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## JAPANESE HOME-GARDENING.

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### MY JAPANESE-CHINESE GARDEN.

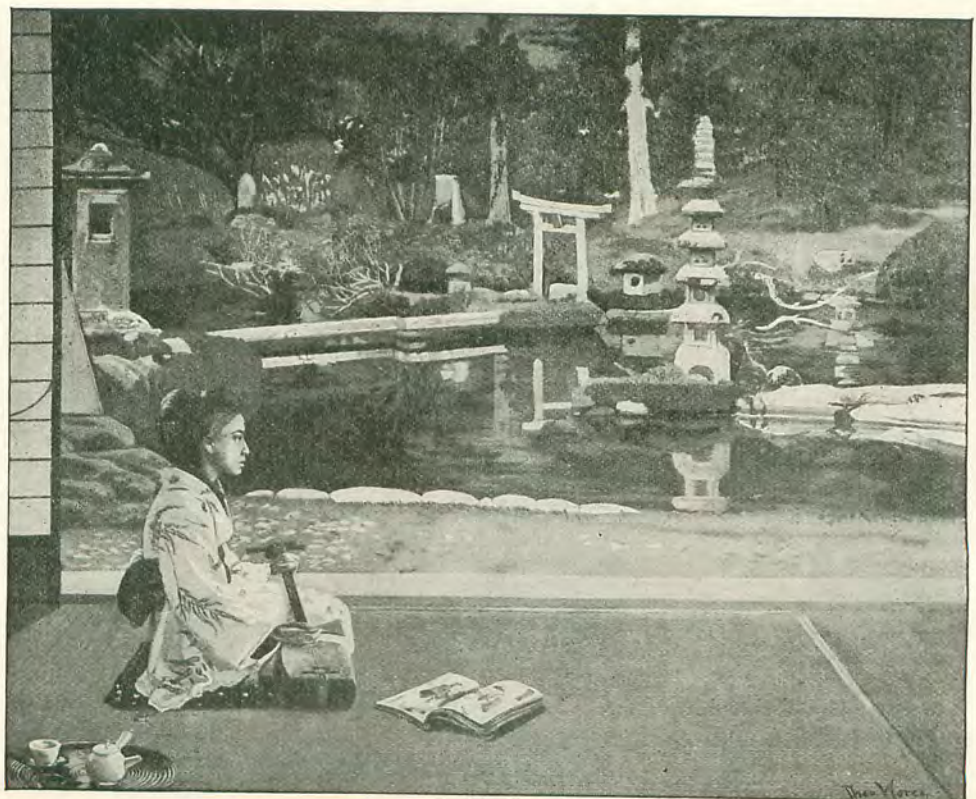
THE Japanese have given the phrase "home-gardening" a new meaning for us, with their dwarf blossoming fruit trees, their lilies growing in water, and their toy Chinese gardens. I may mention at once that the Japanese always call the fascinating little gardens—like the design on a willow pattern plate which we associate with exhibitions of the Japan Society—Chinese gardens.

I made the acquaintance of toy "Chinese" gardens when, in December, 1889, I went over from Yokohama to Tokyo to see about the production of *Lester the Loyalist*, which was printed and published at the Hakubunsha, at that time the leading publishing office of Japan. The head of the firm always received me in his private apartments, and business was a long affair, because we never did any till tea and pip-less oranges and sweetmeats had been brought in by a little mousmee, and there was much explaining of the various features of a Japanese house. I am not here going into all the amusing details of publishing a book in Japan, nor am I about to describe at length the one special feature of my publisher's house which fascinated me most—his toy Chinese garden; a wonderful little affair about two feet long by eighteen inches broad, which contained dwarf trees, temples, dwelling-houses, pagodas, bridges, lighthouses, votive lanterns, *torii*, bell-towers, dancing-stages, tea-houses, and I can't remember what more, with a river, and a lake and little sanded paths.

I made up my mind from that instant to have one of these gardens. Where could I buy all the little bronze ornaments for them? I asked of my publisher. He could not

say—his had been in his family for generations. They were the kind of things you inherited. He really did not know where you could buy them unless it might be at the great fair in the Ginza, which would be held on the following week on the last night of the old year, which he said I certainly ought to see in any case, as it was one of the sights of Japan. The Japanese, he explained, settle all debts among themselves on the first day of the year, which they keep on our New Year's Day. Anyone who fails to do this has no more credit, so they make tremendous efforts and sacrifices to avoid being posted. The great fair in the Ginza is held to enable those who are still short of the money they owe to sell enough to supply it. Small householders will bring almost everything in their possession to see what chance thing may tempt purchasers.

But all that belongs to another story. I am not going



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THE GARDEN OF DAI-NICHI-DO.

to relate here how I spent a hundred dollars among these poor people on that memorable night, but merely to mention that it was there that I bought the little bronze ornaments



FIG. 1.

for fitting out a toy Chinese garden, which have been the envy of the Japan Society itself. I bought them from an old man in a brown leather cloak, who was the very embodiment of respectable poverty. I forget what I gave for them, but more than I should have felt inclined to give if it had not been for the head of the Hakubunsha's telling me that I should only be able to buy them by chance, and that no one would part with an old set unless he was driven by great want. All the pieces I bought from him figure in the pictures, and I have added a few pieces to them, including the most important piece in the whole collection—the beautiful little Japanese farm-house with a steep-pitched thatched roof, and one of the distorted Japanese fir-trees growing up it. This is a valuable old piece of fine bronze delicately wrought, very different from the little moulded pieces of zinc-like bronze which constituted the old man's garden furniture. The rock on which this stands is really a temple washing-pool cut out of a single block, but I use it for



FIG. 2.

a rock from its resemblance to the celebrated rock at Nikko carved with the device of Kobo Daishi, the canonised father of Japanese learning, which faces the Avenue of the Hundred Buddhas.

The explanation of the various toy bronzes used in the garden is as follows: Fig. 1 is the farm-house mentioned above; Fig. 2 is a bell-tower such as is usual in Buddhist temples; Fig. 3, closely resembling it, is the stage used for the *kagura* dance; Fig. 4 is



FIG. 3.

a tea-house built on piles as you have them built out on the side of a mountain or into a river; Fig. 5 is a little octagonal belvedere; Fig. 6 is a pier and pier-house; Fig. 7 is a *torii*, the mystic Japanese arch referred to above; Fig. 8 is an *ishi-doro*, one of the huge votive lanterns made of bronze or stone which it was customary to present in pairs to a temple when a great man was buried there. This I had to model myself from a drawing by Hokusai. I never could buy one small enough for a toy-garden. Fig. 9 is a five-storeyed pagoda. Most Japanese pagodas are five-storeyed. Fig. 10 is one of the rainbow-arc bridges so typical of Japan; Fig. 11 is a garden paling with a *torii*-pattern gate in it, and Fig. 12 is the monarch of mountains—Fujiyama, which I also modelled myself after a picture by Hokusai, because in all my ramblings among the old curio shops in Tokyo and Kyoto I was never able to come across a second-hand Fujiyama. Miss Margaret Thomas, the illustrator of this article, who took a silver medal at the Royal Academy in sculpture, very



FIG. 5.



FIG. 4.

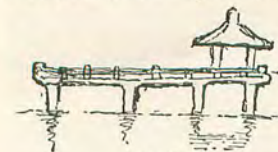


FIG. 6.

good-naturedly made a cast from this model for my garden. I did my modelling in ordinary modelling wax, and anyone with a taste for modelling will find it quite easy to model the furniture of the exact size required for a Japanese toy-garden if she goes to the South Kensington Museum and makes drawings from Hokusai's illustrations of Japanese life.



FIG. 7.

Now that I have labelled the pieces I bought from him I must explain certain features which occur in most of these gardens, and the way in which I had my garden constructed in England.

Several different kinds of ornamentation enter into these

gardens. In the first place there are dwarf trees. The Japanese do not dwarf their trees on purpose for these gardens. In fact, you see them more often in choice flower-pots used as individual ornaments, but the best toy-gardens must have dwarf trees—and the trees *par excellence* for dwarfing are the Japanese firs with queer little pompons of dark green leaves which enter into so many of their pictures. Next in importance to the trees come the little bronze models of temples, houses, bridges, pagodas, lanterns and so on. Then comes the ornamental stonework. For



FIG. 8.

the grounds attached to their mansions, the Japanese go to great expense in buying rare or fantastic pieces of stonework. Huge sums, for instance, are paid for huge lumps of coral. They insert the same kind of stonework on a smaller scale into their toy-gardens. But stonework forms a very important feature in their toy-gardens in another way; they choose pieces whose natural bumps and hollows make them look (and photograph) like mountains, or cliffs, or rocky hills, and with these they constitute a miniature mountain landscape (as shown in the large illustration) upon whose plateau the little buildings rise or the little inch-high figures are grouped. So essential do the Japanese consider choice stones for these toy-gardens, that the head clerk of the

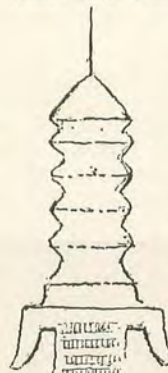


FIG. 9.

Hakubunsha, who acted as interpreter in my printing arrangements, and accompanied us to improve his English on any of our expeditions for which he could spare time, brought me a



FIG. 10.

collection of the proper stones for such a garden in a ridiculous faded green bag which I have still. The stones, of course, constitute the rocks of my garden. His name was Mayeda San. The figures are Chinese, because the gardens are technically Chinese.

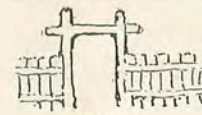


FIG. 11.

Quite as important a feature as any of the foregoing is the introduction of water into the gardens, which, to be complete, must have



FIG. 12.

islands and bridges. The ingenious introduction of water is of great moment.

The prime object of every toy-garden is to produce a thing which, when it is photographed or drawn, looks exactly like a real landscape. I set to work on my garden knowing this first of all. I had a mahogany frame twenty inches long, sixteen inches broad, and two and a half inches deep, made with battens screwed across the bottom instead of a single piece, that it might be easier to lift the zinc out of it, if ever it should be necessary. The garden itself is constructed in a zinc basin of exactly the dimensions to fill the mahogany frame. In one corner of this zinc there is a tap for letting off the water.

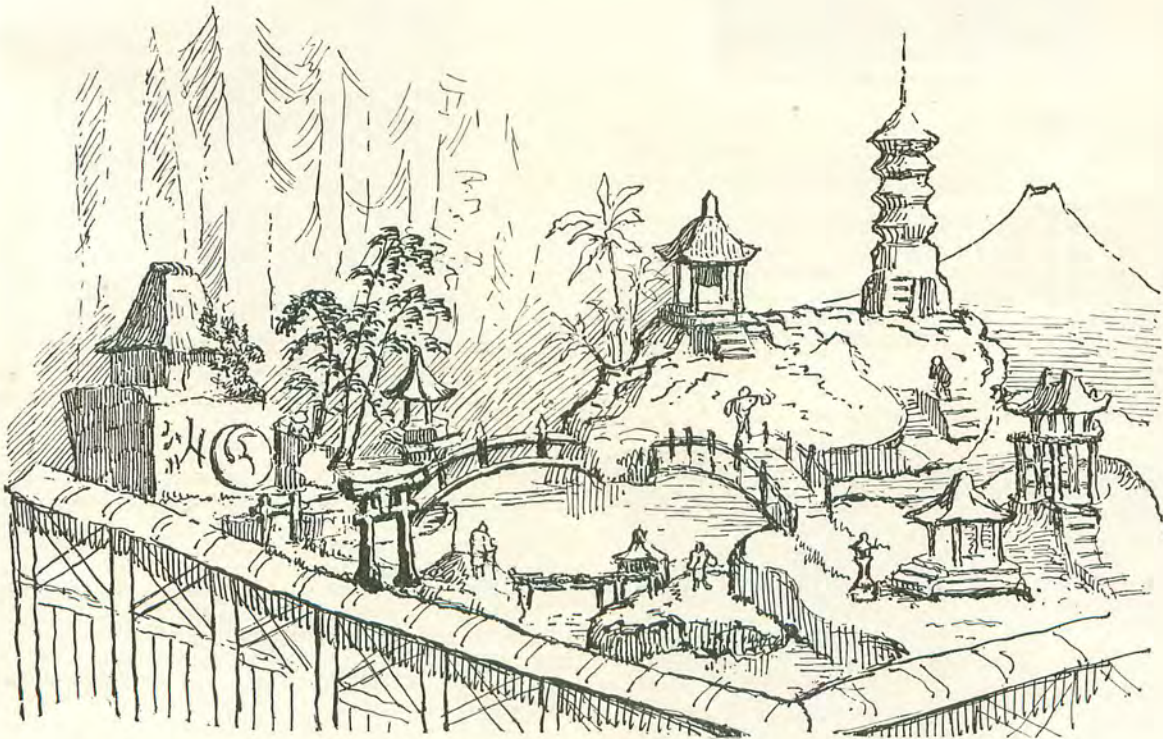
The mainland of the garden is in two portions at opposite ends of the zinc, and is made by bending strips of zinc two and a half inches wide into uneven coast-lines and soldering them to the bottom so that they are water-tight. These are filled with soil and covered with tough deep moss selected on account of the resemblance of its contour to a range of gentle hills. This gave me two ranges of grassy hills for erecting my little bronze buildings on. About half the space of the garden is devoted to these two pieces of mainland; the other half lying between them, rather in the shape of an hour-glass, is filled with water. In that water are introduced several pieces of stone which give the effect of rocky islands, and divide the water up into a lagoon in the front part of the garden, and two winding rivers in the back part. The longest island is connected with the two pieces of mainland by little bronze bridges.

As I found the perfectly straight line of the mahogany frame a little severe, I added a shallow tray resting on its rim behind, with fresh ranges of hills made out of moss, and a still higher platform faced with stonework and crowned with a model of Fujiyama. The frame is kept out

of sight by a covering of thin split bamboo cut off a fine blind which gives exactly the effect of the split bamboo fences so common in Japan.

The attempt to introduce dwarf trees gave me a great deal of trouble, as there was no drainage to the land portion of the garden, and the moss had to be kept very wet. The trees invariably died, so I had to cast about for substitutes. Violets in their season I found very good. Perhaps the size of the buildings can best be brought out by saying that the violet leaves towered over them. I found to my surprise that the violets blossomed freely in spite of the gasiness of the room at night. I knew that the effect would be more realistic if I nipped the flowers off, but I had not the heart to do it after the violets had shown such pluck. Forget-me-nots, while they are young, make admirable miniature trees; they too are more realistic if the flowers are nipped off, but they flower so provokingly well. Finally I fell back on that indestructible vegetable, the Michaelmas daisy.

People who are constituted as I am, will not be satisfied unless they can have their mimic and miniature trees growing, but a better effect is really secured by buying little branches of evergreens of the right appearance, such as larches, from your florist, and trimming them into trees of the desired shape and size. These last a very long time. The effect of paddy-fields can be secured by sowing seeds like cress, and it is easy to introduce variety into your garden by dividing your hills and meadows of moss with paths of white sand. Obelisk-shaped pieces of coral form very appropriate ornaments on jutting capes. And always remember that allowing for the distorted drawing of native artists, you can get quite a good idea of the Chinese gardens so popular in Japan from the ordinary willow pattern plate.



MY TOY GARDEN.