

CHINESE BASKETS

by
Berthold Laufer

Chinese Baskets
by
Berthold Laufer (1874-1934)
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PREFACE

The baskets of the North American Indians have attracted a great deal of attention, resulting in an enormous literature both technical and popular in character, which is concerned with their technique and designs. The basketry of the natives of the Philippines, Hawaii, and New Zealand has elicited a few monographs, but, as far as I know, the baskets of China have never been studied by any one. The mere fact of their existence is not even mentioned in the current books on China and the Chinese. Yet, since earliest times, baskets have occupied a prominent position in Chinese civilization, although naturally, owing to climatic and soil conditions, no ancient baskets have survived. In the ancient Book of Songs (Shi king) and in the ancient Rituals occur many terms for various kinds of baskets, but contemporaneous descriptions of these are lacking, and we hardly receive more than a very general idea of their appearance. We read of round baskets of bamboo, of square shallow baskets of bamboo or straw, or of square baskets in which eatables or clothes were preserved. The young bride offered to her father-in-law fruit in a basket. It was a famous maxim in the good old times that men and women should not touch each others' hands and that when a man wanted to make a gift to a woman, she should receive the object in a basket. We also hear of baskets used for specific industrial purposes ; thus, for instance, as fish-traps set at the openings of dams, and, above all, in the silk industry, which was the main occupation of women. The tender leaves of the mulberry on which the silkworm feeds were gathered in deep baskets, and a square type of basket served for depositing the cocoons. Even at present basket trays play an important part in the rearing of silkworms (Plate I). Baskets also were utilized in funeral ceremonies and

filled with cereals as food for the departed soul, being placed near the coffin. This custom is still perpetuated by the farmers living in the environment of Peking, who bury with their dead an oval basket plaited of willow-twigs. In ordinary life this vessel serves the purpose of a grain-measure, holding one pint ; when used as a mortuary vessel, the wooden hoop around the rim is removed, and food is stored up in the basket (for illustration see Laufer, *Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty*, Plate 75, No. 5).

There is a certain degree of interrelation of basketry, pottery and metal vessels. In the case just cited the mortuary basket is a substitute for a pottery urn which is usually deposited in the grave in the provinces of Chi-li, Shan-tung, and Kiang-su. There are two ancient types of rectangular baskets known as fu and kwei and used for boiled grain at sacrifices and ceremonial feasts ; they are preserved only in pottery and bronze (for illustrations, see *op. cit.*, Plate 25, and *Art in America*, October, 1925, Fig. 4), which give us at least a vague idea of what they may have looked like in basketry. On the other hand, there are ancient sacrificial vessels of tazza shape in pottery and bronze, which at present have survived in basket form in the worship of Confucius and his disciples (Plate 38).

There is a fundamental difference between the baskets of northern China and those of the central and southern portions of the country. In the north they are part and parcel of the rural population, plain, practical, strong, durable, chiefly for agricultural purposes, as collecting and carrying earth and manure, winnowing, storing grain, or used as means of transportation (hamper and dossers). These being exclusively of ethnological interest have not been included in this publication, which is devoted to the artistic baskets whose home is in the Yangtse Valley and the country stretching southward. Here we meet in full development the flower basket with a great variety of shapes and graceful handles, the picnic basket with padlock, the neat travelling basket in which women carry their articles of toilet, and the

"examination basket" in which candidates visiting the provincial capital for the civil service examinations enclosed their books and writing-materials, also the cozy for tea-pots, more practical and efficient than our thermos-bottles, and the curious pillow of basketry weave. The basket boxes with raised and gilded relief ornaments are also characteristic of the south.

In accordance with the general interest in Chinese art and art industries in this country, there is now also a considerable interest in and demand for Chinese baskets. They make a ready appeal to our esthetic sense on account of their elegance of shape, variety of design, and other artistic features, not to speak of usefulness of purpose. Chinese genius has developed baskets along lines unknown in other countries ; it was not merely satisfied with creating pleasing forms and attractive decorations, but also endeavored to combine basketry with other materials like wood, metal, and lacquer, and to enliven and embellish its appearance through the application of processes originally foreign to the industry. The covers of many baskets display a finely polished, black lacquer surface on which landscapes or genre pictures are painted in gold or red. Others are decorated with metal fittings (of brass or white metal) finely chased or treated in open work. Delicate basketry weaving is applied to the exterior of wooden boxes and chests, even to silver bowls and cups, as may be seen in the exhibits (at present at the south end of the west gallery). In this association with other modes of technique Chinese basketry has taken a unique development which should be seriously studied and considered by our own industrial art-workers.

In accordance with the object of this design series, this publication does not aim at a scientific study of the subject, but is primarily intended for the designer, craftsman, and art student. Nevertheless it is hoped that the technical student of basketry also will find it useful and instructive, as full information as to weave and design is given in the plates for each object. The locality where each object was made is noted,

and as the collection is fairly comprehensive, it gives an adequate view of what types of baskets are made in middle and southern China.

The technique of some Chinese baskets is described and illustrated in an article by L. Parker, "Some Common Baskets of the Philippines" in *The Philippine Craftsman* (Vol. III, No. 1, Manila, 1914), and in another study by E. M. Ayres and L. Duka, "Basketry Weaves in Use in the Philippines", in the same journal (Vol. V, No. 5, 1916), as many types of baskets used in the Philippines are either made by Chinese or by the native tribes after Chinese models. Illustrations of Japanese baskets may be consulted in the monograph of J. Conder, "Theory of Japanese Flower Arrangements" (*Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Tokyo, Vol. XVII, 1889, Plates 11, 44, 60, 61, 64) and in an article by C. Holme, "The Uses of Bamboo in Japan" (*Transactions of the Japan Society of London*, Vol. I, 1893 ; see also Vol. V, 1902, p. 50 and Plate V).

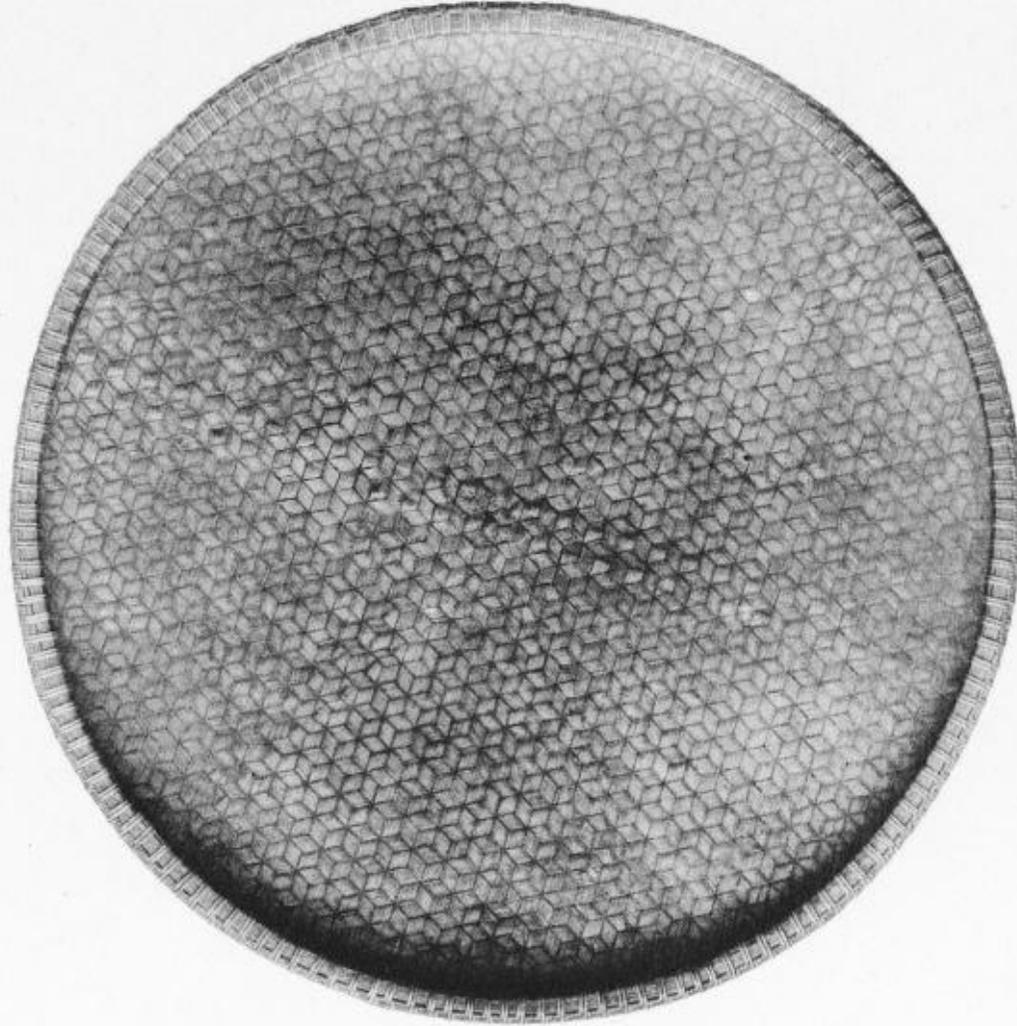


Plate I. FLAT BASKETRY TRAY.

Used in the rearing of silkworms. Made of bamboo in twilled, checker, twined, and coiled weaves, on strong foundation of bamboo strips.

AN-HUI PROVINCE.

Height 2 ½ inches. Diameter 15 ⅛ inches.



Plate II. OLD RECTANGULAR FLOWER BASKET.

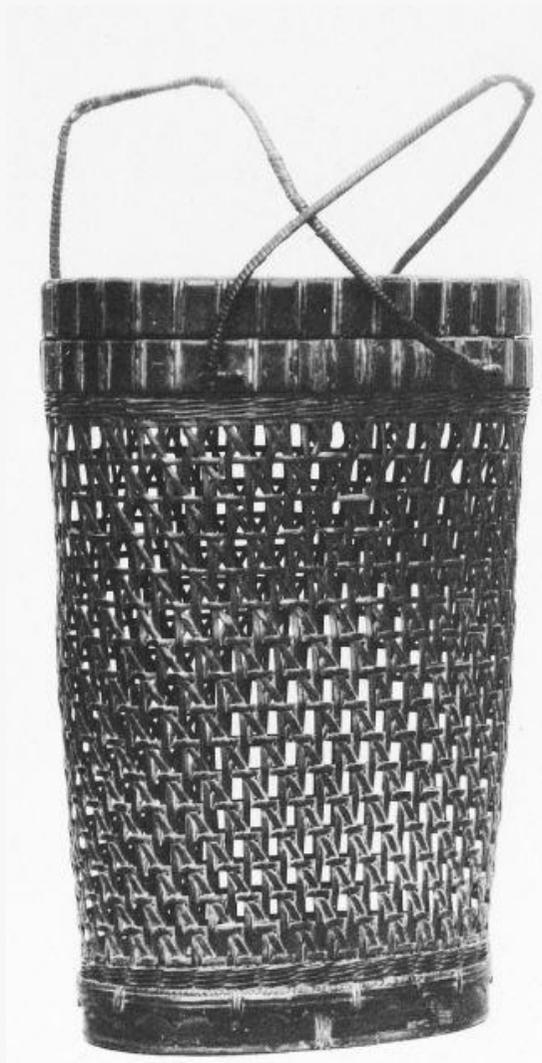
Made in checker, twined, and coiled weaves of brown bamboo strips with designs in black. Handle of three bamboo strips painted red. Base of wood. Date inscribed on base in black ink, "24th year of the period Kwang-sû", corresponding to our year 1898.

KI-AN FU, KIANG-SI.

Height (without handle) 5 ¼ inches. Length 12 inches. Width 8 inches.



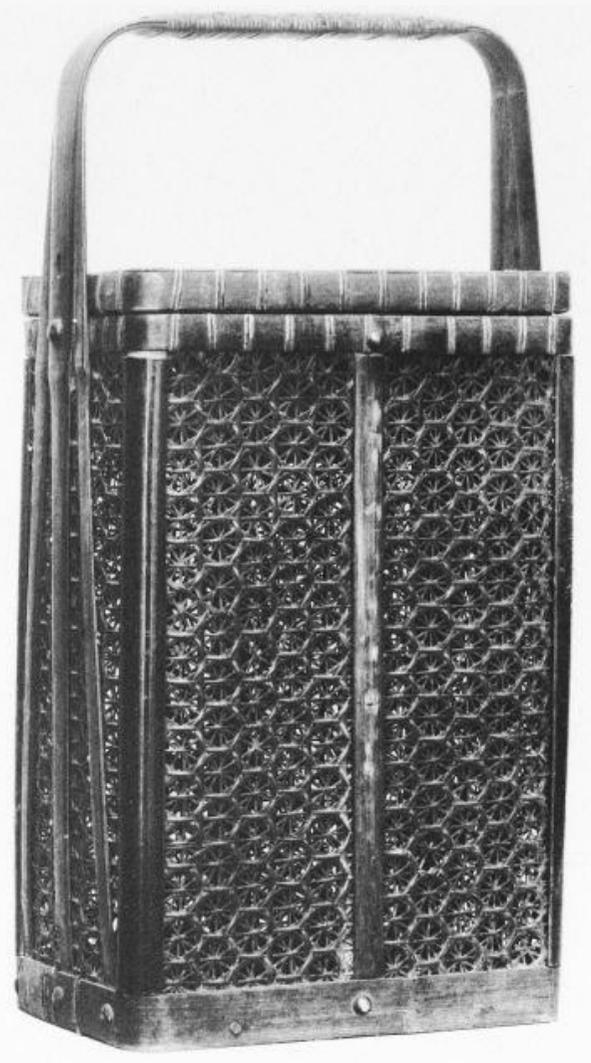
Plate III. OLD RECTANGULAR FLOWER BASKET.
Made of brown bamboo, in checker, twined, and coiled weaves.
KI-AN FU. KIANG-SI.
Height (without handle) 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Length 21 inches. Width 13 inches.



OLD CYLINDRICAL BASKET.

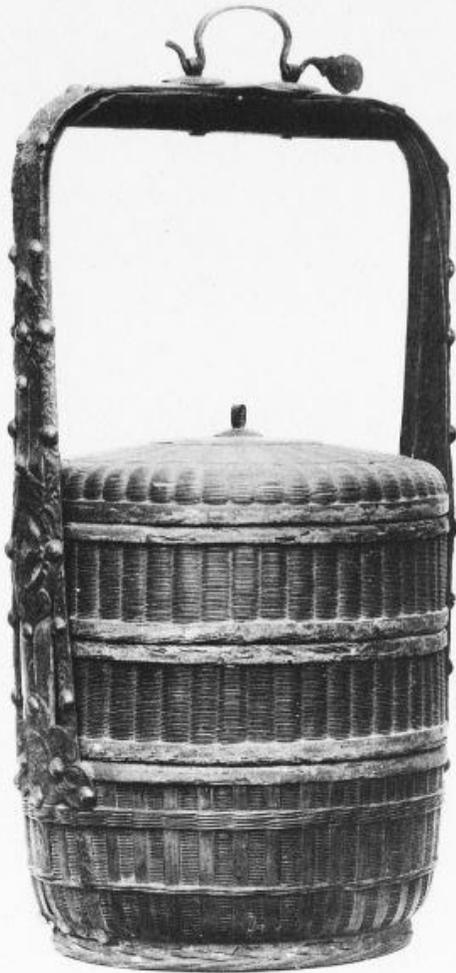
With cover and wooden base, carved with geometric design.
Made of bamboo split, in open, twined, and twilled weaves. Two coiled handles.
KIA-HING, FU-KIEN.
Height 12 inches. Diameter 13 ½ inches.

Plate IV.



OLD RECTANGULAR BASKET.

Made of bamboo split in open weaves, forming hexagons.
With cover, coiled handle, and wooden base.
FU-KIEN PROVINCE.
Height 12 inches. Width 7 inches.



OLD CYLINDRICAL BASKET.

Made in three compartments, of checker and twined weaves, edges and cover coated with red lacquer. The bamboo handle is fitted with ornamental metal work which is adorned with bosses and raised, punched designs. The top is surmounted by a metal handle in form of a branch with a peach.

HING-HWA, FU-KIEN. Height 8 inches. Diameter 7 inches.



OLD OVAL BASKET.

Made in two compartments, of two layers of weaving, twilled and fine strip in screen-like weave. Fitted with bamboo bands carved with key patterns. Inscribed in black ink on handle
(continued on opposite side),

"Made with a pure heart by Madame Ku of Li-men in 1888."

HING-HWA, FU-KIEN. Height 11 inches. Length 11 inches.

Plate V.



Plate VI. OLD CIRCULAR FLOWER BASKETS.

Made of bamboo, varnished, in open and twined weaves.
Base, rim, and handle lacquered red.
WEN-CHOU, CHE-KIANG.
Height (without handle) 3 ½ inches. Diameter 13 ½ inches.

Made of brown bamboo, in checker and twined weaves.
With twined handles.
KI-AN FU, KIANG-SI.
Height 3 ½ inches. Diameter 12 ¼ inches.



CIRCULAR BASKETS.

Plate VII.

With twisted handles. Made of brown bamboo in checker and twined weaves.

KI-AN FU, KIANG-SI.

Height 3 1/2, and 3 inches, respectively. Diameter 8 and 6 1/2 inches, respectively.

OLD OVAL COVERED BASKET.

Made in checker, open, twilled, twined, and coiled weaves. On cover, the two characters *fu* and *lu* ("happiness" and "prosperity") in dark brown. Partially painted in red. Height 5 3/4 inches. Length 9 inches.



Plate VIII. CIRCULAR BASKETS.

With twisted handles. Made of brown bamboo in checker and twined weaves.

KI-AN FU, KIANG-SI.

Height (without handle) 3, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ and 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches, respectively. Diameter 9 $\frac{1}{4}$, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ and 8 inches, respectively.



Plate IX. OLD FLOWER BASKETS.

Circular in shape, with hexagonal base. Made of bamboo in open, coiled, and twined weaves. Strips of black woven in coils on the rim. Handle of three strips carved and painted red, as is the base.

KIA-NING FU. FU-KIEN.

Height (without handle) 3 inches. Diameter 12 ¼ inches.

Oval in shape. Made of cane strips, in open, twined, and coiled weaves. Base painted red.

AN-HUI PROVINCE.

Height 5 ½ inches. Length 13 inches.



Plate X. OLD FLOWER BASKET.

In shape of a boat, with double handle. Made of dark bamboo in open, twined, and coiled weaves.
Traces of gold paint on base and rim.

WEN-CHOU. CHE-KIANG.

Height 8 ½ inches. Length 14 inches. Width 10½ inches.



Plate XI. OLD FLOWER BASKETS WITH DOUBLE HANDLES.

Oval in shape. Made of dark bamboo in open, twined, and twilled weaves.

WEN-CHOU, CHE-KIANG.

Height (without handle) $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Length $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Made of brown and black bamboo split and varnished, in checker, twined, and open weaves. The base is formed by a bamboo strip lacquered red.

NING-PO, CHE-KIANG.

Height $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Length $13\frac{3}{4}$ inches.



Plate XII. OLD CIRCULAR FLOWER BASKET.

Made of bamboo, in open, checker, twined, and coiled weaves.
With handle consisting of three bamboo strips strengthened by cane.
WEN-CHOU, CHE-KIANG.

Height (without handle) $3 \frac{3}{8}$ inches. Diameter $12 \frac{1}{2}$ inches.

Made of bamboo, in checker, twined, and open hexagonal weaves.
Strips and handle are painted red.
WEN-CHOU, CHE-KIANG.

Height (without handle) $3 \frac{1}{2}$ inches. Diameter 10 inches.



Plate XIII. OLD ROUND BASKET (TOTAL VIEW).

Made of fine bamboo split of two shades of brown, varnished, in checker, twined, twilled, and interlaced weaves.

For details, see following Plate.

NING-PO, CHE-KIANG.

Height 8 ½ inches. Diameter 11 ¼ inches.



Plate XIV. COVER AND BOTTOM OF BASKET ILLUSTRATED IN PRECEDING PLATE.

The cover (on the left) is decorated with a phœnix soaring over peonies on the inner side, with a mat design. The bottom of the basket (on the right) is decorated with a design of lotus-flowers and seed-receptacles.



Plate XVa. WICKERWARE BASKET.

Of coil weave, fitted with a porcelain tea-pot. The spout projects through a perforation in the lock, making it possible to pour without removing the pot from the cozy. The hinges are in shape of double coins, and the hook for fastening in form of a fish.

CANTON, KWAN-TUNG.

Height 7 ½ inches. Diameter 9 inches.

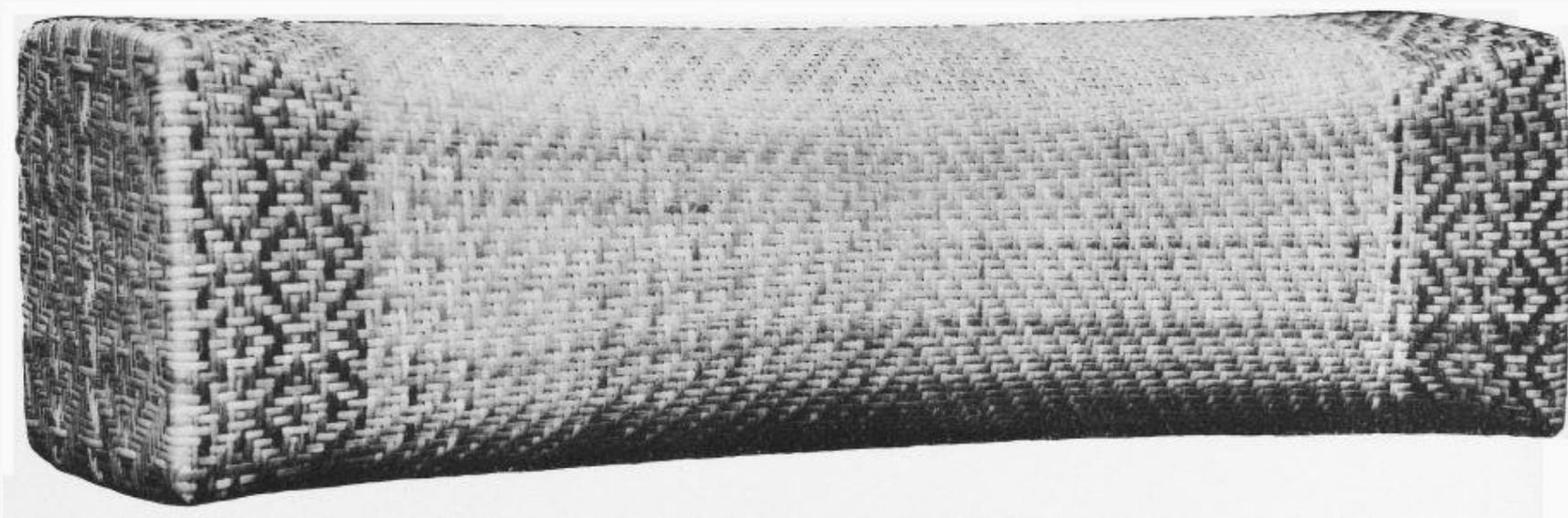


Plate XVb. PILLOW OF RATTAN STRIPS.

Hollow. The ends are ornamented with strips of black in twilled weave of square pattern.

CANTON, KWAN-TUNG.

Height 5 inches. Length 15 ½ inches. Width 5 ¼ inches.



Plate XVI. CIRCULAR BAMBOO CARRYING BASKET.

On the cover, in twilled weave of brown and tan, an ornamental form of the character *hi* ("joy") doubled, expressing the wish that all joy may be doubled. The edge of the cover is of checker and twined weave. The basket proper is made of an hexagonal open weave of three layers ; this design is styled "grape-design".

Base, trimmings, and handle of bamboo.

NING-PO. CHE-KIANG.

Height (without handle) 6 inches. Diameter 9 ½ inches.



Plate XVII. OLD CARRYING BASKET.

Made in two compartments with cover and handle of lacquered wood. The exterior is covered with basketry in hexagonal weaving of split bamboo of two shades. The design in the panel represents the magic wand in a bamboo tube of Chang Kwo-lao, the second of the Eight Immortals. The black-lacquered cover (on the left side) is decorated with a painting in gold and red representing a battle-scene as seen on the stage.

FUCHOW, FU-KIEN PROVINCE.

Height 13 ¼ inches. Diameter 17 ½ inches.



Plate XVIII. OLD BASKETS WITH COVERS AND HANDLES.

Octagonal in shape, with wooden bottom. Made in twined, coiled, and interlaced weaves of extreme fineness.
The handle is lacquered red.
Height (without handle) 4 ½ inches. Diameter 9 ½ inches.

Made of bamboo split, in open twined, twilled, and coiled weaves.
The cover is surmounted by a wooden knob.
FU-KIEN PROVINCE.
Height 8 ½ inches. Diameter 11 inches.

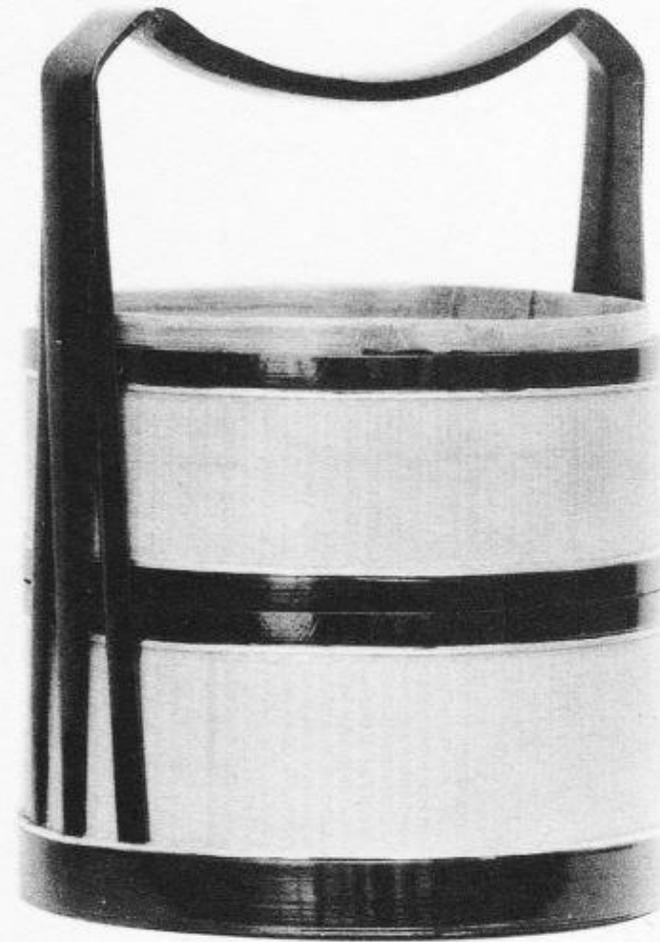
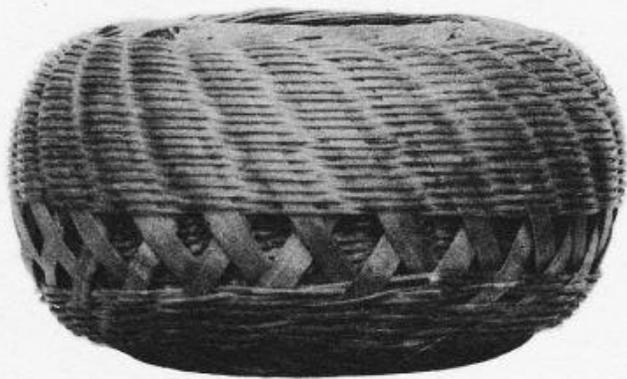


Plate XIXa. CIRCULAR CARRYING BASKET.

Made in two compartments, with black-lacquered handle, of fine bamboo split, in checker and twined weaves. The cover is decorated with a painting in gold outlines, representing two women, one mending a garment, the other painting silk fans.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Diameter 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches.



CIRCULAR BASKETS.

Mode of brown bamboo, in checker weave of two layers. No handles.

KI-AN FU. KIANG-SI.

Height 3 ½ and 3 inches, respectively. Diameter 7 and 4 ¾ inches, respectively.



Plate XIXb.

OLD OVAL BOX.

For keeping cakes. Covered with basketry in checker weave and trimmed with brass mounts and double handle. Hinged lid with brass lock. Cover, base, and edges lacquered black. Height 3 ¾ inches. Length 10 inches.



CIRCULAR LACQUER BOX.

The brown lacquer is ornamented with designs in gold and red. The centre of the cover is occupied by an ornamental form of the character *shou* ("longevity"), surrounded by five bats (*wu fu*) symbolizing five kinds of blessing (*wu fu*): old age, wealth, health, love of virtue, and natural death. On the sides are the eight Buddhistic emblems of luck, alternating with the character "double joy" (*shwang hi*).

FUCHOW, FU-KIEN.

Height 3 ½ inches. Diameter 8 ½ inches.



CIRCULAR BASKET WITH COVER.

Made in coiled, twined, and interfaced weaves of extreme fineness. Partially painted gold and red. The handle is surmounted by a ring.

K'IEN-LUNG PERIOD (1736-1795)

Height 4 ¾ inches. Diameter 8 ½ inches.

Plate XXa.

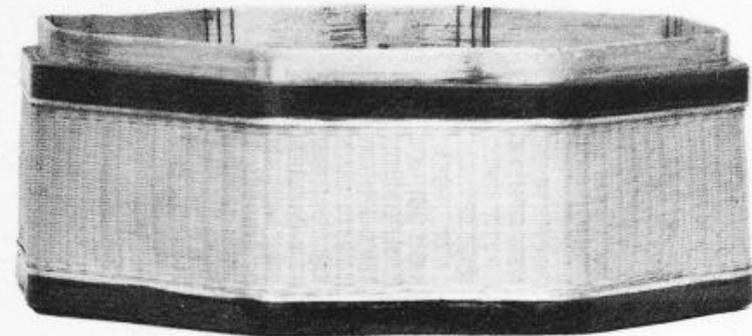
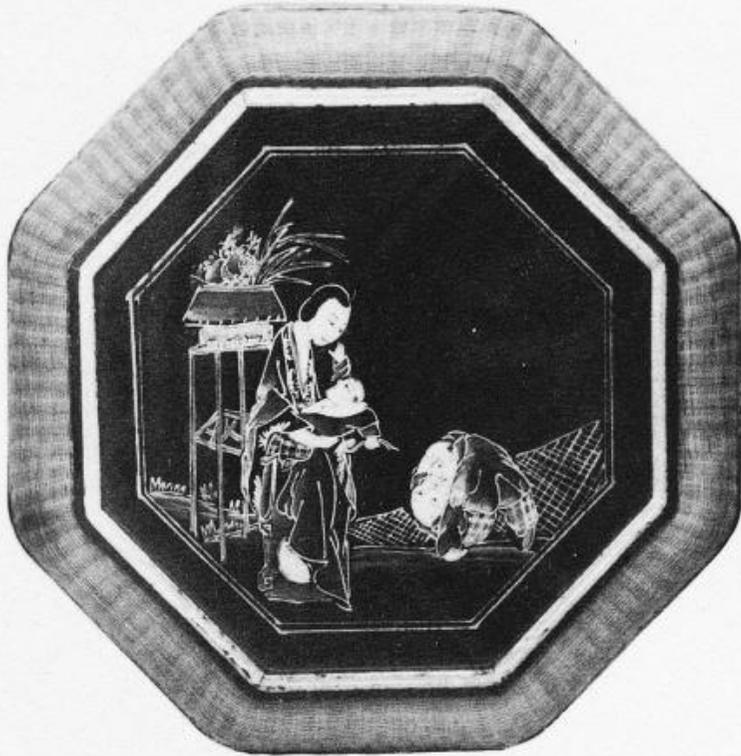


Plate XXb. OCTAGONAL BASKET.

Base, trimmings, and cover of wood. Basketry in double layers : on the exterior, split bamboo in checker and twined weaves : in the interior, twilled weaving in yellow and brown. The painting on the black-lacquered cover represents a mother holding a child ; two boys are engaged in wrestling.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG
Height 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Diameter 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

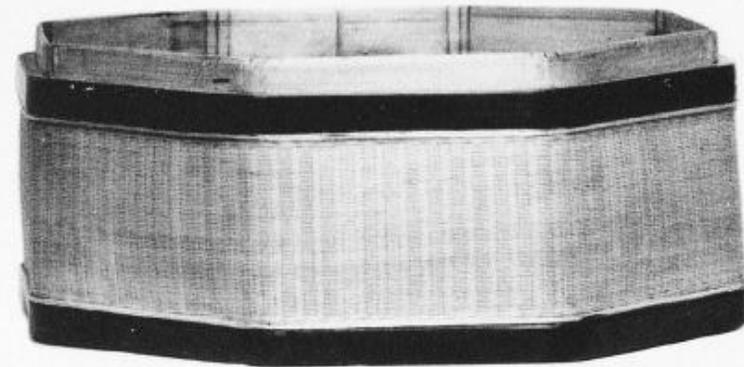
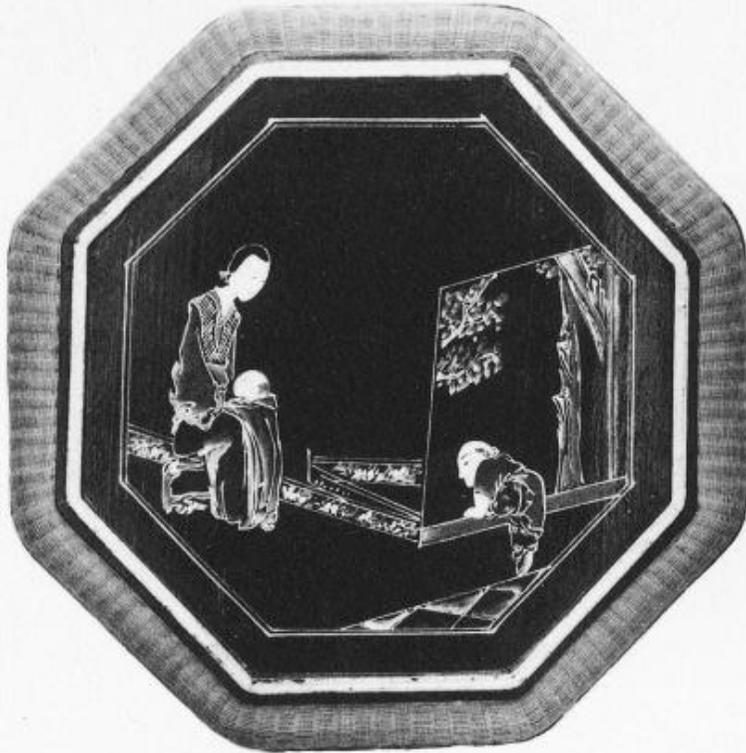


Plate XXI. OCTAGONAL BASKET.

Made, on the outside, of fine bamboo split woven in checker and twined weaves, lined with twilled weaving of brown shade. Base and trimmings of wood. The painting in the black-lacquered panel on the cover represents a mother seated on a bench, with two boys, in a courtyard. One of the boys is leaning toward a painted screen.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.
Height 6 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Diameter 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.



Plate XXIIa. CIRCULAR CARRYING BASKET.

Made of fine bamboo split in checker and twined weaves. Interior lined with twilled weaving. Base, trimmings, and handle of wood.

The cover (on the left) is lacquered black and painted with a landscape in gold. Along the base a raised key-pattern gilded.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Diameter 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches.

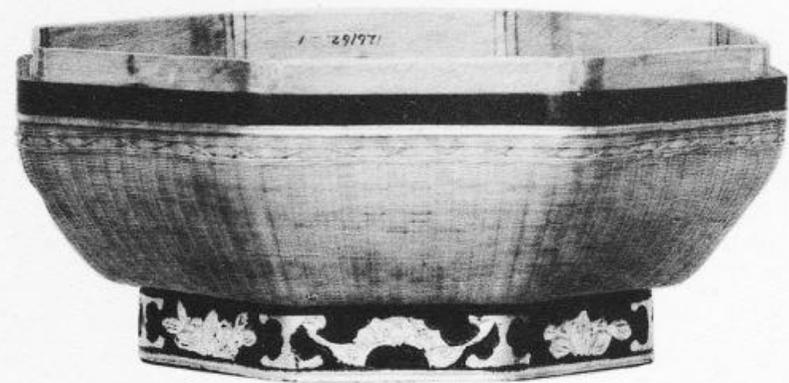


Plate XXIIb. OCTAGONAL BASKET.

Of same technique. The painting on the black-lacquered cover represents two mainah birds perching on a branch.
On the black-lacquered base raised designs in gold of flowers and bats alternating.
CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.
Height 6 inches. Diameter 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

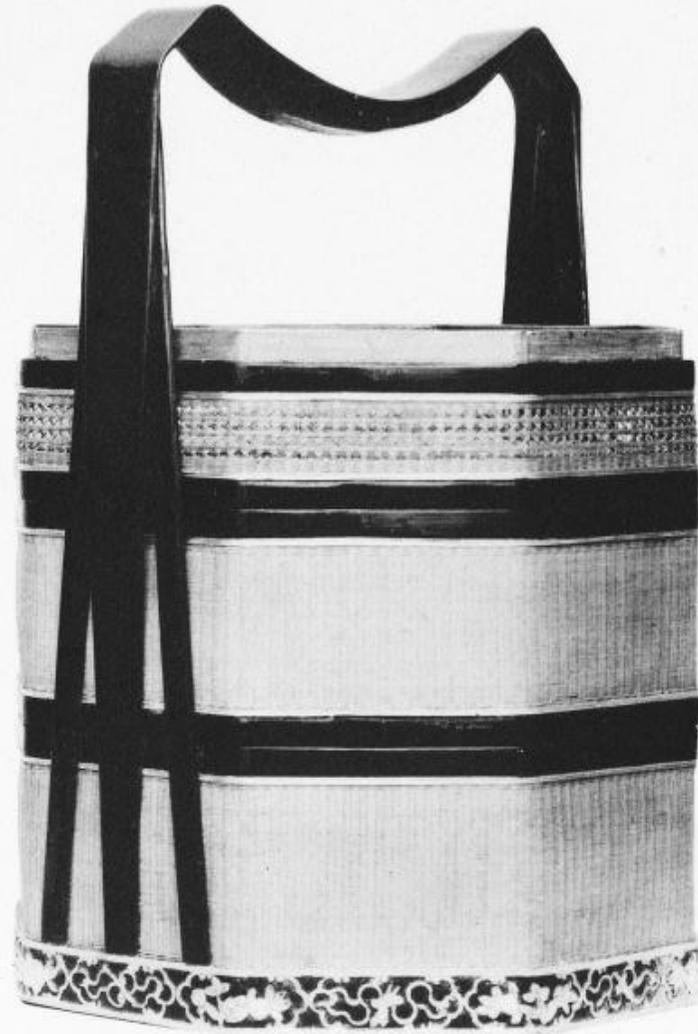


Plate XXIII. CARRYING BASKET FOR SENDING PRESENTS OF FOOD.

Octagonal in shape. Made in three compartments, the upper one in open work. Outside of fine bamboo split woven in checker and twined weave. Wooden handle and trimmings of compartments are coated with black lacquer. Around base, band of floral designs in gold. The black-lacquered cover is decorated with a painting in gold, representing two sages on a paved road in front of a terraced building.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 14 ½ inches. Diameter 13 ⅔ inches.



Plate XXIV. CARRYING BASKET FOR SENDING PRESENTS OF FOOD.

Octagonal in shape. Made in three compartments, the upper one in open work. Outside of fine bamboo split woven in checker and twined weave. Wooden handle and trimmings of compartments are coated with black lacquer. Around base, band of floral designs in gold. The black-lacquered cover is decorated with a painting in gold, representing two sages on a paved road leading to a terraced building.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 14 ½ inches. Diameter 13 ⅜ inches.



Plate XXVa. SQUARE BASKET.

Of same technique as those in Plates XXIII and XXIV.

The painting on the black-lacquered cover represents two women seated on the bank of a brook overshadowed by a tree.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 6 ¼ inches. Each side 10 inches long.



CIRCULAR BASKET.

Of same technique. On the base, plum-blossoms and leaves in gold.
The black-lacquered cover is decorated with a painting in gold and red
outlines : a woman seated on a stone bench under a tree and engaged in sewing.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 4 1/2 inches. Diameter 8 1/8 inches.

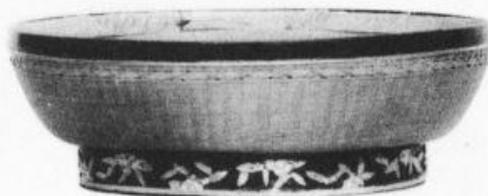


Plate XXVb.



OCTAGONAL BASKET.

Of same technique. The painting on the black-lacquered cover
represents mother and son walking under a willow.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 6 1/8 inches. Diameter 10 1/2 inches.

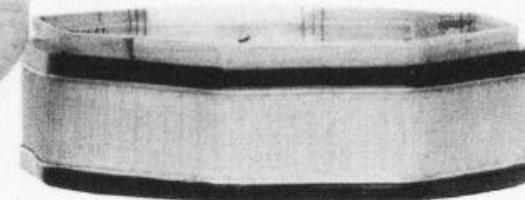




Plate XXVI. OLD RECTANGULAR BASKET.

Fitted with tray inside. Used for books and papers by candidates going to the provincial capital to compete in the civil service examinations, hence called *k'ao lan* ("examination basket"). The bamboo foundation is covered on the outside with twilled weaving in brown, the designs being brought out in black. In the centre of both long sides the character *fu* ("good luck"), implying a wish for the success of the candidate. Hinged handle wrapped with cane, hinged cover, lock and bosses of metal. Height 9 inches. Length 12 ½ inches.



Plate XXVII. RECTANGULAR BASKET.

Made in two compartments, with wooden base and trimmings of bamboo. Basketry of twined, checker, twilled, and coiled weaves on top, in tan and brown. Key pattern and swastika along base. On each of the small sides two ornamental forms of the character *shou* ("longevity"). In the lower panel of the long side the two characters *man t'ang*, on the opposite side (not shown in the illustration) the two characters *fu lu*. They form the sentence *fu lu man t'ang*, which means, "May your hall be filled with happiness and prosperity!" The handle is carved with floral designs.

HANGCHOW. CHE-KIANG.

Height 13 inches.

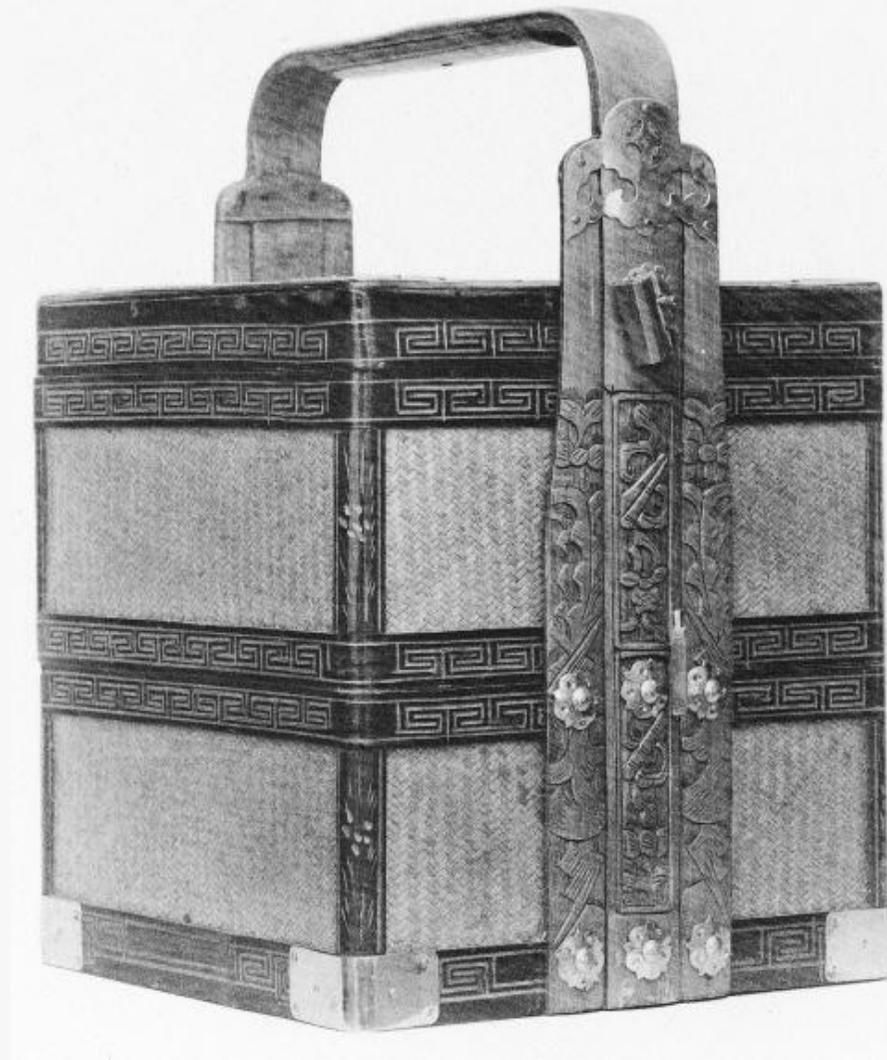


Plate XXVIII. SQUARE PICNIC BASKET.

Made in two compartments with shallow, wooden tray. The exterior is covered with twilled weaving and trimmed with bamboo strips painted black and carved with key patterns. Base and top of wood. The bamboo handle is carved with floral designs and the emblems of the Eight Immortals in relief and ornamented with metal fittings. Closed by metal bar with padlock attached. Four characters are painted in black on the cover : "Outdoors are the green mountains".

NING-PO, CHE-KIANG.

Height 11 inches. Each side 9 ½ inches long.

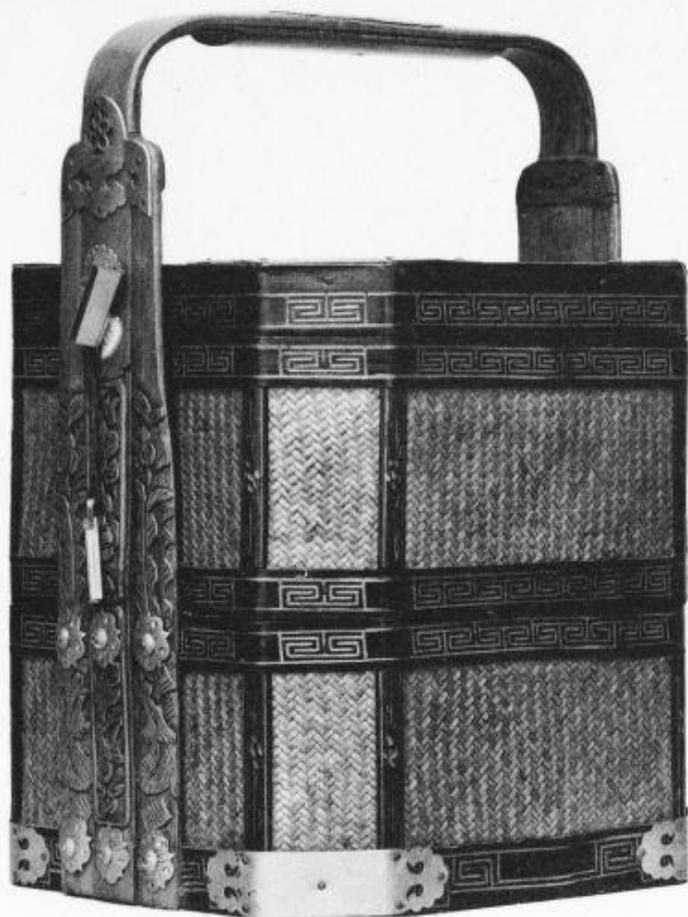


Plate XXIX. OCTOGONAL PICNIC BASKET.

Made in two compartments with shallow tray and fitted with metal trimmings and lock. The exterior is covered with a twilled weaving and trimmed with bamboo strips dyed black and carved with key-pattern. The bamboo handle is finely carved with raised floral designs and the emblems of the Eight Immortals. On the cover, in black lacquer, the character *fu* ("happiness").

NING-PO, CHE-KIANG.
Height 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Diameter 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

On the cover, in black lacquer, four characters reading, "The fifteenth day of the month (i. e. the day of the full moon) is an opportune time for a long outing."

NING-PO, CHE-KIANG.
Height 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Each side 8 inches long.



Plate XXX. TRAVELLING BASKET.

Of rectangular shape, made in three compartments. The upper compartment is woven in open work ; the remainder, in checker and twined weaves of fine bamboo split. The bamboo handle is lacquered black and ornamented with fine metal fittings with designs in open work and engraved. It is fitted with lock and sliding bar. The cover (on the left) is painted with a landscape in gold set off from a background of black lacquer.

CH'ENG HIEN, SHAO-HING FU, CHE-KIANG.

Height 10 ½ inches. Length 10 inches.



Plate XXXI. OLD TRAVELLING BOX OF BASKET SHAPE.

Used by women for carrying toilet articles. Made of wood, in imitation of a basket form, in two compartments, and lacquered red and black. Decorated all over with ornaments in gilded relief. On the cover, squirrels gnawing at bunches of grapes (a frequent and favorite motive in Chinese decorative art). On the handle, a spray of plum-blossoms. On the sides, leaf and floral designs. The medallion in the centre shows a butterfly on a flower.

HANGCHOW, CHE-KIANG.

Height 7 ½ inches. Length 13 ½ inches.



Plate XXXII. OLD TRAVELLING BOX OF BASKET SHAPE.

Used by women for carrying toilet articles. Made of wood in two compartments and lacquered red and black. Decorated with ornaments in gilded relief on cover, sides, and handle, representing plants, Ju-i sceptre (on handle), Taoist genius in medallion (on base), double coins and Swastikas enveloped by fluttering bands.

HANGCHOW, CHE-KIANG.

Height 10 inches. Length 12 inches.



Plate XXXIII. OLD TRAVELLING BOX OF BASKET SHAPE.

With handle and shallow tray. Used by women for carrying toilet articles. Made of wood stained brown and lacquered in black and red. Decorated with designs in gilded relief on cover, sides, and handle. On either side of the handle, in gilded relief within red panel, a vase with branch of plum-blossoms and ornament of natural stone formation as used on the desk. On the cover, gourd vine with leaves and fruits and the two genii of Harmony and Union, framed by a band of key-pattern.

HANGCHOW, CHE-KIANG.

Height 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Length 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.



Plate XXXIV. OLD TRAVELLING BOX OF BASKET SHAPE.

Used by women for carrying toilet articles. Made of wood in two compartments and lacquered red and black. Decorated with ornaments in gilded relief on covers, sides, and handles. On the long sides an all-over pattern of plum design. In the beaded medallion a cat leering at a butterfly (a famous motive of pictorial art) ; below, two dragon-like creatures ; above, on the handle, spray of plum-blossoms. On the cover, two figures in a garden, enclosed in a medallion surrounded by Swastika pattern ; border of gourd with leaves and fruits.

HANGCHOW, CHE-KIANG.

Height 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Diameter 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.



Plate XXXV. OLD TRAVELLING BOX OF BASKET SHAPE.

Used by women for carrying toilet articles. Made of wood in two compartments and lacquered red and black. Decorated with ornaments in gilded relief on cover, sides, and handles. On the side, flowers, birds, and butterflies ; a Taoist genius, enclosed in a medallion. On the cover, in a countersunk medallion, a procession of five figures : in the centre the Chwang-yüan on horseback ; that is, the successful candidate who won the first place at the triennial Palace Examination. He is preceded by two gong-beaters and followed by two standard-bearers, his title "Chwang-yüan" being inscribed on the tablets.

HANGCHOW, CHE-KIANG.

Height 10 ½ inches. Length 11 ¾ inches.



Plate XXXVI. OLD CIRCULAR LACQUERED BOX.

Combination of box with basketry. Made of wood lacquered black and covered with fine bamboo basketry on the outside. The painting on the cover in gold represents a landscape with an open pavilion and a sage with attendant on the bank of a river. Inscription, in vermilion on bottom, yields the date 1726. There is a seal inside of the cover with the name Li Fang.

YUNG-CHENG PERIOD (1722-35).

Height 4 inches. Diameter 11 inches.



Plate XXXVII. OLD CIRCULAR LACQUERED BOX.

Combination of box with basketry. Made of wood lacquered red on the exterior and black in the interior. The outside is equipped with fine bamboo basketry. The painting on the cover in colors and gold outlines represents a painter with attendant, a lady leaning over a table and admiring one of his pictures. Inside of the cover there is a seal in vermilion with the name Hu-chi.

Height 4 inches. Diameter 9 ½ inches.



CEREMONIAL TAZZA.

Used for offerings on the altar in the Confucian temples.
Made of red-lacquered wood covered with basketry of
checker weave. Cover surmounted by gilded knob. Edges gilded.

SUCHOW. KIANG-SU.

Height 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Diameter 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches.



OCTAGONAL JARDINIÈRE.

Plate XXXVIII.

Of basket form. Made of wood and coated with black lacquer in the interior, with red carved lacquer on the exterior. There are eight countersunk panels with reliefs of various flowers in gold and brown. The eight panels on the base are decorated alike with a cloud pattern encircling an ornamental form of the character *shou* ("longevity") in the centre. Handle and edge are finely decorated with meanders and star designs enclosed in hexagons. The lower portions of the handle are in the form of a Ju-i sceptre.

K'ANG-HI PERIOD (1662-1722).

Height 14 inches. Diameter 11 inches.