

**MY LADY OF THE
CHINESE
COURTYARD**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649653935

My Lady of the Chinese Courtyard by Elizabeth Cooper

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ELIZABETH COOPER

**MY LADY OF THE
CHINESE
COURTYARD**



ONE does not think of it as a thing of brick and mortar, but as a casket whose jewels are the prayers of waiting, hoping women.

[Page 69]

*My Lady of the
Chinese Courtyard*

BY
ELIZABETH COOPER

Author of "Sayonara," etc.

WITH THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS IN DUO-
TONE FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

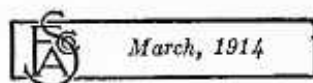


New York
Frederick A. Stokes Company
Publishers

Copyright, 1914, by
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY

All rights reserved

FIFTH PRINTING



725
C 78m
Cop. 2

TO MY HUSBAND

*"What I do
And what I dream include thee, as the wine
Must taste of its own grapes"*

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

AUTHOR'S NOTE

IN these letters I have drawn quite freely and sometimes literally from the excellent and authoritative translations of Chinese classics by Professor Giles in his "Chinese Literature" and from "The Lute of Jade" and "The Mastersingers of Japan," two books in the "Wisdom of the East" series edited by L. Cranmer-Byng and S. A. Kapadia (E. P. Dutton & Co.). These translators have loved the songs of the ancient poets of China and Japan and caught with sympathetic appreciation, in their translations, the spirit of the East.

I wish to thank them for their help in making it possible to render into English the imagery and poetry used by "My Lady of the Chinese Courtyard."

Acknowledgment is also made to Mr. Donald Mennie of Shanghai, China, who took most of the photographs from which the illustrations have been made.

ELIZABETH COOPER.

PREFACE

A WRITER on things Chinese was asked why one found so little writing upon the subject of the women of China. He stopped, looked puzzled for a moment, then said, "The women of China! One never hears about them. I believe no one ever thinks about them, except perhaps that they are the mothers of the Chinese men!"

Such is the usual attitude taken in regard to the woman of the flowery Republic. She is practically unknown, she hides herself behind her husband and her sons, yet, because of that filial piety, that almost religious veneration in which all men of Eastern races hold their parents, she really exerts an untold influence upon the deeds of the men of her race.

Less is known about Chinese women than about any other women of Oriental lands. Their home life is a sealed book to the average person visiting China. Books about China deal mainly with the lower-class Chinese, as it is chiefly with that class that the average visitor or missionary comes into contact. The

tourists see only the coolie woman bearing burdens in the street, trotting along with a couple of heavy baskets swung from her shoulders, or they stop to stare at the neatly dressed mothers sitting on their low stools in the narrow alleyways, patching clothing or fondling their children. They see and hear the boatwomen, the women who have the most freedom of any in all China, as they weave their sampans in and out of the crowded traffic on the canals. These same tourists visit the tea-houses and see the gaily dressed "sing-song" girls, or catch a glimpse of a gaudily painted face, as a lady is hurried along in her sedan-chair, carried on the shoulders of her chanting bearers. But the real Chinese woman, with her hopes, her fears, her romances, her children, and her religion, is still undiscovered.

I hope that these letters, which were shown me by the writer's husband many years after they were written, will give a faint idea of the life of a Chinese lady. They were written by Kwei-li, the wife of a very high Chinese official, to her husband when he accompanied his master, Prince Chung, on his trip around the world.

She was the daughter of a viceroy of Chih-li, a man most advanced for his time, who