

TEA-GARDENS AND TEMPLE-GARDENS IN JAPAN.

By DOUGLAS SLADEN, Author of "The Japs at Home."



PINE TREE AT KINKAKUJI GARDEN.

a dwarf growing in a blue and white china pot, carried by Iyeyasu in his *kago* (palanquin) in all his campaigns. When the hero died and became a god, it was planted outside the stable where the white pony was kept always ready for him in case he should return to the earth, and, being too sacred to be touched by the hands of the pruner, reasserted its natural growth.

It is not always possible to distinguish between tea-gardens and temple-gardens in Japan; there are, it is true, temple-gardens which are not regular refreshment places for tourists, and there are many tea-gardens constructed without reference to temples. But as a rule, before you have been in a temple-garden two minutes, a gay little mousmee with a scarlet sash round her waist comes and bows low before you, rubbing her knees and hissing as if

JAPAN is rapidly being recognised as the land *par excellence* of gardening. The Japanese seem to be able to talk to their plants as the people in Mr. Kipling's jungle stories talk to their animals. At all events the trees and flowers tell their secrets, and the Japanese listen to what they say, and humour them with marvellous results. At present, when the English hear of Japanese gardening, they think at once of dwarf trees; but I shall leave the consideration of them to another article, which deals with the miniature Japanese garden which I have in my house, merely mentioning one instance to show what constant care it requires to keep the dwarf trees from resuming their ordinary dimensions.

There is in the Temple of Iyeyasu at Nikko, the most beautiful of all the temples of Japan, a tall fir-tree which was once



TEA-HOUSE GARDEN, TOKYO.

she were grooming a horse. These are signs of respect, and you are expected to take tiny cups of the clear pale Japanese tea off her tray. And not pay her—oh dear, no—but give her a goodwill offering of three halfpence. You have to go through this performance before you are allowed to see anything in peace, and you will find a bench in the position which commands the best view. The Japanese squats on the top of the bench, and the European sits on its edge with his legs hanging down.

One feature is universal, whether your tea-garden has anything to do with a temple or not—either the garden itself or the view, often both, will be of a nature to satisfy the very soul of beauty.

There are certain features common to most Japanese temple-gardens—to wit, water, stone pagodas, votive lanterns (*ishi-doro*), lighthouses, *torii*, and endless terraces and stairways, fir-trees (*matsuzi*) trained into all manner of fantastic shapes, maples trained into all manner of fantastic colours, wistaria trailing four feet long bunches of pale lilac blossom over arbours built at the edge of the water, groves of blossoming trees, and a ridiculous stone or plaster travesty of Fujiyama. That there are brilliantly blossoming flowers goes without saying. The temple-gardens are the pleasure-grounds of the Japanese; their fairs are held in them, people use them as parks. The patronage of a temple depends a good deal on the Crystal Palace sort of attractions it has to offer. At Asakusa, the most popular temple-garden in Tokyo, there is the loftiest artificial Fujiyama, with a pathway going right up to the top, and at the season of the year, which is in October, it has living pictures made out of growing chrysanthemums (*kiku*) representing life in ancient Japan. At Shiba and Ueno, where they have the golden tombs and splendid temples of the deified Tokugawa Shoguns, they rely on the show of cherry blossom (*sakura*) in April and the lotus lakes (*renje*), in which no water can be seen when the flower is at the height of its glorious blossoming, in July. At the Temple of the Tortoise Well they have as their specialty a little lake surrounded by the most glorious trailing wistarias in the world, called, like the monarch of mountains, Fuji, and in the garden of the sleeping dragon they have old plum-trees (*ume*), as covered with lichen as a neglected cider-orchard. When an inhabitant of Tokyo writes a poem of which he is particularly proud, he goes and pins it to one of these plum-trees. It is characteristic of the Japanese that in poetry they attach more importance to the beauty of the handwriting in which the verse is transcribed than to the beauty of its composition. Japanese poems often have the merit of consisting of only a single verse. A Japanese poet, who was also the messenger from my printer at Tokyo, once brought me a present of a poem on the dawn which he had written in conjunction with his partner, a strolling photographer. Literally translated, it was—

“Dust of light at the back of ocean!”

That was the entire poem.

The other great show-flowers of Japan are the common camellia (*tsubaki*), the azalea (*tsutsuji*), the iris (*ayame*), the beautiful calamus (*shobu*), the tree peony (*botan*), the *hibiscus mutabilis* (*fuyo*), peach blossom (*momo*), the *eulalia Japonica* (*susuki*), the *camellia sasanqua* (*sasankwa*); and the maple (*momiji*) and tea (*cha*) are added to their number for the purpose of marking months. Roughly speaking, the plum blossom marks January; the peach blossom February; the cherry blossom, April; the wistaria and azalea and tree-peony, May; the iris and calamus, June; the lotus, July; the *fuyo*, August; the *susuki*, September; the chrysanthemum and maple, October; the *sasankwa*, November; and the tea, December. March is not treated very precisely in the Japanese scheme of month flowers. It is covered by both the peach blossom and the common camellia. The common camellia (*tsubaki*), which strews the ground with its single scarlet blossom, is a plant or rather a tree, for it grows as much as forty feet high, of ill-omen. Its fallen blossoms signify decapitated heads. The best place in Tokyo to see the azalea is Mukojima, on the bank of the river Sumida, the Thames

of Tokyo, which is also famous for its camellia, plum, and cherry blossom. But foreigners appreciate most the acres and acres of wild scarlet azalea which grow in almost impenetrable thickets near the famous temples of Nikko, and the thousand-year old treasury of the Mikados at Nara. The chief iris and calamus beds are at Horikiri, and the maple groves at Shinagawa, the port of Tokyo. And finally the tea, the choicest in the world, is to be found in little low shrubs protected with high matting screens, or even sheds, at Uji, near Kyoto. This tea costs a guinea a pound in Japan.

The most characteristic temple-gardens are to be found at Kyoto, the ancient capital of the Mikado, and Nikko, the sacred city of the Shoguns, the military dictators whose rule came to an end only thirty years ago.

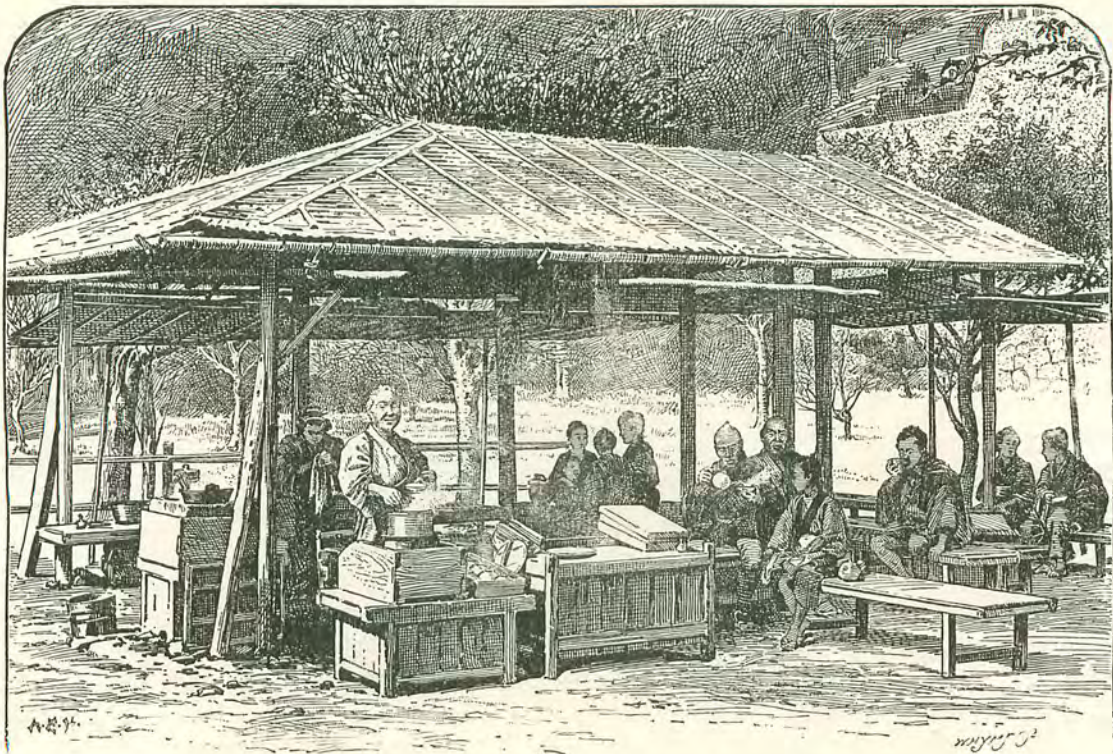
There are two temples at Kyoto, on opposite sides of the city, called Kinkakuji and Ginkakuji, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion and the Temple of the Silver Pavilion. The pavilions, which are very ancient, and built of wood, lacquered inside with gold and silver respectively, are the least important features of the gardens to the European eye; but both have exquisite lakes, and one of them has a fir-tree trained into the shape of a junk in full sail.

But the Silver Pavilion is one of the most sacred spots in Japan; for here the great Ashikaga Shogun, Yoshimasa, after all his battles, retired with his favourites, the pleasure-loving Buddhist abbots, Shuko and Shinno, and reduced the solemn tea-drinking ceremony, the *Cha-no-yu*, to a science. Yoshimasa's rules, elaborated in this pavilion four hundred years ago, are observed to this day; and Shinno seems to have invented tea-spoons. It was they who decreed the tea-room nine feet square, or, as the Japanese would say, four and a half mats, for they measure a room by its mats.

The temple-gardens at Kyoto are regular parks, which go in for larger landscape effects, just as the temple-gardens of Shiba, Ueno, and Nara, are apt to be noble courtyards, full of enormous stone votive lanterns, which look like little lighthouses in garden hats.

At Nikko there are two temples which have very ornate little gardens—that of Mangwanji, which has an exquisite lake of some size, surrounded by the choicest dwarf maples; and that of Dai Nichi Do, which has the elaborate decorations in stone-work which are reproduced in bronze an inch or two high for the miniature gardens the Japanese have in their houses. Its dear little lake has dear little islands, connected with dear little stone bridges like you see on willow-pattern plates, and every vantage point is occupied by a five-storeyed pagoda or a votive lantern, or one of the *torii*—the mysterious double-cruciform arches of Japan, whose origin and use is alike unknown, and whose shape is almost exactly that of the little wooden rests which the Mashonas use as pillows.

Certain temples are famous for the cultivation of certain flowers. All the Japanese world, for instance, goes to see the iris blossom at Horikiri and the wistaria at Kameido. Some of this Japanese world is extremely funny, and some quite pathetic; it is rather funny, for instance, to see prosperous tradesmen and their families arrive from a distance with sufficient articles for a night or two done up in what look like stay-boxes wrapped in oiled paper, tied up with paper string; and quite pathetic to find paupers, who have not enough to eat or any employment in prospect, walking a couple of hundred miles to see some famous temple-gardens in blossom. The temple-gardens have formidable rivals in some of the tea-house gardens, for the Japanese gentleman who is going out for an afternoon or an evening's enjoyment, is extremely particular about his surroundings. Tea-house gardens may always be known by their tall wooden lanterns with paper transparencies. They frequently have the same furniture of votive lanterns, pagodas, and so on, as temple-gardens. The line between the sacred and profane is rather uncertain in Japan; so uncertain, that the priests will often take in summer boarders at a temple, or let the temple holubolus as lodgings, as in the instance of the exquisite little temple of Dai Nichi Do at Nikko. At Kobe, in the



WAYSIDE TEA-HOUSE.

temple of Maya, the mother of Buddha, better known as the Temple of the Moon, the priest not only sold beer, but hung Lord Bass's red triangle up among the wooden tablets which recorded the benefactors of the temple. Bass's beer may always be bought at a really popular temple.

The most beautiful tea-house garden I remember was that of Yaami's Hotel, at Kyoto, where the Duke of Connaught spent most of his time in Japan. That had a really exquisite garden, with a clear miniature river a foot or two wide and an inch or two deep, running swiftly between smooth green pastures; a waterfall quite six feet high, the tiniest bridges, winding stairways of ancient mossy stone, and thickets of glorious azaleas in full blossom. These azaleas, over which jet-black butterflies four inches long hovered, were the objects of the most

solicitous care. Coolies, armed with huge umbrellas, watched them day and night, and if it rained, put up the umbrellas. The best azalea garden of all was a tiny courtyard, in which all the space not taken up by the flowers was covered up in chips of glittering white quartz. Scattered about the garden were a family of storks about the height of a man, some standing, some strutting, some stooping to feed, all of exquisite workmanship. The proprietor would not sell them to the Duke of Connaught, who admired them extremely.

I must mention two pretty adjuncts to the gardens of Japan—the bamboo what-nots in which cut flowers are carried about the streets for sale, and the gigantic scales used for carrying growing plants, both of them slung, like everything else in Japan, from a shoulder bamboo, reminding one of the milkman of one's childhood.

VARIETIES.

THE WAYS OF A FAMOUS AUTHOR.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, the famous American author, was in the habit of cutting and whittling while composing a book. While writing the *Scarlet Letter* one day he took a garment from Mrs. Hawthorne's sewing-basket and snipped it to pieces, wholly unconscious of the mischief he was doing.

He cut up an entire table in this manner, and whittled off the arms of a rocking-chair, which is said to be now carefully preserved among the archives of the family.

WHY HE STOLE THE CHICK.—A common crime among the Chinese, as among Orientals generally, is petty theft. "Except in cases of habitual thieving," says a traveller in the Far East, "it is not treated very seriously, and it occasionally gives rise to an amusing defence, as when a Chinaman charged with stealing a chicken, gravely informed me that he had taken it up because he saw it had its feet in a puddle, and he felt sorry for the poor little creature."

A RULING THOUGHT IN JAPAN.

The ruling thought that runs from the bottom to the top of society in Japan is that the inferior owes his superior unquestioning loyalty and reverence, while the superior owes his inferior benevolence or love.

The duties of the inferior, however, claim by far the most attention. The inferior, while he has rights, seldom ventures to claim them. He considers even his rights to be privileges and so speaks of them.

THE OYSTER OPENS ITS SHELL.—It is said that "if you play on an accordion near an oyster, the oyster will open its shell." Whether this is because it wants to listen, or is looking for a chance to escape, is not known.

HE NEVER TOOK TIPS.—A railway passenger having said to a porter, who asked for a tip, "I thought you were not allowed to take fees," got for an answer, "We do not take them, sir, we only receive them."