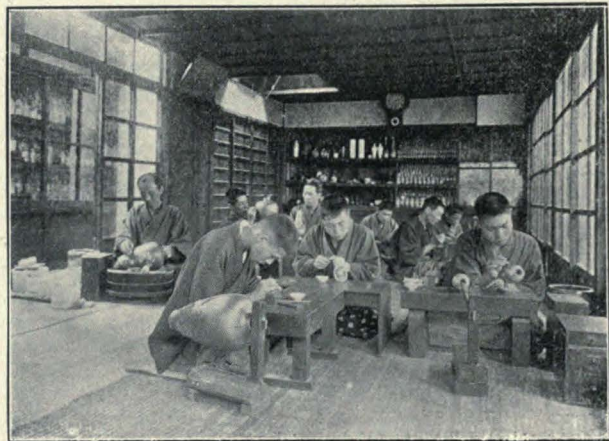
MR. YASUYUKI NAMIKAWA

(Maker of cloisonne Wares)

The art of making cloisonne ware was invented as early as the 7th or 8th century, but it was neglected until the 15th or 16th century, when Mr. Dojin Hirata, otherwise called Hikoshiro, was taught the art by the Dutch, which was handed down to his posterity. Laying aside the question as to the authenticity of this record, we may mention that in those days the highest appreciation was shown to cloisonne works imported from China, so their manufacture was started in various places in Japan. In 1870 Japanese cloisonne wares were exported to France by foreign firms in the concession. In view of this fact the work which had been limited to tobacco pipes etc. was so enlarged as to include many other articles. A certain Mr. Muramatsu believing that cloisonne would grow to be one of the chief articles of export from Japan, urged wealthy men of Nagoya to establish the



CLOISSONNE WARES AND TESTIMONIALS



CLOISSONNE MANUFACTORY

Nagoya Cloisonne Company where a large number of workmen were employed. A German expert, Mr. Wagner, employed by the Department of Agriculture and Commerce, made enamels which greatly improved the manufacture of the cloisonnés.

While things were thus going on, there appeared two celebrated enamel makers in Japan, one Mr. Yasuyuki Namikawa of Kyoto, and the other, Mr. Sosuke Namikawa, of Tokyo. The former made elaborate cloisonne works striped with gold and silver which were highly patronized by the public, while the latter invented the means of applying to cloisonne pictures painted with Japanese or Indian ink. Mr. Yasuyuki Namikawa, with his expert knowledge concerning the manufacture of cloisonne was made the Art Commissioner of the Imperial Household. He has never been apprenticed in any business, his invention being absolutely original. In 1870, when he made his first attempt towards the manufacture of cloisonne, he did not possess more than ten *yen*. When he showed his product to a certain foreign firm in Kobe, the novelty of the idea moved the proprietor and the latter at once gave him an order amounting to 400 *yen*. With such a limited amount of capital, it was next to impossible to meet such a big order. Thereupon he approached a lacquer ware merchant who had business transactions with the firm, and had his work paid for one at a time, thus in several months the order was all completed. His diligence was amply rewarded, for at present he enjoys the high honour of being ranked the finest cloisonne maker in Japan, and was decorated with the merit of the "blue cordon."