

OCTAGONAL PEWTER-JAR.

For keeping tea-leaves. Decorated with scenes, designs, and inscriptions inlaid in brass. The eight large characters around the neck mean, "A family which accumulates virtue will surely acquire a super-abundance of blessings." These blessings are brought out in the eight scenes arranged in medallions and representing a gentleman's or sage's accomplishments in music, poetry, painting, and intellectual pastimes. Below are figures of Turks or men from Turkestan, like a juggler dancing with a brazier of burning coal on his head and trying to catch a ball behind him, another with pointed cap and curved sword, another blowing a conch-shell, and another dancing with a jewel-filled plate raised above his head. The cover is decorated with a series of eight lucky symbols, and is surmounted by the full figure lacquered in brown and gold of a Taoist deity with two top-knots on his head.

CHINA.

Ming Period (1368-1643)