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**Corean Coin Charms and Amulets: A Supplement**

By Frederick Starr

The literature regarding Corean coin-charms is almost confined to H. A. Ramsden’s book—*Corean Coin Charms and Amulets*—printed in 1910. In that work the learned numismatist, whose death is a real loss to the study of Oriental coins, is practically the pioneer in an interesting but unknown field. He went earnestly into his subject and described and figured 207 pieces, some of which are only size varieties. He suggested a classification of types and his book must be the foundation for all further study of the subject. The paper here offered must be considered merely as a supplement to his work, adding to his list new types which he failed to secure. It will be assumed that the reader is familiar with the Ramsden book or has it at hand for reference. Most of the new types herein mentioned are in the collection of the author, the few pieces that are in other hands are referred to their present owners. Mr. Ramsden reprinted his book, in brief sections, in the *Philatelic and Numismatic Journal*, of which he was editor at the time of his death; in that reprint he added some types, most of which are described here. As, however, he assigned no numbers to these and the *Journal* is exceedingly difficult to find for reference, we have proceeded as if such announcement had not been made. We have arranged our new types in the order of classification suggested by Ramsden and have then numbered them consecutively, beginning with number 208. In cases where the pieces fit into his classification, we have mentioned the numbers in Ramsden which these would naturally follow to facilitate reference and comparison. We do not feel that Ramsden’s classification was perfect; in fact we think it could easily be improved; but a new classification [page 43] would require a complete overhauling and republication of all material. We have therefore made no changes. Ramsden gives full varietal to size differences, even when slight, assigning independent numbers to each; this seems particularly undesirable, but even in this we have followed him.

Two hundred and seven of these coins was a very considerable number and one who knew Ramsden’s diligence as a collector might well anticipate that the list could not be greatly extended; sixty-six pieces are however here described and listed. Where these are only new combinations of designs illustrated by him no attempt is made to figure the pieces, but a mere statement of the combination in Ramsden’s number is given. Of new designs, rubbings or photographic illustration and description are given. In description Ramsden’s formula is regularly followed. The author confesses to confusion in the use of the terms *obverse* and *reverse* and admits inconsistencies. Sometimes he has felt that the pictorial side should be considered the obverse in pieces where there are characters on one side and a pictorial design on the other; this is surely a justified assumption in those charms, where figures in high relief occur on one side, while a nearly flat surface occupied by characters surrounding a simple symbol forms the other. But one who knows the extreme significance attributed to characters in the Orient may well doubt whether the pictorial side is the more important one in such a case for example as No. 256.

Ramsden’s classification was into fifteen classes, as follows:-

(a). Large round coin … … … 1 (1)

(b). Figures and animals in high relief … 2 to 20 (19)

(c). Bats and butterflies … … … 21 〃 41 (21)

(d). Fish shapes … … … … 42 〃 44 (3)

(e). Fan shapes … … … … 45 〃 50 (6)

(f). Weight shapes … … … 51 〃 70 (20)

(g). Octagonal shapes … … … 71 〃 80 (10)

(h). Hexagonal shapes … … … 81 〃 83 (3)

(i). Scallop and star shapes … … 84 〃 104 (21) [page 44]

(j). Pierced or open-work round coins … 105 〃 146 (42)

(k). Round, with pictorial designs … 147 〃 160 (14)

(l). Round with fancy designs … … 161 〃 170 (10)

(m). Round with plain characters … … 171 〃 190 (20)

(n). Round with simple fret-work character 191 〃 197 (7)

(o). Miscellaneous and odd shapes … 198 〃 207 (10)

The number of types listed under each class is given above in brackets.

Perhaps the most interesting of these coin charms are those with human figures in high relief on one side. They attract the attention of the most careless observer and present a great and perplexing variety. There are usually two figures, one of which holds a cup, the other a gourd. Of these two figures Ramsden says; they “present a difficulty of identification. Japanese collectors believe them to represent male and female figures, of man and wife, in relation to the principal object and purpose to which they are intended. Kainz, on the other hand, although not specially attributing these charms to Corean origin, says that they represent the two door-keepers, Yuek and Liu, ‘welche in den Haenden Vasen halten and gegen boese Machten schuetzen sollen’.” While the Japanese view is natural and the difference between the objects carried by the two persons is suggestive, there is no reason to consider these figures in Corea male and female; they are rather “the heavenly twins,” “the boys, messengers from heaven,” whose wooden figures form a part of the outfit used regularly in the wedding ceremony.

These coins with human figures in high relief show perplexing variation and in the endeavor to give easy identification of any given specimen I have constructed a little table, which is here reproduced. Ramsden had nine varieties, I have sixteen; two of his are not in my collection, so that the table shows eighteen varieties. The number of the figures and the number of circles, single or double, used in connection with them are used as a first basis of recognition, while the reverse design is then noticed. Should collectors find other types, it [page 45] will be easy for them to check them into the table in their proper places.

TABLE OF CHARM-TYPES WITH HUMAN FIGURES IN HIGH-RELIEF.

I. One figures … …

II. Two figures … …

No circles … …

1 on each side …

2 〃 〃 〃 … …

3 〃 〃 〃 … …

5 circles … … …

6 〃 … … …

7 〃 … … …

8 〃 … … …

9 〃 … … …

Reverse design.

Square-yin yang.

Birds and bats.

Bats.

Yin-yang & characters.

Swastika.

Constellation-square.

Constellation-yin-yang.

Woman.

Plum blossom.

Other.

Those marked O are in my collection; those marked X are in Ramsden but not owned by the author.

In his translation of characters on the pictorial pieces, notably in the series of pierced or open-work coins, Ramsden appears to overlook the fact that famous Chinese poems are either given or implied. His translations are no doubt adequate for numismatic needs. To know that No. 120 bears the words “sage” and “congratulatory animal” may be sufficient but what the inscription really conveys is―“Kirin salute when a sage is born.” Numbers 123 and 126 together make a famous couplet. Ramsden says: “virtuous woman, charming” (No. 123) and “morally a great man” and “speak well” (No. 126); better translations of the latter are “morally great man” and “good partner.” Taken together these give “A charming virtuous woman is a good partner for a morally great man.” Number 133, which Ramsden translates “bird ceremony,” “congratulatory animal” are better translated [page 46] “sage,” “höo salute” and is analogous to No. 120―“höo birds salute when a sage is born.” Number 134, “fish leaps,” “dragon mounts.” (better “dragon-gate”) becomes in sense “at the dragon gate the fish leaps,” which is rather easily understood. Number 136, “plum, bambu, spring rich.” is equivalent to “plum and bambu are the wealth of the springtime.” There is really a good deal of the poetic in this series of charms, and one who studies them from the side of art and psychology will find much of interest.

We may now present our new material. Out of the 66 pieces 55 are our own; one belongs to Edwin Wade Koons of Seoul and ten to Shioya Kisaburo of Iwakuni, Japan. I am obliged to these gentlemen for the rubbings illustrating their pieces.

(b).―Figures and animals in high relief.

No. 208. Octagonal.

*Obverse*: Male figure in high relief; background a mesh of lines, which may be meant for characters. (Plate III. 2)

*Reverse*: Curious figure of a standing man; made in lines of low relief; characters at sides.

No. 209.

*Obverse*: Two figures standing; no circles at side; inner margin of rim-band serrate; otherwise like No. 5. (Plate III. 4).

*Reverse*: Square with fortune character; constellation; three stars above, four below.

No. 210.

*Obverse*: Same as No. 5. Two figures with circle on each side.

*Reverse*: Same as No. 18; seal character for good luck at centre; butterflies above and below, birds at sides. [page 47]

No. 211.

*Obverse*: Two figures; single circles on each side; seven cup-depressions in the broad, flat, rim; inner border of this plain, not serrated as in most similar types. (Plate III. 7).

*Reverse*: Same as No. 10. Swastika pattern.

No. 212.

*Obverse*: Same as No. 5. Two figures with circle on each side.

*Reverse*: Square with characters, fortune; three stars above, four below.

No. 213.

*Obverse*: Same as No. 5. Two figures with circle on each side.

*Reverse*: Same as No. 9. Yin-yang symbol, with three-star constellation above and below.

No. 214. Like No. 6, but smaller.

No. 215.

*Obverse*: Two figures; butterfly above, bat (or leaves?) below; cf. No. 6; two circles on each side and two circular characters. (Plate III. 1).

*Reverse*: Same as No. 17. Yin-yang symbol, surrounded by characters.

No. 216.

*Obverse*: Two figures; three circles above and below; double circles at side. (Plate III. 3.).

*Reverse*: A slight variation from No. 17. Yin-yang symbol, surrounded by eight characters.

No. 217.

*Obverse*: Two figures; eight circles.

*Reverse*: Plum blossom design.

This piece, inserted in the table, with the specimen in hand, has disappeared; fuller description is therefore impossible. [page 48]

No. 218. With suspension-loop.

*Obverse*: Butterfly. Same as reverse of No. 5. Larger in size.

*Reverse*: Swastika pattern. Same as No. 10.

No. 219. Same designs; smaller size; no suspension loop.

*Obverse*, as the reverse of No. 5; *reverse* as No. 10.

No. 220.

*Obverse*: Butterfly, or bee (?).

*Reverse*: Yin-yang symbol with double circles at sides; clouds above and below.

No. 221. Narrow, sharply-marked rim.

*Obverse*: A butterfly, raised, on a flat surface. (Plate III. 9).

*Reverse*: Within the narrow rim, is a wide ring of the same flat surface; within, above and below are bats and between them a squared character, 福, blessing; double circles at the sides of this. [page 49]

No. 222. Crenate; with suspension loop.

*Obverse*: Crane and plum-blossom. (Plate III. 4).

Reverse: As No. 17. Yin-yang symbol and characters.

No. 223. With pierced knob at top for suspension.

*Obverse*: Two flying cranes, facing different directions.

*Reverse*: Eight characters, apparently the same as in Ramsden’s No. 92 surrounding an eight pointed central space.

(c).―Bats and Butterflies.

No. 224. With pierced knob at top, for suspension.

*Obverse*: Two birds in flight and a bat; seven circles, distributed over space between; rim of two concentric circles. (Plate III. 8).

*Reverse*: Rim of three concentric circles of differing width; Yin-yang symbol and seven pittings in a central [page 50] square field; at sides two concentric circles, with centre-pittings; characters above and below-天地; heaven, earth. (Cf. No. 2).

No. 225. Crenate. With suspension loop.

*Obverse*: In upper field two birds and a bat (cf. No. 3); a kirin in lower field. (Plate III. 10).

*Reverse*: Same as No. 17; a yin-yang symbol, surrounded by eight characters.

No. 226. Butterfly-form; outline conventional crenate circle; pierced circles bring out design and openings mark out legs and thorax; characters on each side of body, on the middle of wings.

*Obverse*: 壽福; long-life, blessing.

*Reverse*: 康寧; peace, comfort.

Ramsden’s No. 24, but with openings through.

No. 227. Cf. No. 25; but open-work. Two bats facing; central square hole, bordered by double line; four characters at each side.

*Obverse*: 壽福康寧; long-life, blessing, peace, comfort.

*Reverse*: 富貴多男; many sons, wealth, nobility.

No. 228. Two bats facing; central square hole; four characters on each side of piece.

*Obverse*: 五子登科; five sons pass examination.

*Reverse*: 相輝組綏; shine reciprocally.

Comparable with 26, 27 of Ramsden, but with different detail. [page 51]

No. 229. No doubt derived from a design like No. 36, but no actual butterflies; centre a five-petalled flower.

*Obverse*: 九五福康寧; nine, five, fortune, peace, comfort.

*Reverse*: 八千歲春秋; spring and autumn (i.e. age) eight thousand years.

No. 230. Butterfly, neatly and sharply worked out; square hole in the body; antennae, open-work. One character on each side of the body.

*Obverse*: 金鼎; golden vessel (for food).

*Reverse*: 玉燭; jewel-candle.

No. 231. Butterfly pattern; stamped out; thick; crude work; alike on both sides. [page 52]

No. 232. Like Ramsden’s 32, but set into a rim as a coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

No. 233. Compare this with the last number; the design is the same but the horse takes the place on both sides of one character and part two of the bats. Copper. (Shioya Collection). There is probably a stamped-out brass or bronze from of this same type in the regular Corean series.

*Obverse*: 子昌盛; prosperous sons.

*Reverse*: 壽康寧; long-life, peace, comfort. [page 53]

No. 234. Like Ramsden’s 38, but set into a rim, as a coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

(f).-Weight shapes.

No. 235.

*Obverse*: Characters, one on each side of square hole; four small circles, one above and one below each character.

*Reverse*: Similar arrangement, but in small circles.

Like Ramsden’s 62, except for the four circles on obverse.

No. 236. Square characters as each side of square hole.

*Obverse*: 壽福康寧; long-life, blessing, peace, comfort.

*Reverse*: 富貴多寧; wealth, nobility, full of peace. [page 54]

No. 237.

*Obverse*: One character on each side of the square hole 壽福; long-life; fortune.

*Reverse*: Designs of uncertain significance; a constellation and a gourd?

No. 238. Rather wide, flat, rim; square characters on each side of the square hole; cup depressions on the horns.

*Obverse*: 壽福; long-life, blessing.

*Reverse*: 康寧; peace, comfort.

No. 239.

*Obverse*: Conventionalized rounded characters, one on each side; small circle above and below each.

Reverse: Similar arrangement. Characters are un-decipherable. [page 55]

No. 240. Ramsden’s 56 without crenate margin and set in wide-rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection)

No. 241. Compare with Ramsden’s 62. The characters and general plan are the same; but margin not crenate, and the whole is set into a wide-rimmed, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

No. 242. Different from any weight-shaped piece in Ramsden or Starr collection. Set into a wide rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection). [page 56]

*Obverse*: 壽福; longevity, happiness.

*Reverse*: 康寧; peace, ease.

(g).-Octagonal Shapes.

No. 243. Octagon; knobbed. Circular hole at centre; characters on both sides.

*Obverse*: 孝悌忠信禮義廉耻; loyalty, fidelity, piety, brotherliness, ceremony, righteousness, integrity, shame.

Reverse: 壽福康寧……… peace, propriety, frugality, long-life, happiness, . . . . . .

(h).-Hexagonal Shapes.

No. 244. Hexagonal, with knobs at corners; four characters on each side.

Obverse: 忠孝傳家; loyalty, fidelity, for generations.

Reverse: 壽福康寧; nobility, fortune, peace.

No. 245. Same as No.244, but smaller in size. [page 57]

(i).-Scallops and Star Shapes.

No. 246. Two sides alike; characters 太平萬歲; peace through ten-thousand years. Open-work, stamped out.

No. 247. Ramsden’s 92 set into a wide-rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

No. 248. Pierced near border with three threes of holes and a triple hole at top, for suspension. Characters in central circular spaces-如意; all to your desire. [page 58]

No. 249. Crenate circle; circular hole; each division of the crenate outline, has a shallow disk-pit sunk in it, eight on each side. Thick, crude.

(j).-Pierced or open-work round coins.

No. 250. Open-work coin, A demon rides upon a hoö bird, which is eating kiri. The two sides are practically the same.

No. 251. Open-work coin. Two hoö birds and clouds. The two sides are alike. [page 59]

No. 252. Ramsden’s 128, but is solid and set into a wide-rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

No. 253. Open-work coin; circular central hole; neat, sharp rims; two large leaves, one on either side of hole, bear characters.

*Obverse*: 祥雲滿香; lucky cloud full of fragrance.

*Reverse*: 和風甘雨; peaceful breeze, sweet rain.

No. 254. Open-work coin; circular central hole; sharp rims; four spaced plum-blossoms; characters above and below.

*Obverse*: 寒梅着花; cold, the plum blossoms.

*Reverse*: 香旺; fragrance gushes forth. [page 60]

(k).-Round with Pictorial designs.

No, 255. Large, thin, open-work coin. Central part is No. 160 of Ramsden; then comes the open-work zone, and the rather wide rim. [page 61]

*Obverse*: Mountains, clouds, water, herbage, pine, deer, tortoise, crane. On central coin, four yin-yang symbols alternate with characters―壽富多男―many sons, long-life, wealth.

*Reverse*: Open-work zone much the same. On central coin the characters-吾君萬年-may our lord live ten thousand years.

No. 256. Large medal, with suspension ring; bold, high work; broad rim.

[page 62] *Obverse*: Characters grouped, with circles alternating ― 壽富貴男 ― sons, long-life, wealth, nobility.

*Reverse*: Fret pattern, repeated disconnectedly sixteen times, around border; two dragons, facing, beads down, with jewels.

No. 257. Large coin-like piece, with an octagonal hole. Has been pierced, near the rim, with seven perforations, apparently for suspension and to make it serve as a chatelaine.

*Obverse*: Around central hole a mass of clouds; around this a wide zone bearing the characters―永言配命自求多福―eternal adapted to fortune, truth harmonizes with fortune.

Reverse: Mass of clouds around central hole; upon the outer zone the constellation of Ursa major and waves.

No. 258. Same as No. 154, but larger, and slightly varied details; note tail of male, and female. [page 63]

*Obverse*: 鳳儀薰殿; Phoenix appearing salute, fragrance fills palace.

*Reverse*: Phoenix (hoō birds) fill space around the central hole.

No. 259. Companion piece to preceding.

*Obverse*: 聖世遊麟; in the age of a sage, kirin come out and play.

*Reverse*: Two kirin fill the space around the central square.

No. 260. Coin, square-holed; flat, rather wide rim.

*Obverse*: Characters 龍鳳; dragon, phoenix (hoō).

*Reverse*: A dragon and phoenix (hoō). [page 64]

No. 261. Round, coin-like; wide rim; square central hole.

*Obverse*: 壽福康寧; long-life, happiness, health, peace.

*Reverse*: Figures, one on either side.

No. 262. In delicacy of work and nature of design this reminds of the open-work numbers 112-133; The rubbing permits little more to be made out than the flying bird. Because the pattern is markedly different from any other the cuts are inserted. Wide-rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

No. 263. Wide-rimmed, solid, coin-like piece. Copper. (Shioya collection).

[page 65] *Obverse*: Four characters about central square hole. 五一成節; five―succeed jointly.

*Reverse*: Clouds and sun design? Comparable to last, but neither is sharp.

(m). ―Round with Plain characters.

No. 264. Coin-like, but with narrow rim and inner raised line; the central square hole is also double bordered; of pewter or some lead alloy.

*Obverse*: 五子登料; five sons passed examination.

*Reverse*: 連仲三元; may the dynasty continue through thrice a universe. (Heaven, earth and man)

No. 265. Large, coin-like.

*Obverse*: 太平安樂; peace, ease, luck.

*Reverse*: 壽富多男; long-life, wealth, many sons. [page 66]

No. 266. Very like ordinary coinage; wide-rim.

*Obverse*: 忠孝傳家; loyalty and fidelity, from generation to generation.

*Reverse*: 衣冠維世; garment and crown (position) pass from father to son.

No. 27. Very like ordinary coinage.

*Obverse*: 萬壽無疆; ten thousand years of age, no limit.

*Reverse*: 如岡如陵; like a hill, like a mountain.

(n)-Round, solid, with single concave character.

No. 268. Broad rimmed, coin-like; large character on either side in raised but hollowed work; loop for suspension. [page 67]

*Obverse*: 海; sea.

*Reverse*: 富; wealth.

This may represent a series completely unknown to Ramsden.

Also without loop.

No. 269. Broad-rimmed, coin-like; large character on either side, in raised but hollowed work; loop for suspension.

*Obverse*: 多; many.

*Reverse*: 男; sons.

(o).-Miscellaneous and odd Shapes.

No. 270. Stamped out; the two boys; no inscription. The two sides differ strikingly in the support or lower part. (Koons collection.)

No. 271. Two jewel-symbols crossing. (Cf. No. 205). [page 68]

No. 272. Sharply stamped-out piece; pouch-shaped; alike on the two sides; bears conventionalized characters-壽; long-life. 福; happiness.

No. 273. Open-work piece; thick; poor work.

*Obverse*: Has four pit depressions in the round knob.

*Reverse*: Flat, without pitting.

The pieces in Mr. Shioya’s collection give rise to some curious questions. He has perhaps eighteen or twenty specimens of which all but ten (number 231, 232, 233, 239, 240, 241, 246, 251, 261, 262) which are here illustrated and described are included in Ramsden and are identical with Corean specimens in size, type and inscription, but are made of copper. Those here illustrated are fundamentally the same as Ramsden’s specimens, — except 232, 241, 261 and 262 — but are included in coin-rims and are solid, like coins; these also are all of copper, not of brass or bronze like the Corean specimens. All of them are from Formosa and were collected there by Mr. Shioya personally; he was much surprised when I attributed a Corean origin to them. In his collection there was also one of the elaborate chatelaines, identical with No. G. 8, of my classification. An independent origin in Corea and Formosa is quite impossible: such identity of types, inscriptions, and combinations of unrelated elements is not to be expected. Where did these things originate? Are they Formosan, introduced from there into Corea, or were they introduced into Formosa from Corea? When and how, and [page 69] why, were they introduced from one to the other? Which is the probable older idea — pieces stamped out in weight-shaped, crenate, or butterfly-like forms, or similar patterns and shapes included in rims and made in coin-like form? In other words which is more primitive and natural, the Corean or the Formosan type? There is another alternative, theoretically possible and very simple and immediate. Might the types have been developed in China, fully fixed and conventionalized, and then transferred to Corea and Formosa, both of which have indeed looked to China as a teacher? Chinese numismatics is a long-established science; Chinese coins, coin charms and amulets are well known. Ramsden himself, had perhaps the finest collection of Chinese coins in foreign hands — it is inconceivable that a Chinese series of this kind, parent of the Corean and Formosan, could have been overlooked.

When we come to study the chatelaines in detail we shall find that the chatelaines of class G — “combinations of coin charms” are usually composed of elements which are identical with the coin-charms described and figured by Ramsden. Occasionally in these chatelaine combinations we find elements not yet known as independent pieces. We believe that we are justified in all such cases in assuming that these actually do exist as coin charms and might be added to the list. We have not added them, but the studious reader will easily pick out such here and there and will have no difficulty in locating them in their proper place in the classification.

To us, who approach this entire subject more from the ethnographic than the numismatic viewpoint, the chatelaines to which these coin-charms are attached are quite as interesting as the coin-charms themselves. Ramsden only hints at their variety and illustrates but a half-dozen types representing several different classes. We have made a considerable collection and have thought it worth while to go into some study of them (a) because they represent a special art; (b) because they exhibit an exuberance of fancy and imagination; (c) because some of them, for one reason or another, call for special comment; [page 70] and (d) because with a great series before us, we can suggest a classification and point out types and groups. These chatelaines form the basis or backing for an elaborate and complicated mass of ornament and symbolism. To them are attached streamers of ribbon upon which these coin charms are threaded; the ribbons are of different colors and the coin charms or coins — for sometimes true coins are also used — vary in size and form. A well made example may carry scores of coin charms upon a dozen or more ribbons. Such objects are called by the Corean name of yurl-shoi-pai and were given to brides or were constructed by them from coin charms, gathered and hoarded for the purpose. The chatelaine backs are liberally furnished with metal rings, to which the keys of the young housekeeper were suspended. The form, bulk and weight of these things must have seriously interfered with their convenient use as key-carriers, but the good luck influences from the coin charms with their favorable symbols and auspicious inscriptions no doubt more than compensated. (Plate I.)

While Ramsden attempted to exhaust the subject of the coin charms themselves he did not do the same by the chatelaines. He pictures but six examples, selecting them to illustrate a few classes. He recognized four groups: (a) the happy couple; (b) the long life character; (c) open work designs in great variety; (d) a mass of coin charms. Of these he considered (a) and (b) the older. This classification is entirely inadequate and we venture to propose a new arrangement. We assign letters to the classes or groups and numbers independently under each, so as to permit of locating new types readily in the scheme.

**Proposed Classification of Chatelaines.**

A. Solid; crenate; with two figures, good-luck character and crane. Ramsden’s No. 20, or a variant of it.

B. Solid; demon-head at top; with two figures and central character. [page 71]

(a) With evenly rounded border.

(b) With crenate border.

C. Heavy, solid work; high relief; alike on the two sides.

D. Open work: dragon patterns.

E. Central character; heavy and firm, but with some open-work; foliate or floriate decoration.

F. Fragile, floriate or foliate, open-work; with or with-out central character and dragon elements.

G. Combinations of coin charms.

(a) Frail forms, related to preceding group.

(b) With enclosing fret-work border.

(c) With simple border, or none at all-resolving itself into a simples mass of attached coin charms.

H. A single, simple piece, like a coin charm.

(a) Round-solid, or open-work.

(b) Octagonal.

(c) Of fancy form; as the butterfly-Ramsden’s No. 22.

I. Solid; heavy; sharply stamped; pouch or gourd forms.

We will now pass to the detailed description of types under these groups.

A. The chatelaine is Ramsden’s 20, or a variant. We believe this is always a chatelaine or carrier (Plate II.) and never a coin charm as Ramsden thinks. The varieties it presents are shown in Plate IV. We shall call the side that bears the two figures the obverse. We have seen five obverses and three reverses.

1. Obverse: flying cranes, facing in opposite directions, above and below the conventionalized character for long life; at right and left the two figures; in spaces two double circles and two marks of uncertain meaning. Reverse: a flower-like device, which stamped out becomes Ramsden’s No. 17-with eight characters. (Plate II. Plate IV. 5).

2. Obverse: a flying crane above, a bat below, the conventionalized character for long life; at right and left the two [page 72] figures; in spaces between character and figures are two double circles on each side. Reverse: as last. (Plate IV. 1, 5).

3. Obverse: a flying crane above, a bat below, the conventionalized character for long life; at right and left the two figures; outside these a double circle on each side; in spaces around the central character four single circles. Reverse: as last. (Plate IV. 2, 5).

4. Obverse: a flying crane above, a flower (or cloud pattern) below, the conventionalized character for long life; the two figures at the sides; outside of them a double circle on either side. Reverse: two dragons, one above, the other below, the conventionalized character for long life. (Plate IV. 3, 6).

5. Obverse: a flying crane above, a cloud pattern below, the conventionalized character for long life; the two figures at the sides. Reverse: two dragons; one above, the other below, the conventionalized character for long life. (Plate IV 4, 7).

B. Solid; with demon-head at top. Two clearly marked subdivisions — (a) with evenly rounded margin; (b) with crenate, or more or less irregular, margin.

(a) 1. Obverse: two figures at the sides of the conventionalized character for long life; in the spaces between — above, a double circle, below, a cupule; around are five flying bats. Reverse: a dragon around a cloud pattern; plum blossom above; a flight of ten birds around; with nine characters between 壽福康寧富貴多男子 — meaning long life, blessing, strength, peace, wealth, honor, many sons. (Plate V. 1, 3).

2. Obverse: the same as preceding. Reverse: Corean dog with flower; double circles and trio of small circles in triangle; a flight of seven birds around; also the nine characters as in preceding and some interspersed decoration. (Plate V. 1, 4).

3. Obverse: the two figures at sides of conventionalized character for long life closely surrounded by dots; outside of them double circles on each side; flight of five bats around. [page 73]

Reverse: plum blossom design; surface around sprinkled with plum blossoms made of dots; double circle above; the nine character of the preceding designs. (Plate V. 2, 5).

(b) 1. Obverse: great character for long life; two double circles and four cupules symmetrically around it; the two figures in pairs on either side; outside these a double circle on each side; around are eight kirin. Reverse: a broad rimmed octagon, with plum blossom at centre and the eight characters around, meaning-“One accomplishment leaves merit, amassing money is not treasure”; around all is a flight of five bats, (Plate VI. 1, 3).

This exists also in slightly coarser reverse.

2. Obverse: great character for long life; four cloud symbols; around are eight kirin. Reverse: same as preceding. (Plate VI. 2, 3).

3. Obverse: great character, 黃金萬, “yellow gold ten thousand,” two flying birds; figures of old man and woman; a butterfly below. Reverse: great character 寶進招, “treasure calls,”; around on each side a flying bird, a butterfly, bhotan, bambu; at bottom, a bat. (Plate VI. 4, 5).

C. Heavy, solid work; while at first sight suggesting B. b. it really differs in every detail. Two sides alike. At the centre is the highly conventionalized character for “joy”; surrounded by a complicated pattern composed of four or more butterflies. (Plate VII. 1.)

D. Open-Work; dragon designs.

1. Two finely executed dragon figures, symmetrically facing, in clouds. Obverse: raised, convex work' finely detailed. Reverse: hollowed, concave work; with characters 福 主之昊太而身達虹赤喜蒼龍據 腹而文皇之兆祥 “when blue dragon writhes, many good omens appear as in the days of Munwhang; when red rainbow encircles the body, immense wealth grows up as in the period of Taiho.” (Plate VII. 2, 3.).

2. Largest of all the chatelaines in my collection, measuring over 9×6 inches. (The full-size rubbing is reproduced [page 74] in the folding plate I). In a frame composed of two dragons facing, are ten large coin-like charms; the two sides are practically alike save for the characters on the coins.

3. Octagonal frame; two dragons within; cloud above and mountain below a central plaque upon which are punctate characters 康寧, “strength, peace.” Alike on two sides. Yellow brass. (Plate VII. 4).

E. Central character; heavy and firm, but with some open work; foliate or floriate decoration.

1. Obverse: Available space divided into upper and lower panels; on the lower is the character for long life; on the upper, a plant in bloom. Reverse: on the lower panel is the conventionalized character for long life; on the upper, a plant design. (Plate VIII. 1, 2).

2. Obverse: Much like preceding, but the two figures stand at the sides of the character and small details vary. Reverse: The character is less compact and is composed of coarser lines. The entire piece is smaller, but gives the impression of shortness with relatively greater breadth. (Plate VIII. 3, 4).

F. Fragile, poor material; open-work, foliate and floriate designs; two sides alike.

1. Central character for high, surrounded by a mass of foliate and floriate open-work. (Plate VIII. 5.)

2. Flower-like design, surrounded by mass of foliate open-work. (Plate VIII. 6).

3. Mass of foliate and floriate open-work, guarded at sides by dragons facing inward. (Plate VIII. 7).

G. Combinations of coin charms.

This group is the most varied of all and ranges from well-made attractive forms to pieces of loose workmanship, ricketty and almost repellant. It may be roughly subdivided into lesser groups, but these scarcely deserve independent numbering. We may recognize (a) frail forms, somewhat like the last group; (b) forms with an enclosing border of fret-work; [page 75] (c) forms with a simple border or none at all ― becoming indeed mere masses of attached coin charms.

1. Central part made up of nine charms ― butterfly, coin-like, and open-work―all described in Ramsden; surrounded by a somewhat squarish, double, frame of foliate open-work, ending above in two dragons. (Plate IX. 1).

2. Central part composed of eight butterfly, coin-like and stamped out charms, most of them given in Ramsden; double border of foliate and dragon design open-work. (Plate IX. 2). Notice the curious stamped out design above the butterflies; it is not yet known as an independent piece.

3. Central part composed of nine butterfly, coin-like and open-work charms, all given in Ramsden; simple border of foliate and dragon open-work. (Plate IX. 3). While we constantly mention this work, here and in group F as “foliate” the dragon-idea is usually present in the foliation and in the present case we believe both bats and butterflies are suggested in this foliate border. In other words, we here have to do with undoubtedly ancient decorative designs, which have become conventionalized and broken down to the degree that the original ideas are almost or quite forgotten.

4. More or less fan-shaped mass of coin-charms, thirteen in number and all given in Ramsden. At the centre is a large open-work coin-like piece; to it are loosely attached, by ugly connecting strips, coin-like, fan, butterfly, and weight charms; a handle is added. (Plate X. 1). This piece is a sample of the least attractive of all the chatelaines; the material is poor and rotten, breaking easily; the casting is badly done. Two specimens of this class, differing in the component charms, are here shown; others have been seen, one being larger than any here shown.

5. Of same general character as the last, but with different component elements; without handle. (Plate X. 2).

6. In this neat and attractive specimen, we pass to the second subdivision suggested above ― those with a border of fret-work. Yet in some respects it is related to the two unattractive [page 76] and badly-made chatelaines just described. It too is fan-shaped, made up of known elements; but these are in direct contact, well cast, from sharp originals, in good material. All the elements are known as independent charms except the four small round bits bearing characters, which surround the upper butterfly; these seem to be parts of our No. 245. (Plate X. 3). The fret-work frame in this and the four following specimens is open-work.

7. General form somewhat fan-shaped. Centre a mass of nineteen coin-like, open-work, fan and butterfly charms; also the four small round bits above mentioned; surrounded by a fret-work frame and surmounted by dragons. Here are combined the fan-shape of the last three specimens and the foliate-dragon open-work idea. The type differs from the other fret-work frames in having no protecting outer rim. (Plate XI. 1). The sides differ.

8. Centre, a group of nine rather large coin-charms, al in Ramsden; surrounded by a horse-shoe shaped frame of fret-work, with an outer protecting rim and surmounted by the foliate-dragon open-work. (Plate XI. 2).

9. General form rectangular; at centre is the great character for joy; surrounded by a frame of fret-work with outer protecting rim; surmounted by a group of charms — butterfly, coin-like, small round bits with characters — and foliate work. (Plate XI. 3).

10. General form rectangular. Group of twenty-one coin-like, one stamped-out, and two butterfly charms; frame of fret-work with protecting rim; surmounted by foliate-dragon work. (Plate XI. 4).

11. General form octagonal. Border, a narrow solid frame with fret deign; within this the fundamental design is a tray vessel with a growing plant; above is the character for joy; scattered about, among the branches of the tree are nine coin-charms. (Plate XII. 1).

12. Fan-shaped. Nineteen coin charms, grouped closely [page 77] in a circular arrangement; all within a plain, narrow, solid rim. (Plate XII. 2).

13. Circular. Around a central open-work coin charm (our No. 245) are grouped nine charms of Ramsden’s group (n) - Round with single fret-work character. All are enclosed by a narrow, solid rim. In Ramsden’s work but seven specimens of this group are given; in this chatelaine there are nine. The two not in Ramsden’s list are 康 and 貴;-“ease” and “nobility.” (Plate XII. 3).

14. Around a central coin charm are grouped a circle of nine, all of which are in Ramsden: there is no outer frame or rim of any sort. (Plate XII. 4).

15. Somewhat rectangular frame of foliate- floriate- bat- butterfly -dragon design; within are twelve coin-like charms; above there are three butterfly charms. The two sides are practically alike, differing only in the characters on the charms. (The full-sized rubbing is reproduced in folding-plate II.)

H. a single, simple, piece; like a coin charm, but intended for a chatelaine carrier, not for suspension to one.

1. Large, round, coin-like charm, with some openings through; alike on the two sides; pierced, for carrying pendents, by three holes below; for suspension loop, by two above. Around a central design, that of Ramsden’s No. 160, a broad zone is occupied by pictorial elements — mountains, waves flying cranes, pine trees, kirim etc. (Plate XIII. 1).

2. Octagonal; heavy; thick and solidly made; suspension projection above. Obverse: characters 壹藝遺業積金非寶, “one accomplishment, leaves merit; amassing money is not treasure.” Reverse; characters 忠孝傳家詩書敎子, “Teach family fidelity and obedience; give next generation knowledge and culture.” (Plate XIII. 2, 3).

3. Ramsden’s butterfly charm, No. 22, should be here; it is primarily a chatelaine, although often hung with coin charms upon one.

I. Solid, heavy, sharply-stamped pieces; gourd or pouch-shaped, or with gourd or pouch as an essential element. [page 78]

1. Gourd-shaped. Obverse: two cranes and rushes; fungus (or kiri) above; characters 瑤山; Yö-san. Reverse: chiefly occupied by flower sprays; above, a pong (hōo) bird in flight with cloud. (Plate XIII. 4, 5).

2. Pouch, drawn together at top. Obverse: characters 壽福, long-life, fortune. Reverse: the doubled character for joy 喜. (Plate XIV. 1, 2).

3. Pouch, somewhat constricted, or a vessel for storage; Obverse: the conventionalized character for long life, surrounded by graceful plant designs. Reverse: surface completely covered with plant designs. (Plate XIV. 3, 4).

4. Similar pouch-form the main element. Obverse: a gate-way, below which is a cartouche-like space bearing seal character; below this is a line of Corean characters, 부모은쳔엽수; Pumo un chun yung su. Reverse: a butterfly and octagonal coin-charms and two small bits with characters, all being enclosed and protected by a narrow semicircular border or frame. (Plate XIV. 5, 6).

We have thus brought together, described and figured forty-three chatelaines. A few others are known to us but are not in our collection; a few others are likely to turn up. They form a group of art objects upon which the old Corean fancy was exuberantly lavished. They deserve to be known and will repay careful examination. They are particularly interesting as showing how forms and decorations are related and pass into one another; they are richly symbolical; they admirably illustrate the process of conventionalization and the loss of knowledge of the origin of traditional patterns.

**List of Plates.**

I. Chatelaine with ribbons and coin charms, showing way in which they were used.

II. Mass of ribbons and charms attached to chatelaine; to show that Ramsden’s No. 20 is truly a chatelaine and not a coin-charm.

III. Coin charms with high relief designs. [page 79]

IV. Chatelaines: Class A.

V. 〃 〃 B,

VI. 〃 〃 B.

VII. 〃 〃 C. D.

VIII. 〃 〃 E. F.

IX. 〃 〃 G.

X. 〃 〃 G.

XI. 〃 〃 G.

XII. 〃 〃 G.

XIII. 〃 〃 H. I.

XIV. 〃 〃 I.