THE CHINESE IDEA OF A GARDEN

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It may seem a strange statement but it is nevertheless true, that to understand Chinese gardens a certain grasp of Chinese Philosophy is essential. It is therefore wise at the outset to consider the diagram by which Père Amiot, an exceedingly wise Jesuit father who came to China in A.D. 1740, sought to make this philosophy clear.

In the centre of the upper circle is shown Shang Ti, the Creator,—the Supreme or Heavenly Emperor; in the centre of the lower circle is shown the Ch'i or vital essence—the all powerful " breath " of Shang Ti by means of which the T'ai Ch'i, that is the First or Ultimate Principle, is put into motion. This produces the two Secondary Principles the famous Yin and Yang, or the Negative and Positive Principles in Nature, from which all living things spring.

The Yin or Negative Essence corresponds to the feminine elements; to weakness to darkness; its symbols are the Earth and water.

The Yang or Positive Essence corresponds to the masculine elements; to strength, and to light; its symbols are Heaven and the sun.

The figure at the bottom of the chart is the conventional representation of these two principles which it is very important to keep in mind.

In this philosophy man holds no position as Lord of the Universe. Although he is the most important and highest of the " Ten Thousand Things," as all the Creations of Nature are called, he is still considered one of them, and finds his greatest joy in communion with, and contemplation of, the other manifestations of the Universe which he may be said to look upon his " brothers."

If, a grasp of this philosophy is necessary for a comprehension of gardens, it is equally necessary for an understanding of Chinese painting and poetry, and, indeed, Chinese life.

Nor is a grasp of this philosophy alone sufficient, one must also recognize that curious superstition, the belief in the Western Paradise, and the Hsien Chou—" Islands of the Hsien," which is linked with the supposed existence of these beings. Haien are immortals who live in the Taoist Paradise, supposed to be situated in the K'un Lun Mountains of Central Asia. Human beings may attain the desirable state of Hsienship by living a life of contemplation among the hills. When the process is complete they are transported to Paradise by a dragon, or a crane there to " pick the fairy grasses " and live forever in beautiful Surroundings. Li T'ai-po writes:

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PARTING FROM YANG, A HILL MAN*

"There is one place which is an everlasting home to me:
"The Jade Woman Peak on the High Southern Mountain.
"Often, a wide, flat moonlight
"Hangs upon the pines of the whirling Eastern stream.
"You are going to pick the fairy grasses
"And the shooting purple flower of the ch'ang p'u.
"After a year, perhaps, you will come to see me
"Riding down from the green-blue Heaven on a white dragon."

It is important to consider also the life led by a member of the Chinese aristocracy in pre-Revolution days. The only aristocracy which has ever existed in China, excepting members of the Imperial Clan, was an aristocracy of brains. The Official Class was recruited from among those who had passed the literary examinations, and these were open to all men in the Empire outside members of a few proscribed classes as soldiers, actors, barbers, etc. Moreover after a man had passed the second examination, that of Chü Jen "Promoted Man," he automatically became an Official and although he might have to wait for office, his rank was such that people looked up to him; he was able to teach, and perform various ceremonies the payment for which enabled him to "pass through the day," the Chinese idiom for making a living.

After he had held office, and attained wealth and rank he would establish a chia or family home which would be very, very full of people, as many of his less fortunate relations, to say nothing of daughters-in-law and grand-children would assemble under his roof and live on his bounty. For a man who had passed years in literary study in order to pass the examinations, years in which he had been steeped in poetry and the Classics, the inevitable bustle of the chia must have been very tiring, and, of course, the post of an official was in itself no sinecure; moreover he had probably mastered the seven Fine Arts, which are: Calligraphy, Painting, Playing the Table-lute, Playing Chess, Writing Poems, Drinking Wine, and Cultivating Flowers, and to thoroughly enjoy these it was essential for him to have peace, quiet, congenial companions, and beautiful surroundings. Therefore, the ideal of an educated man is to possess a Pi'ieh Shu or country place—high up in the hills, where he and his friends can retire and let their hearts—which, of course, are regarded as the seat of thought—beat in unison with the rythmical pulse of Nature herself. This ideal is expressed by Tu Fu:

*The translation of the poems in this article are from "Fir-Flower Tablets" by Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell.
A DESULTORY VISIT TO THE FENG
HSIEN TEMPLE AT THE DRAGON'S GATE

I had already wandered away from the
People's Temple,
But I was obliged to sleep within the
temple precincts.
The dark ravine was full of the music of
silence,
The moon scattered bright shadows
through the forest.
The Great Gate against the sky seemed
to impinge upon the paths of the
planets.
Sleeping among the clouds, my upper
garments, my lower garments, were
cold.
Wishing to wake, I heard the sunrise bell
CoCommanding men to come forth and
examine themselves in meditation.

A realization of this point of view, universal in China, will assist in giving an answer to the
question implied in the Title to the Article. The Chinese idea of a garden is that it shall
represent as closely as possible the innumerable natural scenes so dear to the heart of a
scholar; that it shall reproduce as nearly as possible the site of his mountain retreat.
Naturally the periods when an official could leave behind him the cares of the world and
retire to the actual wild were rare; moreover leaving him, himself, out of the question the
women of China were debarred by the Social System in vogue, from ever enjoying the
experience of an actual sojourn in desolate places, therefore one may almost say that the
planning of a Chinese garden was a case of literally bringing the mountain to Mahomet!
Gardens were planned for various reasons and not the least frequent was to give pleasure
to some woman, a mother or a lovely favourite, as, of course, the tastes of educated
women, except in the matter of drinking wine, were the same as those of the men.

In discussing the planning of gardens, a Chinese scholar said, "You ask, why should one
make a garden? Perhaps the place one lives in is bustling and noisy, and one's heart is
therefore not "open" (the Chinese idiom for being at peace). When a man is born he has
three great needs: food, clothes, and a dwelling-place. Now food and clothes should be
varied, and the dwelling-place should not be monotonous. Man likes variety. Even the
uncultivated man goes to the hills though he does not always appreciate them, but the
cultivated man of refined tastes does appreciate.

This point is brought out by Li T'ai-po in the poem: ---
REPLY TO AN UNREFINED PERSON
ENCOUNTERED IN THE HILLS

He asks why I perch in the green jade hills.
I smile and do not answer. My heart is comfortable and at peace. Fallen peach-flowers spread out widely, widely, over the water.
It is another sky and earth, not the world of man.

"It is not important that a man should be rich to make a garden although, of course, it takes money, but he must be cultivated and refined. He longs to bring the hills to himself so that he can have a natural view, the only way he can do this is to have a garden—this is his great reason.

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If the site chosen be flat and uninteresting the garden will be as if "cut from wood"; to give interest one should be able to see far, and for this reason one must have hills. There is no garden without hills. One must also have water. High hills from which the rain runs down always have streams on their sides and round their bases, these also must be represented in the garden. One can tell by the nature of the hills made, by the naturalness or artificiality of the stream whether a man's learning be great or small. Of course, gardens can be placed on any site but the cultivated man will go to the uncrowded part of the city, near the wall, so that when he climbs his hills he may be able to see far out into the country—so that he may forget he is surrounded by houses."

Many historic gardens have existed in China, and a point worthy of notice is, that a couple of hundred years before the Christian era, the Emperor Wu of Han created an immense pleasance called the "Shang Lin," or Royal Forest, where he desired to spend happy days and hours. However public opinion, always so powerful in China, frowned upon this monopolisation of arable land and he was obliged to give up his park and allow the farmers to put it under cultivation again. This incident is an example of the fact that the Chinese have never permitted an individual, no matter how high his rank, to absorb too much ground for his private use. Gardens though full of hills, lakes, valleys and vistas, in reality occupy a comparatively small space, and extensive private pleasure grounds, with large lawns, wide herbaceous borders, and elaborate parterres such as are common in the West, would not be tolerated for a moment. A Chinese has always been obliged to confine his garden within a small space and has never been allowed to seriously interfere with the most important business of life—that is agriculture. In this connection it may be recalled that according to the Chinese division, the four Classes of Society are: 1st Scholars, 2nd Agriculturists, 3rd Labourers, 4th Traders. You will notice that soldiers, sailors and other classes whom we honour, are not considered as worthy of mention in the Social System.

Soochow, Hangchow, and Wusih are all famous for gardens of great beauty; Shanghai too, possesses the lovely remains of a renowned garden. The "Record" says that the space to the North and West of the "Temple-of-the-City-Wall, and City-Moat" was originally the Yü Yüan, "Garden of Ease" and belonged to Pan Yün-tuan, or Pan En who built it to give his
mother pleasure; within are Pavilions, Terraces, Pools, and Rocks, it was very beautiful and no other garden in the hsien or district could compare with it. The "Record" then quotes from Pan En's own words, as follows: (a paraphrase). "To the West of my house there lay originally, vegetable gardens, fields, and trees. In the Chi Wei year of the Chia Ching period of the Ming dynasty (A.D. 1559), my period of office as an Official of the Board of Rites at Peking having ended, and being at leisure for a space, I collected a few rocks and called upon workmen to place them as I wished. I dug a pool, built a pavilion and planted

"The Star of Literature Rock"
"In front of it ran a stream from East to West"

bamboos." These last are of prime importance in a garden. The famous poet Su T'ung-po said "If there are no bamboos then the people are uncultivated, untutored." The four things mentioned, rocks, pools, pavilions and bamboos may be considered as the pillars of a garden upon which everything else rests. Pan continues his narration: "For twenty years I continued to build the garden. I sat a sit --- I thought a thought --- I rested a rest --- it was still not very good. In the Ting Chou year of the Wan, Li period A.D. 1577 when I returned from Szechuen where I had held the office of Provincial Treasurer, I gave my entire heart to the affair. I thought only of the garden. I increased the size of the ground adding fifteen plots of land. I made seventeen pools. Furthermore I bought many fields and devoted the entire revenue from these to beautifying the garden. My first reason for doing this was to give my mother pleasure. I also invited my friends to come to banquets when we made poems and passed happy hours—the garden became daily more beautiful. To the East I placed several two-storyed buildings in order to cut off the noise and bustle of the city and in the centre of the three divisions I made a door-way over which a board was placed upon which the characters Yü Yüan 'Garden of Ease,' were written. Entering the
gate, taking a few steps to the west there was again a gate, on this was written Chien Chia, Beauty Penetrates Gradually; twenty paces more to the West and one turned to the North, at this place there was a small Pai Fang (an Arch), on which were inscribed the four characters Jen Ching Hu T’ien, Man’s Place is in the Immortal’s Heaven. Passing under the arch one reached a curved stone bridge and after crossing this a wall faced one. In this an inscription written in the great seal style was sunk which read Huan Chung Ta Kuai, Within the Domain Great Joy. Following the wall to the East one reached a Hall called the ‘Jade Glory’ and in front of this stood a marvellous rock, a most curious example of Nature’s handiwork. It had been known and remarked since the time of the Emperor Hui Tsung of Sung, and should by rights have been sent to him, as it was considered the finest in the Empire. The name of the rock was Yü Ling Lung, ‘Exquisitely Carved Jade-Stone,’ and the Hall took its title from the rock. Ten years ago this rock was still in its place, now it has vanished; however a wonderful and famous stone stands in the tiny courtyard where gold-fish are bred, and is known as the Kuei Hsing Shih, ‘Star of Literature Stone,’ because of a fancied resemblance to the figure of the Patron Saint of Learning. The part of the City where this may be seen, a short distance S.W. of the present enclosure, was once included in the “Garden of Ease.” Behind this Hall stood a house on the water’s edge, it had a red railing over which one leant and threw flour cakes to the fishes in the pool below, therefore the house was called the “Joy of Fishes Summerhouse.”

Pan in common with many of his countrymen realized the joy of seeing fish alive. Here follow various minor details in regard to buildings,

and the Record continues, “Stepping thirty paces to the West there was another gate called the Li Hsiang "Treading Towards Good Fortune Gate,” on either side of which were fine rocks. Within was a pavilion twice as wide as deep, it had a floor paved with stone, and great cocks rose on either side of it which were higher than the pavilion itself, so that looking down, it was as if one looked from a precipice; from afar the pavilion was completely hidden and one thought that one was looking at a mountain. A large pool lay in front of it traversed by a stone passageway, while all around stones and trees rose up. Opposite this pool was a fine Hall of five chien, called the "Joy and Longevity Hall." It was beautifully carved and ornamented, while on either side were buildings containing four chai—that is, rooms for study. These chai were each called by one of Pan En’s fancy names. In the middle of the pool rose a large island surmounted by a pavilion, while to the South of the island, groves of bamboos were planted.

These are, of course, always supposed to suggest the various virtues of which they are symbols. Inalterability being the first and most important. Pan En then gives a very elaborate description of various buildings where books and paintings were kept; of fine rocks from the famous district of Wu Kan in Chêkiang; of a pavilion named in allusion to one of the Eight Immortals and continues "below this pavilion was a spot named Detain the Spring-time Cave ‘and at the South was a long grape arbour. Following this arbour one passed to the West and crossing a small bridge reached a hillock covered with bamboos. Passing this again one arrived at a group of more than a hundred plum trees; as these stood on a sloping bank, the path ran below them, and to the East of the path stood a shrine to Kuan Ti. To the East, the road was now high now low, at times it coiled and turned, at times it ran level and true; there were pools and caves, ravines and stone bridges, indeed it is impossible for me to describe and record all the points of interest that were to be seen. In a word everything was of interest!
On the hillside was a little shrine to the Spirit of the Hills, and above this stood a pavilion surrounded with sharp stone peaks. Here one was glad to rest and look across to the Hall of Joy and Longevity which stood opposite. After leaving the pavilion one entered a cave and the only way of egress was to climb up the side of the rock; when one stepped out there stood a temple to Kuan Yin --- the Goddess of Mercy.

This was at the highest portion of the Southern hills and as one came out of the temple one looked down upon the pool the houses and the pavilions, which at times seemed as if hidden in a mist. The noise of the city seemed far off and divided from one, here were five chien where Buddhist priests could sit in meditation; those who came to this place were of a very high order. The descent was on the Northeast, the path turned and turned; finally crossing a zig-zig bridge of forty paces one reached the large pavilion at the Treading Towards Good-fortune Gate already referred to. This was the view to the South of the Joy and Longevity Hall. To the West stood a house of three chien in which were placed the tablets to my ancestors, and behind lay a square pool, full of lotus flowers. Around the building ran a low wall along which were planted ten thousand high bamboos, so the houses stood as if in a grove. In front of it ran a stream from East to West debouching in a pool large enough to use boats upon. To the East of Joy and Longevity Hall was another building where precious works of art were stored, and behind this again, stood a two-storyed building where I often lived, so in this building the kitchen was placed. To the East was the house where my son stayed, and he often came to see me. Although I should not say it myself others have compared my garden to the famous retreat of the poet Wang Wei."

A persistent local tradition relates that the fame of Pan's garden reached the ears of the Emperor, who strongly disapproved that a subject should indulge in such magnificence, and that Pan found it advisable to make the whole place over to the public, who used it as the Cheng Huang Miao, "Temple-of-the-City-Walls and City-Moat." But the Record does not hint at such a thing. On the contrary it says that Pan En's dwelling house which stood on the site now occupied by the Roman Catholic Cathedral covered a li of ground, and that when Pan was eighty years old he built a Hall naming it the Hall of the Four Old Ones." Three of the Old Ones referred to being his brothers, who were each over seventy, and the fourth himself. The Record further says that in the twenty-fifth year of Ch'ien Lung A.D. 1761 the Shanghai people bought Pan En's garden from those who came after him, that they repaired it with public funds and called it the Western Garden.

Further that at the time it was bought it consisted of seventy-seven mou of ground (just under thirteen acres) and that the stones and hills were all as they had been in the time of Pan En. This Western Garden was placed in charge of the Bean Merchants’ Guild. Continuing it says that in the third year of Hsien F6ng A.D. 1854 the T'ai P'ing rebels pillaged the city, and that in the tenth year, 1861, foreign houses were, built for the Western soldiers to live in, that the rock-hills of the garden were pulled to pieces in order to fill up the ponds and make the ground for these houses to stand on. It closes the account of the Garden of Ease with the words "Since then at what places stood hills --- at what places lay pools --- cannot be known,"

POEM WRITTEN SOON AFTER THE GLORY OF THE GARDEN EASE HAD PASSED.
As in the glance of an eye, how often have the many glories altered? The light on the lake, the colour of the hills, these are as before.

The scent from the open-work-gauze, from the fine-silks, of the courtesans among the flowers, has departed.

The dreams are cold, gone are the days of songs, of music from the Shêng, played in boats under the moon.

The painted pavilion now lets in the sunset-hour rain, a filigree hair-pin --- lies neglected on the floor.

Broken is the bridge, faded are the willows; they brush the autumn mist.

The wanderer must not sigh in vain over the glories now ruined and abandoned.

The garden of the Golden Valley, famous in former years, is in even more grievous state.

Translation by FLORENCE AYSCOUGH.

(To be continued).

THE CHINESE IDEA OF A GARDEN
BY
FLORENCE AYSCOUGH

(Continued from page 22).

On Chung Yang, the Ninth Day of the Ninth Moon, the Western Garden presents an extraordinary appearance. It is thrown open to the public free of charge, and is thronged with men, women and children of every age and estate, who spend the whole day climbing the rock-hills, and wandering along the winding paths. The curious belief that good health throughout the ensuing year can be assured by ascending a height on this particular day had its origin in the following incident: ---

During the later Han dynasty there lived in Ju-nan a certain Huan Ching. He was given the following warning by Fei Chang-fang who said: "On the Ninth of the Ninth Moon a calamity will come upon Ju-nan. You must take a bag, and fill it with a certain plant; this
you must hang upon your arm, then go with your family to the top of a mountain and drink Chrysanthemum Wine. Thus danger can be escaped." Huan Ching did as he was bid, and when he returned home at night-fall found all his poultry and animals dead. "These you see," said Fei Ch'ang-fang "have served as your substitutes." Ever since, the custom has been universally observed, and in addition to climbing a hill, those who can afford it, eat crabs and while doing so place a vase of yellow chrysanthemums on the table in front of them.

In contradistinction to this Western Garden there is the Eastern or "Inner Garden"—made in the forty-eighth year of K'ang Hsi (A.D. 1710)—which is in charge of the Bankers' Guild. This has been newly repaired and is in perfect condition. It is indeed a gem.

Another garden which must have been lovely in its day lay to the South of the City, but before the time that the Record was compiled it had been turned into what was known in China as a Shu Yüan, that is, a Literary Establishment, where poor scholars of the Hsiu T's'ai, "Flowering Talent," or first degree, could come to local examinations, held twice in the month, when money prizes were given for the best essay. This enabled them support themselves while studying for the second degree. In this garden, now ruined, stood a stone boat, built on the same idea as the famous marble boat at the Summer Palace in Peking. The mention of this brings us to the Gardens of the Rulers.

Throughout the history of China her Emperors and Empresses have found one of their great temptations in the laying out of magnificent pleasure grounds and it is said that the late Empress-Dowager spent the sum intended for the creation of a Navy in the erection of the wonderful buildings at the present Summer Palace, while of course her predecessors spent fabulous sums on the wonderful Yuen-ming-yuen built in the French style. This was completely levelled by the Allied Troops in 1860 as an act of retribution. It was entirely Western in conception and was extremely interesting and beautiful.

Having discussed gardens in a general manner let us consider in certain detail the "furnishings" or adjuncts considered most desirable. As far as flowers are concerned certain definite places are prepared for certain definite flowers. The flowering trees are carefully placed; the peonies have their "T'ai" or Terraces; the lotus blooms their pools; while the chrysanthemums and epidendrums are as a rule grown in pots, and are most carefully cultivated.

As far as I can discover no books on gardens as such exist, and this is not difficult to understand as a garden is simply the fruit of a vivid imagination, but there are many treaties on the growing of flowers.

The Moutan Peony is divided into 39 classes or varieties by a writer of the Yuan dynasty, which, of course, flourished about the time of Edward I. Early in the 11th century, soon after the Conqueror came to Britain, Liu Ming wrote a work on the chrysanthemum, dividing these flowers into thirty-five varieties. The Lan Hua, that exquisitely scented little epidendrum has also received much attention, as have the various species of Pyrus.

Certain flowers are planted in T'ai or raised beds surrounded by walls, and this method seems to me one of the few features which might be imported into our gardens, without fear of presenting an anachronism.
Flower shows, or rather flower competitions, are popular and are now open to the public though doubtless they had their origin, as ours probably did, in private competitions among friends.

Most important are shows of dwarf plum trees, *Lan Hua*, chrysanthemums, Moutan (peonies) and melons, but azaleas are also occasionally shown.

*Lan Hua*, are divided into two main classes, spring blooming and autumn blooming, while sub-divisions are innumerable. The great interest lies in the strangely varied petals of this little flower. In competitions prizes are given for novelties. Each year at the shows held in the Shanghai City the pre-eminent plant is raised on a high stand in the centre of the hall. It may be one that has won this honour for several years, but if not the vanquished blossoms of the year before are placed beside it. Something new is always sought for, as when white-heart flowers triumphed over red; when in their turn yellow-heart took the place of white; and when "lotus-petals" and then "bean-petals," respectively, made their appearance.

In the *Lan Hua* season those who love the flowers send many *li* along the waterways to meet the boats of the *Lan Hua* gatherers coming from
the hills, and often buy a whole boat-load in the hope of discovering a novelty.

Chrysanthemums are given very charming and refined names. The yellow button, similar to the wild form, is called, "Heaven full of Stars"; the white quill, "Goose-feathers Tube"; the yellow quill, "Carrot-threads"; the large ragged mauve, "Drunk with Wine made from Peaches of the Immortals"; the big single white with a yellow centre, "Jade Saucer Gold Cup"; the varieties with very fine petals, "Pine Needles," or "Dragon's Beard"; red ground and white dots, "Maple leaves and Reed Flowers"; white streaked with red, "Snow on the Ground-Rouge," the idea suggested being either that of a young girl admiring the snow, or the journey of the lovely Wang Chao Chilli to the snowy wastes of Central Asia.

The peony is looked upon as the flower of the Yang principle—that of light strength and masculinity—and is the King of flower,. Its very name, "mou," meaning "male," and "tan," "vermillion," suggests the qualities attributed to the blossom, qualities which have caused it to be chosen as a symbol for good fortune. In fact, it is often referred to as the "Fu Kuei," "happiness and wealth," or the Lo Yang Hua, "flower of Lo Yang," because it is supposed to have originally come from there. Ou Yang-hsiu, a famous Sung poet, wrote the Lo Yang peony "Chi," or "Record."

As the petals do not vary the names chosen depend on colour, thus the deep red blossoms are known as "Ink," the white as "Jade," and the cream as "Bright" Moutan. Most highly prized are the "Ink" and a variety with a yellow mark at the petal edge, known as "Golden-border Peony." The ordinary pink variety has no special name.
Azalea shows are more modern and so are the enchanting shows of "Buddha's hand" citrons, and melons. These gourds and citrons are arranged in certain prescribed manners. For Guest Halls they are placed on plates, three below and one on top, but for the study single specimens are placed in valuable bowls on fine white sand or rice. The citrons are especially valued for their scent, the gourds for their wonderful variety of colours.

The "furnishings" of a garden apart from plants and trees, rocks and pools, provided by Nature but transplanted by man, are very varied. The most important are writings and paintings which embellish the different buildings and walls. One of the most interesting features is formed by the Hua Chiang, or ornamented walls. These are of two main sorts. Those with openings made in fantastic shapes through which a peep of something beyond is gained, and those with very carefully prepared surfaces on which guests can paint a picture or write a poem. These last are, of course, solid and in addition to the writings and paintings referred to, often have stone tablets with famous inscriptions let into them. Groups of clay figures representing historical scenes are also popular, but

cannot be relied on as far as accuracy is concerned; one often sees a hero in the dress of the Chou dynasty engaged in battle with an opponent who wears that of, let us say, the T'ang. The masons not being educated men follow their own fancy and as long as they make figures full of life the owner is satisfied. The Chinese have a saying "Ornament has no defined order (if it provides), distraction—that is sufficient." All this ornament is, of course, very expensive. Even in the old days the decoration over a gateway might easily cost three thousand ounces of silver, and to-day quite a small garden must cost several times ten thousand.

Dragon walls are very popular and give the effect that the garden is running up-hill and down-dale. The addition of the head and tail is probably rather modern, and is certainly greatly used at present. In the "Garden of Ease" there are two "single" dragons, and one very fine pair meeting over a doorway, which support the "flaming pearl" between them. In the "Inner Garden" is a very well modelled head, and this dragon seems about to swallow the chan or three-legged toad which lives in the moon. The absolute symbolism of this group is obscure. Various theories are put forward, but there seems nothing conclusive. In reference to this legend poets often speak of the moon as chan. Li T'ai-po does this in his poem:

LOOKING AT THE MOON AFTER RAIN.

The heavy clouds are broken and blowing,
And once more I can see the wide common stretching beyond the four sides of the city.

Open the door. Half of the Moon-toad is already up,
The glimmer of it is like smooth hoar-frost spreading over ten
thousand **li**.

The river is a flat, shining chain.  
The moon, rising, is a white eye to  
the hills;  
After it has risen, it is the bright  
heart of the sea.  

Because I love it—so—round as a  
fan,  
I hum songs until the dawn.

While we use the word "garden" for pleasure grounds of all sorts, the Chinese  
differentiate. A **Hua Yüan**, or flower garden, must have a wall and be an important place,  
but what we would call a cottage garden, they call **Hua P’u**, a place where "Flowers are  
Spread Out."

*(To be continued.)*
"Peonies have their T'ai, or raised beds."
"This dragon seems about to swallow the Chan, or three-legged Toad."

*Photos BY FLORENCE AYSCOUGH*
Probably the most famous and vivid description of a Chinese Garden is the one contained in that popular novel "Hung Lou Mêng" or "Dream of the Red Chamber." This tale, written in one hundred and twenty chapters, deals with the history of a wealthy family named Chia, "Pao Yu," or Precious Jade, a talented son of the house being the hero. A daughter becomes a *Fei*, or Imperial Consort, only second in rank to the Empress. In accordance with the Rites, it is necessary that, upon her appointment to this exalted position, she shall pay a visit to her parents, and it is in honour of this visit that the Garden is enlarged and newly decorated. The story which gives a marvellous insight into Chinese domestic life, was delightfully translated by the late H. Bencraft Joly of H.B.M. Consular Service, and published by Kelly and Walsh, Ltd. in 1892.

After recounting the reception announcing the promotion of the daughter, and describing the emotion of her parents the tale continues: "From this day the masons and workmen of every trade were collected to the full number; and the articles of gold, silver, copper, and pewter, as well as the earth, timber, tiles, and bricks, were brought over, and carried in, in incessant supplies . . ."

"The two residences of Ning and Jung were, in those days, it is true, divided by a small stream, which served as a boundary line, and there was no communication between them, but this narrow passage was also a private property, and not by any means a government waterway, so that they could easily be connected, and as in the garden of Concentrated Fragrance there was already a stream of running water, there was no further need now of going to the trouble of bringing another in. The rockeries and trees were not sufficient but a part of an old garden belonging to the Jung mansion existed, so that the bamboos, trees, and rockeries in that compound, as well as the arbours, railings and such other things could all be very well removed to the front; and by these means these two grounds, could, by being thrown into one, conduce to the saving of considerable capital and labour; it devolved entirely upon a certain old Hu, a man of note, styled Son of the Hills and Wilds, to deliberate upon one thing after another, and to initiate its construction . . ."

"Various members of the family were deputed to allot the sites, to set things in order (and look after), the heaping up of rockeries, the digging of ponds, the construction of two-storied buildings, the erection of Halls,----

*The translation of the antithetical phrases and of the poem which the Imperial consort admired were made by Florence Ayscough.*

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the plantation of bamboos, and the cultivation of flowers; everything connected with the scenery devolving, on the other hand, upon the Son of the Hills and Wilds to make provision for, and after leaving Court, he would devote such leisure moments as he had, to
going everywhere to look at the most important spots, and consult with the family, after
which he troubled his mind no more with anything."

Time went on and finally those in charge of the work were able to send the following
message to Chia Chêng, head of the family: "It only remains for you, Sir, to see the
various parts of the garden, and should there possibly be anything which is not proper,
steps will be taken at once to effect the alterations, so that the tablets and scrolls may con-
veniently be written."

Chia Chêng pondered for a while. "These tablets and scrolls present, however, a difficult
task. According to the rites, we should, in order to obviate any shortcoming, request the
Imperial Consort to design and compose them; but if the Honourable Lady does not gaze
upon the scenery with her own eyes, it will also be difficult for her to conceive its nature
and indite upon it! And were we to wait until the arrival of Her Highness, to request her to
honour the grounds with a visit, before she composes the inscriptions, such a wide
landscape, with so many pavilions and arbours, will, without one character in the way of a
motto, albeit abounding with flowers, willows, rockeries, and stream, nevertheless, in no
way be able to show off its points of beauty to advantage."

It was proposed that the various members of the family should visit the garden and that
the young Pao-yü should write temporary scrolls. This plan met with general approval and
they proceeded to the garden gate. The Head of the House said: "See that the garden
gate is closed for a time, we will see the outside and then go in."

"Chia Chêng first looked straight ahead of him towards the gate and espied on the same
side as the main entrance a suite of five apartments. Above, the cylindrical tiles resembled
the backs of mud-eels. The doors, railings, windows, and frames were all finely carved with
designs of the new fashion, and were not painted in vermillion nor in bright colours. The
whole extent of the walls was of polished bricks of uniform colour; below, the white marble
on the terrace and steps was engraved with Western foreign designs and when he came to
look to the right and left, everything was white as snow. At the foot of the white-washed
walls, tiger-skin pebbles were, without regard to pattern, promiscuously inserted in the
earth in such a way as of their own selves to form streaks. Nothing fell in with the custom
of gaudiness and display so much in vogue, so that he naturally felt full of delight, and
when he forthwith asked that the gate should be thrown open, all that met their eyes was a
long stretch of hills, which shut in the view in front of them."

"What a fine hill, what a pretty hill," exclaimed all the companions with one voice.

"Were it not for this one hill," Chia Chêng explained, Whatever scenery is contained in it
would clearly strike the eyes, as soon as one entered into the garden, and what pleasure
would that have been?"

"Quite so," rejoined all of them, But without large hills and ravines in one's breast (liberal
capacities) how could one attain such imagination. 'Then, casting a glance in front of them
they perceived white rugged rocks looking either like goblins, or resembling savage beasts,
lying cross-ways or in horizontal or upright positions, on the surface of which grew moss
and lichen with mottled hues, or parasitic plants which screened off the light; while slightly
visible wound, among the rocks, a narrow pathway like the intestines, of a sheep."

The progress of the family, through the garden is then described in great detail, and
various discussions in regard to suitable mottoes are recorded. His uncles admired those suggested by Pao-yü, but his father was severe in judgment, saying, "' You should laugh at him, that is all, but we can by and by choose some device.'

" Thus speaking he entered a cave, where he perceived beautiful trees with thick foliage, quaint flowers in lustrous bloom, while a line of limpid stream emanated out of a deep recess among the flowers and trees, and oozed down through the crevice of a rock. Progressing several steps further in, they gradually faced the Northern side where a stretch of level ground extended far and wide, on each side of which soared lofty buildings, intruding themselves into the skies, whose carved rafters and engraved balustrades nestled entirely among the depressions of the hills and the tops of the trees."

A pavilion stood on the bridge, and in this pavilion the whole party sat down for a while before continuing the inspection of the garden. Pao-yü chose several acceptable characters for various tablets and also composed the following pair of antithetical phrases, seven words to each: ---

" The willows on the winding
causeway, and three green
bamboo boat-poles exchange their
kingfisher colour ---

The flowers on the opposite banks,
tho' divided, are of one
scent."

Upon hearing these lines Chia Chêng, his father, gave a faint smile, as he nodded his head, whilst the whole party were again effusive in their praise. " They then crossed the pond, contemplating with close attention each elevation, each stone, each flower, each tree. Suddenly they caught sight in front of them a line of white wall with numbers of beautiful cottages : speedily the whole company penetrated inside, perceiving as soon as they had entered the gate, a zigzag arcade, on the furthest extremity of which stood a diminutive cottage. Everything in the interior in the shape of beds, teapoys, chairs, and tables was made to harmonize with the space available. Beyond a small door they found a backcourt with lofty pear trees in blossom, and banana trees. At the foot of the wall became visible an aperture where there was a spring for which

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a channel had been opened. Winding round the steps, it skirted the buildings until it reached the front court, where it coiled and curved flowing out under the bamboos.

"' This spot' observed Chia Chêng, full of smiles, 'is indeed pleasant and could one, on a moonlight night, sit under the window and study, one would not spend a whole lifetime in vain !' "

Again the party sat down and discussed the suitability of various inscriptions, and again Pao-yü was appealed to.

" ' They all seem to me unsuitable ' he answered, ' this is the first spot Her Highness will honour on her way, and there should be inscribed, so that it should be appropriate, something commending her Sacred Majesty, all the characters suggested are too stiff,
would not the four characters Yu Fêng Lai I—The Crested Love-pheasant comes, it is fitting and correct—be better? 'With clamorous unanimity the whole party shouted Excellent'!! Even Chia Chêng nodded his head." Another pair of antithetical phrases was then demanded of Pao-yü and he recited:

"Tea from the rare tripod-cauldron is consumed, but the dark smoke still rises; Chess by the quiet window is ended, but the fingers are still cold (from holding the stone pieces.)"

The various furnishings required were then discussed and Chia Lien produced a paper pocket-book containing a list, which he kept inside the top of his boot. He read out "Of the hundred and twenty curtains of stiff spotted silk embroidered with dragons in relief, and of the curtains large and small, eighty were got yesterday, so forty are still to come. Besides these there are the two hundred red woollen portieres; two hundred of Hsiang Fei bamboo; 200 door-screens of rattan with gold, streaks, and of red lacquered bamboo; 200 of black lacquered rattan..."

"As he spoke, they proceeded outwards, but suddenly they perceived a hill extending obliquely in such a way as to intercept the passage; and as they wound round the curve of the hill faintly came to view a line of yellow mud walls the whole length of which was covered with paddy stalks for the sake of protection, and there were several hundreds of apricot trees in bloom, which presented the appearance of being on fire, spurted from the mouth or russet clouds, rising in the air. Inside this enclosure stood several thatched cottages. Outside grew, on the other hand, mulberry trees, elms, mallows, and silk-worm oaks, whose tender shoots and new twigs, of every hue, were allowed to bend and to intertwine in such a way as to form two rows of a green fence. Beyond this fence and below the white mound, was a well, by the side of which stood a well-sweep, windlass and such like articles; the ground being divided into parcels, and apportioned into fields, which with the fine vegetables and cabbages in flower, presented, at the first glance the effect of being illimitable.

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"'This is' said Chia Chêng chuckling, 'the place really imbued with a certain amount of the right principle; and laid out tho' it has been by human labour, yet when it strikes my eyes, it so moves my heart, that it cannot help rousing in me the wish to return to my native place and become a farmer.'"

Of course the party discussed "mottoes" but decided that the poets of times gone by had already written everything possible on such a scene, so decided to call it quite simply "The apricot blossom village." Chia Cheng added: "'This reminds me that although the place is perfect in every respect, there's still one thing wanting in the shape of a wine-board, you had better have one made to-morrow on the very same pattern as those used outside in villages, it needn't be anything gaudy, but hung above the top of a tree by means of bamboos. There is no necessity,' he went on to explain, 'to keep any other birds in here, but only to rear a few geese, ducks, fowl, and such like: they will be in perfect keeping with the place.'"

This having been decided the party went on and "winding past a mound, they penetrated among flowers, and wending their steps by the willows, they touched the rocks and lingered by the stream. Passing under a trellis with yellow roses, they went into an arbour with white roses, they crossed by the pavilion with paeonies, and walked through the garden where the white paeony grew, and entering the court with cinnamon roses, they
reached the island of bananas. As they meandered and zigzaged, suddenly they heard the sound of water, as it came out of a stone cave, from the top of which climbing plants drooped downwards, while at its bottom floated the fallen flowers.

"Chia Chêng said 'There are to be four boats in all from which to pick the lotus, and one for sitting in, but they have not as yet been completed.' Therefore the party walked, holding on to creepers, and supporting themselves by the trees, when they saw a still larger quantity of fallen leaves on the surface of the water and the stream itself, still more limpid, gently and idly meandering on its course. By the bank of the pond were two rows of weeping willows, which intermingling with peach and apricot trees, screened the heavens from view, and kept off the rays of the sun from this spot, which was in real truth devoid of even a grain of dust."

The description continues at great length, and then the story proceeds to the day when her Imperial Majesty arrived.

"Having forthwith carried her inside the gate, the eunuchs dispersed and only the maids-of-honour and ladies-in-waiting ushered Yüan Ch'un out of the chair, when what mainly attracted her eye in the park was the brilliant lustre of the flowered lamps of every colour, all of which were made of gauze or damask, and were beautiful in texture, while on the upper side was a flat lantern with the inscription in four characters: 'Regarded (by His Majesty's) benevolence and permeated by his benefits.'
Ornamented Wall, Hu Garden, Nanking.
"Yuan Ch'un entered the apartment and effected the necessary changes in her toilette; after which, she again egressed, and, mounting her chair, made her entry into the garden,
when she perceived the smoke of incense whirling and twirling, and the reflection of the
flowers confusing the eyes. Far and wide, the rays of lights, shed by the lanterns,
intermingled their brilliancy, while, from time to time, fine strains of music sounded with
clamorous din. But it would be impossible to express adequately the perfect harmony in the
aspect of this scene, and the grandeur of affluence and splendour.

" The Imperial consort of the Chia family, we must now observe, upon catching sight, from
the interior of her chair, of the picture presented within the confines of this garden, shook
her head and heaved a sigh. ' What lavish extravagance! What excessive waste! she
soliloquised.

" But of a sudden was again seen a eunuch who, on his knees, invited her to get into a
boat; and the Chia consort descended from the chair and stepped into the craft, when the
expanse of a limpid stream met, her gaze, whose grandeur resembled that of the dragon in
its listless course. The stone bannisters, on each side, were one mass of air-tight lanterns,
of every colour, made of crystal or glass, which threw out a light like the lustre of silver or
brightness of snow.

" The willow, almond and the whole lot of trees, on the upper side, were, it is true, without
blossom and leaves; but pongee and damask silks, paper and lustrine had been employed,
together with rice-paper, to make flowers which had been affixed on the branches. Upon
each tree were suspended thousands of lanterns; and what is more, the lotus and aquatic
plants, the ducks and water fowl in the pond had all, in like manner, been devised out of
conches and clams, plumes and feathers. The various lanterns, above and below, vied in
refulgence. In real truth, it was a crystal region, a world of pearls and precious stones. On
board the boat were also every kind of lantern representing such designs as are used on
flower-pots, pearl-laden portieres, embroidered curtains, oars of cinnamon wood, and
paddles of magnolia, which need not of course be minutely described."

Yüan Ch'un noticed various inscriptions, but was anxious to see her parents, and, when she
came before them, burst into tears. In fact every one wept.

" Having in days gone by, ' she urged, ' been sent to that place where no human being can
be seen, I have to-day after extreme difficulty returned home; and now that you ladies
and I have been reunited, instead of chatting or laughing we contrariwise give way to
incessant tears! But shortly, I shall be gone, and who knows when we shall be able again
to even see each other! ' "

" ' The families of farmers, ' she further went on to say to her father, ' feed on salted
cabbage, and clothe in cotton material; but they readily enjoy the happiness of the
relationships established by heaven! We, however,

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relatives though we now be of one bone and flesh, are, with all our affluence and honours,
living apart from each other, and deriving no happiness whatsoever! ' "

Finally, controlling their emotion the family proceeded to inspect the grounds, which the
Imperial Consort named Garden of the Broad Vista. ' Various poems written by Pao-yü and
others were submitted to the lady who, while she admired them all, considered the
following, being complimentary to the Emperor, whose virtue had brought about prosperity
and peace, as the most beautiful: ---
"The Apricot Blossom Flag'
beckons me to drink,

I look far-off and see hills with
hamlets on their sides---

On the pool covered with the red-
fruited calthrote and green water-
plants, geese are floating.

The mulberry trees and elms
furnish beams where the swallows
build. For fifty mou the land
stretches before me—leek-green,
the colour of spring.

For ten li the scent from the
ripening rice-fields impregnates
the air. It is a prosperous Age!
there is no hunger no want---

Why then be thus urgent with the
weaving of cloth, and the
ploughing of fields?"

The reading of poems was followed by a theatrical performance, and presentation of gifts; then. ---

"Eunuchs respectfully announced: 'It is already a quarter to three, and may it please your
Majesty to turn back your Imperial Chariot;}' whereupon, much against her will, the Chia
Consort's eyes brimmed over, and she once more gave vent to tears. Forcing herself,
however, again to put on a smile, she clasped old lady Chia's and Madame Wang's hands, and
could not bring herself to let them go; while she repeatedly impressed upon their
minds that there was no need to give way to any solicitude, and that they should take good
care of their healths; that the grace of the present Emperor was so vast, that once a
month he would grant permission for them to enter the Palace and pay her a visit. It is
easy enough for us to see each other,' (she said) 'and why should we indulge in any
excess of grief? But when His Majesty in his Heavenly Generosity allows me another time
to return home, you shouldn't go in for such pomp and extravagance.'

"Dowager lady Chia and the other inmates had already cried to such an extent that sobs
choked their throats and they could with difficulty give utterance to speech. But though the
Chia Consort could not reconcile herself to the separation, the usages in vogue in the
Imperial Household could not be disregarded or infringed, so that she had no alternative
but to stifle the anguish of her heart, to mount her chariot, and take her departure."

(To be continued.)
It was the writer's intention to conclude the series of articles on "Chinese Gardens," with the third instalment, however, having seen the beautifully illustrated book on, An Old Chinese Garden, by Kate Kerby, published by the Chung Hua Book Co., she feels that readers might like to know the more recent history of the garden described in the foregoing articles.

The history is given in a record written by the famous writer Shên Te-ch'ien, in the Twelfth Year of the Ch'ien. Lung period, A.D. 1747, which record, cut on stone, is placed in the garden itself. The pictures are her own. They were taken on a glorious Spring day, when the garden seemed one of the most exquisite spots imaginable. Leaving the Soochow Station she had followed the canal of the City moat; had ferried across to the Gate of the Extremity; had walked down the busy, narrow street where every industry is practised; and had turned sharply into a square courtyard which seemed completely filled by a giant wistaria. Its age no man could tell. The huge moss-grown trunk, coiling in Dragon Waves, embroidered by the sun, might well have struck its roots a millennium ago. This courtyard, however, is no longer a part of the Fu Yuan, "Returned Garden," as it is now called, the actual entrance being reached at the end of a narrow passage, down which a small figure was proceeding.

The enclosure itself is thus described by Shên Te-ch'ien in a record, of which the following is a paraphrase: ---

"In Soochow between the Ch'i Men and the Liu Men there is a famous garden. It is named "Fu," "Returned," because Chiang, the Ssu-ma, repaired and restored the site of an earlier pleasance. This was called Cho Chêng Yüan.* Unsuccessful in Government Garden,' and had been founded in the Ming time by Wang, a Censor who had retired from office. It then fell into the hands of a certain Chêng, and later became, successively, the property of two Military Officials, Wang and Yen.

"In the garden were lofty two-storeyed pavilions with ornamented beams, high hills, great pools, many rare flowers, and fine trees. There were songs and posturing dances. It was the first in Soochow. For a hundred years it had been a deserted waste; in the grass which had grown thick and long, foxes and rabbits had made their holes. When

* The Transliteration of Chinese characters in this article is by the Wade System, the Tseh Tsen Yuen referred to in "An Old Chinese Garden" is therefore spelt Cho Chêng Yüen.
In the grass which had grown thick and long, foxes and rabbits had made their holes.
Chiang the Ssu Ma acquired the place, he did not desire songs, dances, and dissipation, but only that the fame of the garden should not be allowed to lapse, so he discussed with his friends the steps to be taken. They inspected the ground. Where there was high land they added soil making a hill; where the ground was low they dug it out and created a pool. There was a Hall where guests assembled; looking far-off one saw summer houses and high buildings; for study there were quiet enclosures; and for sleep, peaceful rooms. Walking round and back, up the hills and down, one passed covered passages, pavilions, summer-houses, moon terraces, high places, water, and little hamlets. To think over and accomplish all this took many years. In Wu Wu, A.D. 1738, and Kên Shen, A.D. 1740, I went to see the garden—in describing it I would say that although it contained so much it was in no way over decorated, but was, on the contrary, very restrained: that although the furnishings were not of the most expensive, they were in no sense ordinary, but were very fine.

"The first time I visited the garden I did not see it completely as I was obliged to leave for Peking, therefore I could only have an idea of its beauties, but in the Spring of Ting Mao, A.D. 1747, I begged leave of absence, came to the South, and again strolled in the garden.

"It seemed as tho' the hills were higher; it seemed as tho' the pools were deeper; and as tho' the peaks were more numerous. The clouds of Heaven were reflected from the
surface of the water. The houses had not really altered, but it seemed as if the buildings were higher. Indeed it was even more beautiful than before. The place was the old place, but the crooked paths, the curves of the pools all seemed increased and added to. It was as if my eyes saw it for the first time.

"High boughs of trees, pressing against each other, prevented the sun's rays from penetrating; low boughs wrote characters on the mirrored surface of the water. A marvellous stone was well placed. In front of the Great Hall stood rows of rare flowers. I did not know their names.

"The lord of the garden prepared wine, and bade his guests think; they chanted songs; they chatted, and rejoiced. Their pleasure was very refined and not in the least coarse. Birds flew, fish swam, and were most interesting; it was like the days of old when neither fish nor birds feared man. Although one had not left the city mart, it was as if one had reached the hills and forests. My eyes and heart were refreshed even more than on the first visit.

"I counted on my fingers, it was four or five years since the garden had been restored and the former ancient beauties had returned. Therefore we named the garden 'Fu'—'Returned'!"

Shên Tê-ch'ien, a delightful old gentleman who attained the ripe age of ninety-seven, and who for years enjoyed the friendship of Ch'ien Lung, then refers by name to many famous gardens and concludes his record as follows:

"Chiang the Ssu-ma did not wish to inscribe his name as having restored the garden, feeling that if he did so, possibly the memory of those who had created it, might be wiped out. Indeed the depth of his heart could not be compared with that of an ordinary person. Moreover, in restoring the garden he did not only think of bringing back the physical beauties. His great-great-grandfather had been a high military official, of literary ability. His way of living and his purity had brought forth a high degree of virtue and he incessantly cultivated his good qualities. During his life time, the light of his fame was great and his name was known to high and low. In naming the garden 'Returned' Chiang thought of bringing back the qualities of his forbear. At the same time he took for himself the hao or fancy name, T'ung Hsien 'Eulogize Him Who Went Before.'"

There are many other beautiful gardens in Soochow, one of the most famous being the Ssu Tzu Lin, Lion Forest—which is, happily, being restored in a magnificent manner. The rocks are very remarkable and were originally placed in position by the famous artist and recluse Ni Tsan who lived A.D. 1301-1374. He also planned the placing of rocks in the "Returned" garden, when it was originally founded as the Cho Chêng Yüan. Shy, and nervous, a recluse by nature, he was one of China's great artists, and his studies of bare trees are incomparable.

From the foregoing passages it will be seen what an important part pleasure grounds play in the lives of the Chinese people. A school-girl on the up-hill road to English Composition is quoted by Miss Attaway in her paper on "Soochow Gardens," as follows: "A Chinese Garden is what? There have been many definitions can be said out. In one word it is the large assembly of many fine sceneries, such as lakes, mountains, bridges, birds sing,
golden fishes, wild animals, ancient ruins, and so forth, with spectacular arbours built very adequately "—and so it is!

The object of its planning is to keep ever in man's heart a realization of his oneness with the Yin and Yang, and the great T'ai Ch'i, the Spirit of the Creator through which all things have their being.

The RETREAT OF HSIEH KUNG BY Li T'ai-po*

The sun is setting—has set—on the Spring-green Mountain. Hsieh Kung's retreat is solitary and still. No sound of man in the bamboo grove. The white moon shines in the centre of the unused garden pool. All round the ruined Summer-house is decaying grass, Grey mosses choke the abandoned well. There is only the free, clear wind. Again—again—passing over the stones of the spring.

*Translation from "Fir-Flower Tablets" by Florence Ayscough and Amy Lowell.
Although one had not left the City mart, it was as though one had reached the hills and forests.
A narrow passage down which a small figure preceded us

*Photographs by Florence Ayscough*