

**THE JADE CHAPLET IN TWENTY-
FOUR BEADS, A COLLECTION
OF SONGS, BALLADS, &C.,
FROM THE CHINESE**

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The Jade Chaplet in Twenty-Four Beads, a Collection of Songs, Ballads, &c., from the Chinese by
George Carter Stent

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GEORGE CARTER STENT

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IN TWENTY-FOUR BEADS

A COLLECTION OF SONGS, BALLADS, &c.

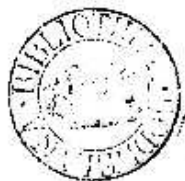
(from the Chinese)

BY

GEORGE CARTER STENT

M.N.C.B.R.A.S.

AUTHOR OF 'CHINESE AND ENGLISH VOCABULARY' 'CHINESE AND ENGLISH
POCKET DICTIONARY' 'CHINESE LYRICS' 'CHINESE LEGENDS' ETC.



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THE
JADE CHAPLET.

*THE BUTTERFLIES' CHOICE.*¹

WHOM shall I choose from this bevy of fairies?

Who shall be queen of "all under the sun?"

'Mid such charms I'm bewildered;—my choice ever varies,

Where *all* are so lovely, 'tis hard to choose *one*.

The fairest, the freshest of flowers bring hither,

With the dew on their petals like glistening pearls;

Blend their hues and arrange them with care ere they wither,

Spray by spray in the hair of these ravishing girls.

¹ The Emperor Ming, of the Tang dynasty, used to cause the ladies of the palace to place fresh flowers in their hair, and at his signal attendant eunuchs would free a number of butterflies they had previously caught. The fortunate lady on whose head most butterflies alighted, attracted by the blossoms, was selected by the Emperor as his favourite. This was called *Tieh-hsing*, "Butterfly fortune," or "Butterfly luck."

The Jade Chaplet.

Butterflies of all colours, the gayest—the brightest,
Rainbow-tinted—bespangled,—likewise hither bring ;
Let the thrall of the captives be one of the lightest ;
Displace not the *bloom* of one azure-tipped wing.

Now, watch me, and mark, when I hold up my finger,
Let their gauzy wings once more in freedom rejoice ;
“ *On whose head the butterflies love most to linger,*
“ *That girl shall be queen—she’s the butterflies’ choice.*”

*CROSSING THE BOUNDARY RIVER.*¹

WITH quivering lip she bade her guard farewell—
 Her pride sustained her or she would have wept—
 "You've served me thus far faithfully and well,
 "Go! tell your lord his promise has been kept."

¹ *Wang-chao-chün* was one of the ladies of the palace in the time of the Emperor Yüan, of the 'Hän dynasty. This monarch was so voluptuous, and had so many ladies that he would not put himself to the trouble of seeing the whole of them personally, but ordered an artist, named *Mao-yen-shou*, to paint each of their portraits so that he could inspect them at leisure in his own apartments.

All the ladies bribed the painter to induce him to produce flattering portraits, except *Wang-chao-chün* who, knowing that she was beautiful and needed no adventitious aid to enhance her charms, depended on them alone, and declined to solicit any favour from the artist. This annoyed the painter so much, that he portrayed such a plain face on his canvas, instead of her own beautiful one, that the Emperor, on inspecting it, tossed it aside with contempt, and thinking her the ugliest lady in the palace, promised her in marriage to the chief of a Tatar tribe with whom he had recently been at war, and whom he now wished to conciliate. When she came to take leave of the Emperor previous to starting on her journey, he was struck with her extraordinary beauty, and perceiving that he had been duped by the painter, ordered him to be at once beheaded.