

麟慶：鴻雪因緣

Tracks in the Snow: excerpts

Episodes from an Autobiographical Memoir

By the Manchu Bannerman Linqing (1791-1846)

Translated by Yang Tsung-han and John Minford

Introductory Note

An earlier selection of the first ten episodes of this memoir, together with one of the prefaces, edited from Professor Yang's manuscript translation, was published in the Australian journal *East Asian History* (number 6, December 1993, pp. 105-142), with a lengthy introduction, and a tribute to the translator by his friend Professor Liu Ts'un-yan. The ten episodes selected for publication here are linked by the theme of the garden. Linqing himself owned a garden in Peking designed by Li Yu 李漁, the Half-acre Garden, and in the course of his life visited many of China's famous gardens.

Footnotes are those of Professor Yang's, unless they are translated from the original annotations by Linqing, in which case they are marked (LQ). If they are my additions, they are marked (JM). The informal nature of Professor Yang's comments has been preserved wherever possible.

The translation of *Tracks in the Snow* was sponsored by the Asia Foundation.

JM

No. 23 Climbing to Enjoy the Fragrance of the Garden of Good Cheer

Mount Hui lies to the west of Wuxi county in Jiangsu province, with nine peaks above and nine glens below. The temple stands on the eastern foothills. To the right of the temple is the spring where Lu Yu of the Tang dynasty once tasted the water and judged it to be the second best in the Empire.¹ The spring is paved with stone, and adjacent to it are two ponds, one square and one round in form, each sheltered by a pavilion.

During Emperor Kangxi's tour of the south, His Majesty kindled a fire in the Bamboo Stove preserved in this temple by Brother Xinghai, and boiled water from the spring to make tea. This event made the spring even more famous.

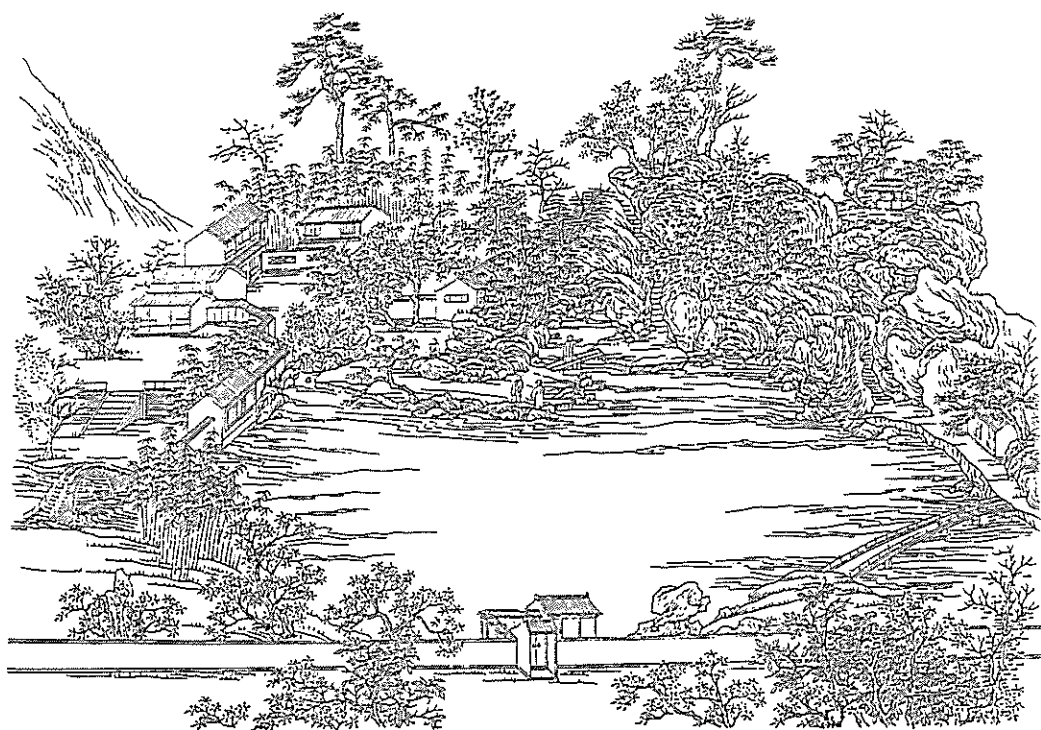
The Qin family garden, which is on the same hill, to the left, was originally a monastery; it was called Southern Hermitage, and then Abode of Profuse Fragrance. It was acquired by a President of one of the Six Ministries in the Ming dynasty, Qin Jin, who made it into a garden and named it Traveller's Lodge in Phoenix Valley. His descendants enlarged it and beautified it from one generation to the next and gave it a new name—the Garden of Good Cheer. In the reigns of Kangxi and Qianlong, the garden was several times honoured by the Imperial presence.

An isolated hill stands above the garden, which used to be called Hill of Beauty, until one of Their Majesties graciously bestowed upon it the title Solitary Eminence.

In the middle of the ninth month, when the moon was full, I went to the house of my aunt, Madame Gu (my mother's sister). My cousin Chungu invited me to go for a ramble on Mount Hui. We sampled the 'second spring in the Empire', and having enjoyed our tea we went on into the Temple and begged the monk to show us the famous bamboo stove. We were informed by the monk that there was an official injunction forbidding its public display. So we continued on our way, proceeding to

¹Editor's Note: See *Lu Yu quanji* 陸羽全集, ed. Zhang Hongyong 張宏庸 (Taipei: Chaxue wenxue chubanshe) 1985, p. 47.

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the Garden of Good Cheer. From a distance we could already see the sea of bosky green shade, provided by the almost one thousand ancient trees of the garden, which towered into the sunny sky. And although we were still half a mile from the Garden, we could detect, wafted on the breeze, the heady fragrance of the cassia flowers that were in full bloom before the Hall of Heavenly Fragrance.

As soon as we entered the gate, we saw the Fish Gazebo, with a pond around it, filled with water from the Temple spring, which came

gurgling along a stone channel. Beyond the pond and over a bridge, we reached the Hall of the Lovely Tree.² Following a winding path along the slope of the hill, we climbed to the highest spot, where stood the Plum Flower Pavilion, then turning to our right we reached in turn the Hall of the Imperial Brush, the Gallery of Celestial Fragrance, the Nest in the Clouds, the Tower Piercing the Void—but the crag known as Solitary Eminence stood still further south.

The blossoming cassia groves tempted us to stay longer. Attracted by the richness and purity of their fragrance, I plucked a slender spray, and culled a few blades of the grass known as 'domino'—on the back of this grass are little raised yellow dots, just like the dots on dominoes, in all the twenty-one varieties found in a set. The grass is also reputed to have healing properties. It is a rarity, so I took some back with me to my boat.

Upon investigation, I found that the literary name of this Mr Qin was Guosheng, and that he was a *jinshi* and Board President of the late Ming, noted for his suppression of the Yao bandits in Chen county (Hunan province) and in Guangxi.

As to the story of the Nine Elders of the Qin Garden, this refers to the occasion when the members of the Qin family who held official status as students in the Provincial Academy came to the Garden to welcome and do homage to the Emperor Qianlong, when he graciously visited the Garden on one of his Southern Excursions. On that occasion, His Majesty favoured these loyal elders by graciously composing a poem, which contained the following two lines:

Six hundred are the accumulated years
of the Nine Elders of the Qin family;
This rare gathering outshines even
the celebrated assembly of Bo Juyi.

²Chinese men of letters had an almost superstitious obsession with the names of their gardens, studios, etc. These often contained literary allusions or quotations from the Classics. The name of this hall is an allusion to a story in the *Zuo Commentary* 左傳, Duke Zhao, second year. But to speak bluntly, this is really otiose.

No. 25 Seeking Out the Beauty of Orchid Pavilion

Orchid Pavilion is at Lanzhu Hill, twenty-seven *li* south-west of Shanyin county in the province of Zhejiang. In the Yonghe reign of the Jin dynasty,¹ Wang Xizhi, the Chief Secretary of Kuaiji,² invited forty-two celebrities (including Xie An³) to assemble here and observe the traditional venerable spring festival of Lustration.⁴ He composed a Preface to the collection of poems written by the participants in that famous gathering, and his handwritten copy of that Preface has become a great treasure of calligraphy, up to the present day. The 'Pavilion' has also as a result acquired an everlasting fame.⁵

¹To be exact, the ninth year of the Yonghe 永和 reign of the Eastern Jin, or AD 353.

²Wang has been generally and popularly lauded as China's greatest calligrapher. In the Southern dynasties, the Chief Secretary, *neishi* 內史, was quite often the chief administrator of a region under a royal prince of the blood, who was stationed as a sort of Lieutenant or Deputy Governor. As many of the royal princes of the blood were young or incompetent, the *neishi* ruled the region in the name of the prince.

³One of the most celebrated prime ministers of the Eastern Jin dynasty.

⁴The festival had a long history. We do not know the origins of this partly religious, partly folk festival. The translator considers it a sort of mixture of the Roman Lupercal and the English May Day. It was repeatedly referred to in the beginning of the Spring and Autumn epoch, and was sung about in the 'Songs of Zheng', *Book of Songs* 詩經.

⁵Our author, like all the writers and scholars of the past, believed that the *ting* 亭 was a common noun and referred to an actual architectural construction—a 'pavilion', as I have translated it, deliberately using quotation marks. Nowadays we know better. The Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove had nothing to do with a 'grove', and the Orchid Pavilion had nothing to do with a *ting* in the sense of a pavilion. There was no pavilion at the time of Wang's gathering; rather a pavilion was constructed later to commemorate this famous event. *Ting* in the Chinese language in ancient days was a word of measurement, and a place name, hence the famous line *shi li wu li, chang ting duan ting* 十里五里·長亭短亭. Liu Bang 劉邦, the founder of the Han dynasty, in his early manhood in Qin days served as a *tingzhang* 亭長, i.e. a petty officer of an area of five or ten *li*, circa 2 or 3 miles. So here, Lanting ('Orchid Pavilion') was really just a local place name, as in the office of *Hanshou Tinghou* 漢壽亭侯 bestowed by Cao Cao 曹操 on Guan Yu 關羽. Hanshou is the name of a county in present-day Changde, Hunan; *Tinghou* was a peculiar title in the medieval period of Chinese history when there were *xian*, *xiang*, *ting*, and *hou*. *Ting* was of the lowest rank. So *ting* here was also used in the sense of a town or village, not a pavilion at all.

Afterwards the Prefect Wang Yizhi built a pavilion in the rivulet, and the Minister of Works He Wuji moved the pavilion to the top of the hill. Since then the building has been repeatedly destroyed by fire but this elegant poetical gathering for the purpose of drinking and versifying has been much talked of and celebrated.

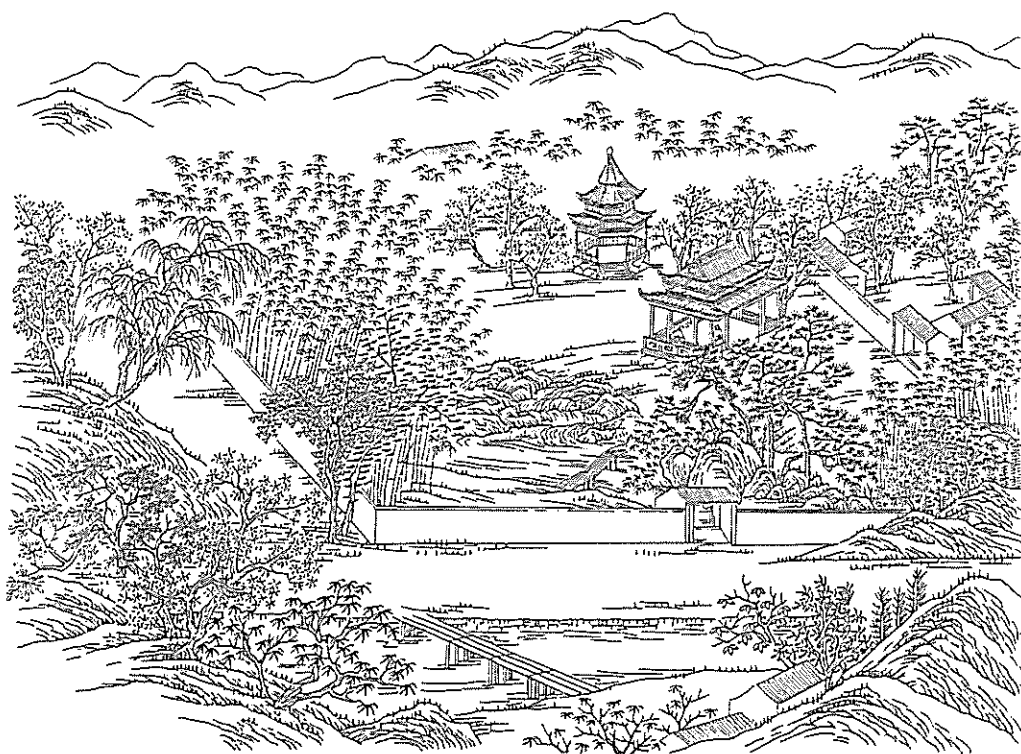
In the present dynasty, in the thirty-eighth year of the reign of His Majesty Kangxi, our Sage Ancestor and Benevolent Monarch had the pavilion rebuilt by special decree, and bestowed a copy of the Preface written in his own Imperial hand: this was to be carved on a stone stele, which was to be erected in the pavilion. In the tenth month of the year *jisi* (AD 1809), I went to Zhejiang. My parents were enjoying the hospitality of Mr Li Hengyuan of Kuaiji, and I hastened to his house to pay my filial respects. During the hours of leisure, besides my morning and evening homage and service to my parents, I went with Uncle Kang Jie to visit this place. High hills and precipitous ridges, flourishing forests and tall bamboos grace it now as they did at the time of Wang's description. And all along the path, an impression of great charm is created by flowery meadows, paddy fields, wooden bridges and thatched cottages. An old proverb says: "All the way through Shanyin, you see picturesque scenery without intermission." This in no way exaggerates the truth.

Investigation reveals that the authentic copy of the Preface in Wang's own hand was once in the collection of the famous Zen Master and calligrapher Zhiyong. Then Xiao Yi, by special order of the Tang Emperor Taizong, succeeded in obtaining it by a swindle, and at the Emperor's decease, it was buried with His Majesty in the Zhao Mausoleum,⁶ and hence is no longer to be seen. However, before it came into the possession of the Emperor, there had already been more than one facsimile copy made, and these were in turn carved on stone. One was the hand-written copy of the Master Zhiyong himself; another was the Kaihuang copy of the Sui dynasty; yet another was the Dingwu copy made by Ouyang Xun.⁷ During the Song dynasty, when Song Jingwen was Governor and Garrison Commandant of Dingzhou, he deposited this last copy in the

⁶The official nomenclature of His Majesty's tomb.

⁷Perhaps the greatest calligrapher of the Tang dynasty. Ouyang was at one time Household Chamberlain to the Heir Apparent.

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Official Treasury in Dingzhou.⁸

Later Xue Shaopeng⁹ substituted a facsimile copy for the Dingwu copy and moved it to Chang'an. In the Daguan reign of the Song dynasty,¹⁰ this Dingwu copy was brought to Kaifeng and placed in the Xuanhe Hall of the Imperial Palace.¹¹

⁸Hence this copy became known ever after as the Dingwu copy. Song Jingwen's 宋景文 name was Song Qi 宋祁, Jingwen being his posthumous title.

⁹A scholarly official who was a renowned calligrapher himself.

¹⁰During the reign of Huizong 徽宗 (1102–1125).

¹¹The famous museum where art objects—calligraphy, paintings, rare editions, etc., collected by Huizong—were housed.

Subsequently, at the invasion of the Jin Jurchens and the debacle of the Song, many treasures including this piece of calligraphy and the Stone Drums of the Qin from Qiyang were transported north. Since then the Dingwu copy has been irretrievably lost, like the Guangling melody.¹²

In my own collection I have a rubbing of the original Dingwu version. Before the text there is a portrait of Wang Xizhi, and the text itself is identical to the text in the collection of Chen Zhensun,¹³ in which the character *hui* is completely corroded, and a small seal has been impressed on the blank space. At the end there are two colophons written by the Prefect Wang Menglou,¹⁴ and three colophons written by Assistant Prefect Wang Mengquan,¹⁵ asserting that this copy is a rubbing of a Song dynasty stone-carving, and quoting the words of Zhao Songxue as evidence.¹⁶ This copy was really the woodblock-printed copy from the Hall of Partial Leisure of the Jia family.¹⁷

As for the Zhiyong copy, it is known to be in the collection of the Fang family of Tongcheng county in Anhui province, but I have never seen it. The Kaihuang copy is now in the collection of the Zha family of Haining county; it has been reproduced recently as part of the *Collection of Calligraphy in the Hall of Spring Grass*.

¹²The 'Guangling melody' has two interpretations. According to the popular and conventional version it was a rare *qin* 琴 tune with a musical scale known only to Ji Kang 嵇康, who during his lifetime refused to teach it to anybody or publicize it. When he was on the point of being executed he deplored the fact that this tune and the musical scale that went with it would be irretrievably lost. The other and almost unnoticed interpretation says that when he was about to be executed he sighed, and predicted the hopeless fate of the Wei dynasty, which was soon to be overthrown by the Sima 司馬 family—founders of the Jin dynasty. The Wei troops sustained two crushing defeats at the hands of the Sima forces, at Guangling (present day Yangzhou). These defeats sealed the fate of the Wei dynasty. The translator is inclined to favour this last, and less conventional, interpretation.

¹³Chen Zhizhai 陳直齋, author of *Shulu jieti* 書錄解題 (Descriptive Catalogue of Books). (LQ)

¹⁴Wang Wenzhi 王文治, native of Jiangsu, *tanhua* 探花, or Third on the *jinshi* 進士 list. (LQ)

¹⁵Wang Yangdu 王養度, native of Zhejiang, Recommended Candidate. (LQ)

¹⁶Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫, whose studio name was Songxue 松雪, or Pine Snow, was an extremely versatile, original and influential painter and calligrapher, and also a poet and scholar.

¹⁷Jia Sidao 賈似道, infamous Prime Minister of the Southern Song.

No. 34 Greeting the Crane in the Prefectural Garden

In the westernmost part of the prefectural *Yamen* of Tai'an, there were several *mu* of spare land. When my father¹ assumed office and moved in, he weeded the grass and constructed paths, rockeries in the shape of hills and built a gallery of three bays facing directly towards Mount Tai. He composed a couplet for this gallery:

First I planted the mulberry and flax,²
 now I tend to my flowerbeds and paths;
 Returning from the hills of Tiantai and Yandang,
 I pay homage to the clouds of the Eastern Peak.

In the summer of the year *bingzi* (1816), my father composed four poems to record the beauties of the garden:

I

A small shelter built in the vicinity
 of the cavern of clouds,
 Its luminous casement receives much of
 the Mountain's glory.
 When I return from the *yamen*,
 the drum of duty is quiet,
 And in the mild warmth of the evening,
 a gentle breeze blows.
 'Silver pots' are collected
 in the stone paths,³
 Jade bridles congregate
 in the highways of the metropolis.⁴

¹Linqing belonged to the Wanggiyan 完顏 clan, and he was directly descended from the fifth Emperor of the Jurchen Jin dynasty. During the Manchu dynasty, his family belonged to the Imperial Household Bond-servant Division of the Manchu Bordered Yellow Banner. His father was the official Tinglu 廷謨 (1772-1820).

²Mulberry for sericulture, flax for textiles.

³According to the *Ruiyingtu* 瑞應圖, if during royal feasts the sagacious ruler never indulges in drinking to excess, then the 'silver pot' manifests itself, as a propitious omen.

⁴Reins and bridles ornamented with jade, used by rich aristocrats.

Abundant harvest goes with
 the laudable mores of the people,
 Everywhere we hear the jubilant
 Rice Shoot Songs.⁵

II

I hoe these few *gong*
 of moonlit land,⁶
 And enjoy flowers a-plenty
 in the four seasons.
 The pure white are taken
 for flying snowflakes,
 The crimson rival the splendour
 of sunset clouds.
 Wild vegetables
 provide the repast,
 And mountain berries
 serve for tea.
 To welcome in
 the living fragrance
 Push back the green gauze
 from the ornamented windows.

III

Favoured with
 the blessings of the immortals,
 I bring my family to this
 mountain verdure.
 My wife and children frequently
 gather and converse,
 Friends are invited
 to assemble here.
 My head on the pillow,

⁵Peasant folk songs to wish for and celebrate the *cornucopia*.

⁶*Gong* 弓 is a term of measurement varying in length from five feet to eight.

I listen to the gushing spring;
The wine cup put away,
the night scene stretches afar.
The mountain genius
favours me
With a myriad spectacles
of alpine illusion.

IV

Dare I be so derelict as to indulge
in lute and crane?
May the floating clouds
see into my heart!
Though these few rooms
are my transient lodging,
Yet the three paths
are my garden and grove.
I remind the domestics
to weed the rank grass,
And bid my sons
compose short songs.
My short stay here
of a few years
Is no less bliss than
retreating to a mountain hermitage.

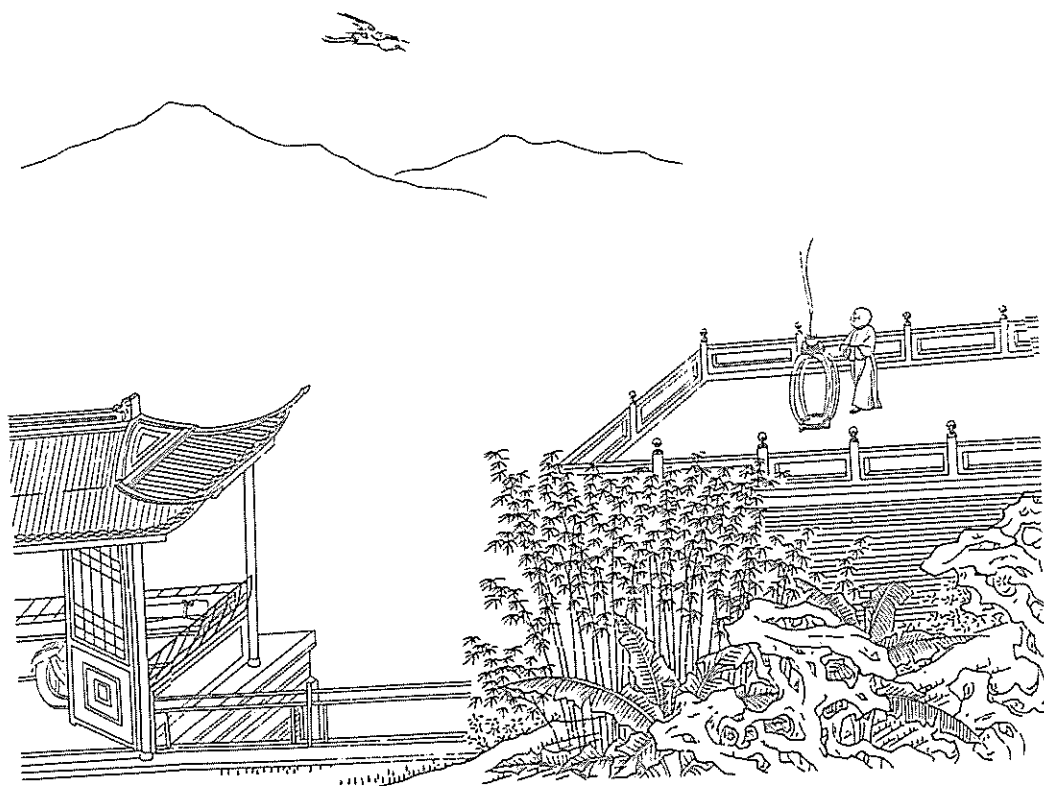
My mother and I both wrote poems in response to my father's.

I stayed in the side room of the gallery,⁷ and finding myself in such close proximity to the Fairy Mount, I would regularly perform my obeisance to it from a distance every morning and evening, burning incense and supplicating the *genius loci* to bless my parents with perennial health and youth.

On the thirteenth of the seventh month, I had just ascended the terrace, set out a small table and lit the incense, when a red-crowned

⁷He is trying to say that he did not dare to stay as a guest in the room of honour, but as a dutiful and reverent son, in the side or humbler room.

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crane with black skirt-feathers rose soaring serenely into the clouds. Was this a reincarnation of the Taoist Ding Lingwei,⁸ I wondered, or of the Buddhist monk Zhang Caizhi?⁹

I had this picture made to commemorate this unusual and wonderful occasion.

⁸A Taoist monk of the Han dynasty who became an immortal and transformed himself into a crane, in order to fly back and hover over his native place. Having exhorted the people to follow his example and become Taoist devotees, he soared up into the heavens. See *Soushenji* 搜神記.

⁹The translator acknowledges his inability to identify this person.

No. 51 Exploring the Beauty of the Sui Garden

Upon leaving the Fairy Hermitage and its delights, I lifted my head and saw that the setting sun was approaching the hills. Adjusting my dress, I was about to go on my way, when Wang Pushan asked me if I had ever visited Sui Garden.

"No," I replied. Wang pointed to the east, to a pagoda, and said:

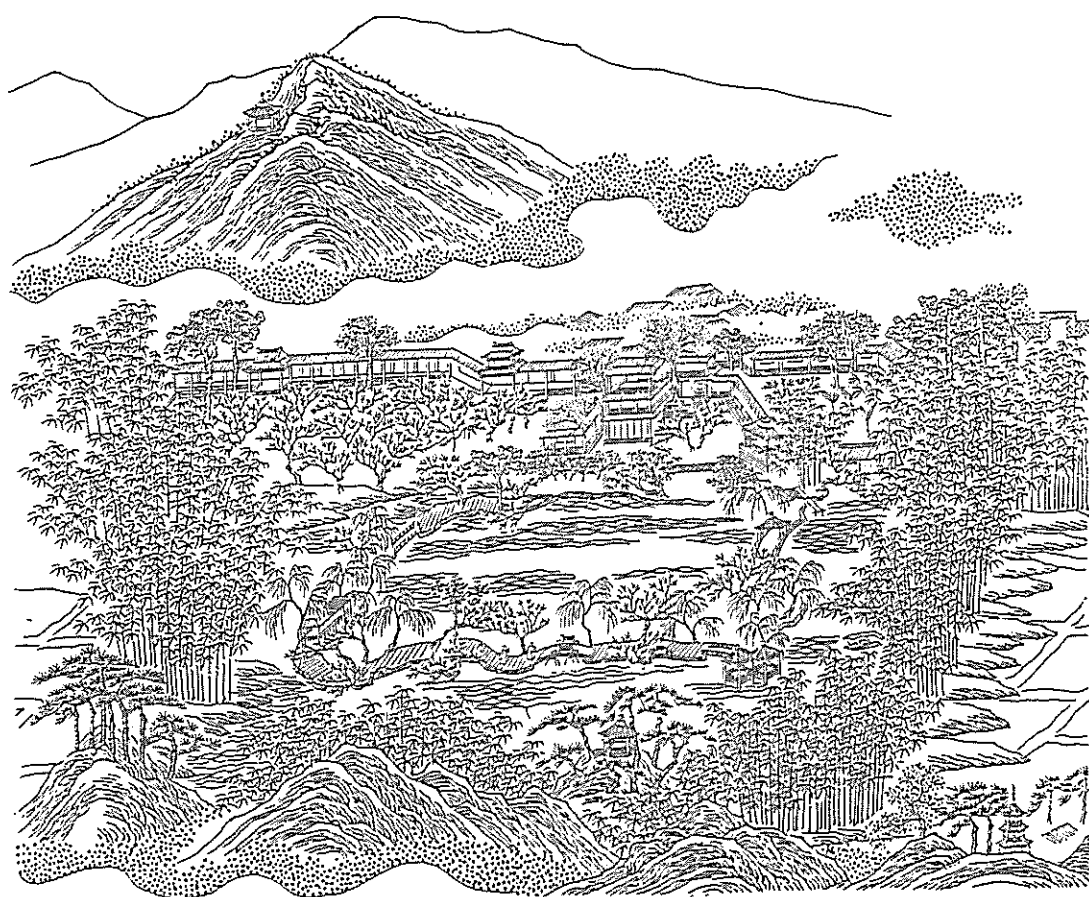
"That is Mount Xiaocang, and at its foot lies the garden first owned and constructed by a Director of the Imperial Silk Textile Workshop named Sui. In the days of Qianlong, the Academician Yuan expanded the garden when it came into his possession, and changed its name to another Sui, written differently and meaning something different.

"At various times he wrote six short essays in praise of his garden. Let me quote his own words:

My garden is both deep and spacious. Pass from one room to another: each one is enhanced with the shining radiance of mirrors, so luminous and bright, that when walking through them one loses one's way. It is a place suitable for both walking and sitting. A high tower stands as 'screen' to the west. A clear stream flows eddying through it, ten thousand bamboos form a sea of verdure. You need never fear the oppressive heat of summer, neither heat-wave nor heat-stroke; and in winter since the windows are fitted with transparent glass, you may see the snow and not feel the wind. There are one hundred plum trees, more than ten groves of cassia trees. The trees cast clear shadows when the moon rises, their fragrance wafts on a gentle breeze. This is a place for the pleasures of spring and autumn alike. With continuous corridors and walkways to stroll in, one need not abandon one's pleasure in walking even during rain, lightning, thunder or gale—it is a place suited even to stormy weather.

"The Academician has passed away; the garden is deserted. And yet the charm of the place is unchanged! Why don't you go there and take a look?" concluded Wang.

勝訪園隨



"I most certainly will!" said I.

I found the path and had soon reached the garden. I saw that it backed onto the hill, which formed its rear wall. Buildings stood beside the stream, and a pavilion was hidden in the depths of a valley, while a bridge led to a short embankment. There was nothing grand or imposing about it, but it had a subtle charm and intricacy of its own, very like the delightful literary style of its most recent owner, the Academician Yuan of Xiaocang Mountain Studio.

This Academician was named Yuan Mei, and hailed from Qiantang in Zhejiang province. In the year *jiwei* of the Qianlong reign (1739) he passed his *jinshi* examination under my great-great-grand-uncle Sire Songyi, of whom this same Academician once wrote a biographical study, in which he expressed his profound gratitude to the kind favour of the senior scholar, who had been both his principal examiner and also on another occasion his sponsor. This biographical essay was included in Yuan Mei's *Complete Works from the Xiaocang Mountain Studio*. I only regret that I was born too late to have had the privilege of paying homage to him in his garden.

Among the successful *jinshi* candidates of that year under my ancestor, those that went on to serve in lucrative official posts, or to enjoy great literary fame, were too many to be counted on one's fingers. However, with Yuan Mei, there were Shen Guiyu, Board President,¹ and Qi Cifeng, Board Vice-President.² Together they were known as the Three Legs of the Tripod.³

¹Shen Deqian 沈德潛, *jinshi*, native of Jiangsu. (LQ)

²Qi Zhaonan 齊召南, native of Zhejiang, on the *juren* 舉人 Supplementary Reserve List, recommended to participate in the examination of Extensive Learning, and after passing, appointed as Assistant-Compiler in the Hanlin Academy. (LQ)

³The round bronze *ding* 鼎 has three legs.

No. 86 Verifying Documents in the Hall of Pomegranates

In the spring of the year *gengyin* (1830), an Imperial Censor presented an impeachment, to the effect that the post-horses in the province of Henan had not been maintained to the correct number, and specifying other areas of official negligence, including the levy of private carts, neglect in searching for and arresting wanted criminals, and the absence of proper regulations to enforce the performance of these duties. His Majesty sent two Vice-Presidents, Zhong Chang and Yang Yizeng,¹ as commissioners to Henan to investigate this matter in the fourth month of the same year, and ordered the provincial officers concerned to report forthwith. Popular sentiment was in a state of great agitation, and wild surmises and irresponsible opinions flew back and forth.

I asked two members of my staff, He Huwen and Yu Lifu,² to check and verify the relevant documents in the Archive and also the precedents, and to work together with me to draft a reply. To put the reply in succinct form, we said that Henan province maintained forty-seven post-stations and that the total stipulated number of post-horses in all the various *zhou* and *xian* districts was 3608 horses. There had been certified expenditure for daily rations, and any natural death of a horse had been duly listed and permission granted for it to be replaced. This was all entered in the annual report to the Ministry. There should not have been any default. As to the levy of carts, since the various post-stations had never possessed any, whenever there was an official requirement for one, they had always been hired on a temporary basis. Occasionally they were requisitioned according to the farm acreage, or with compensation according to the mileage travelled by the cart. In certain regions local constables had taken charge of this, and in certain other regions the constables had been responsible, but under the supervision of the local gentry or elders. However the supplier-owners had always been given

¹Yang was a native of Anhui, a *jinshi*, who later served as a Provincial Governor. (LQ)

²He Bing 何炳 and Yu Cheng 余成, both natives of Zhejiang. (LQ) Linqing was posted as Provincial Judge in Henan from 1829 to 1832. (JM)

compensation according to the regulations. In summary, we could say that no levy of any kind occurred unless there was an absolute official requirement, and that there was partial alleviation during times of poor harvest, and restoration of the normal practice after an abundant crop.

In conclusion, we pointed out that this post-station system had drawn upon aid from the people in the form of *corvée* for more than 180 years. If this practice had been a heavy burden on the people, naturally we should rectify it and inaugurate a better system. To review the practice in the province, it never violated the principle of working three days out of every ten for the State and had been generally deemed satisfactory by all. It seemed that we should continue with the old practice, but be constantly alert in watching and restraining the officers and magistrates, and especially the minor clerks and agents.

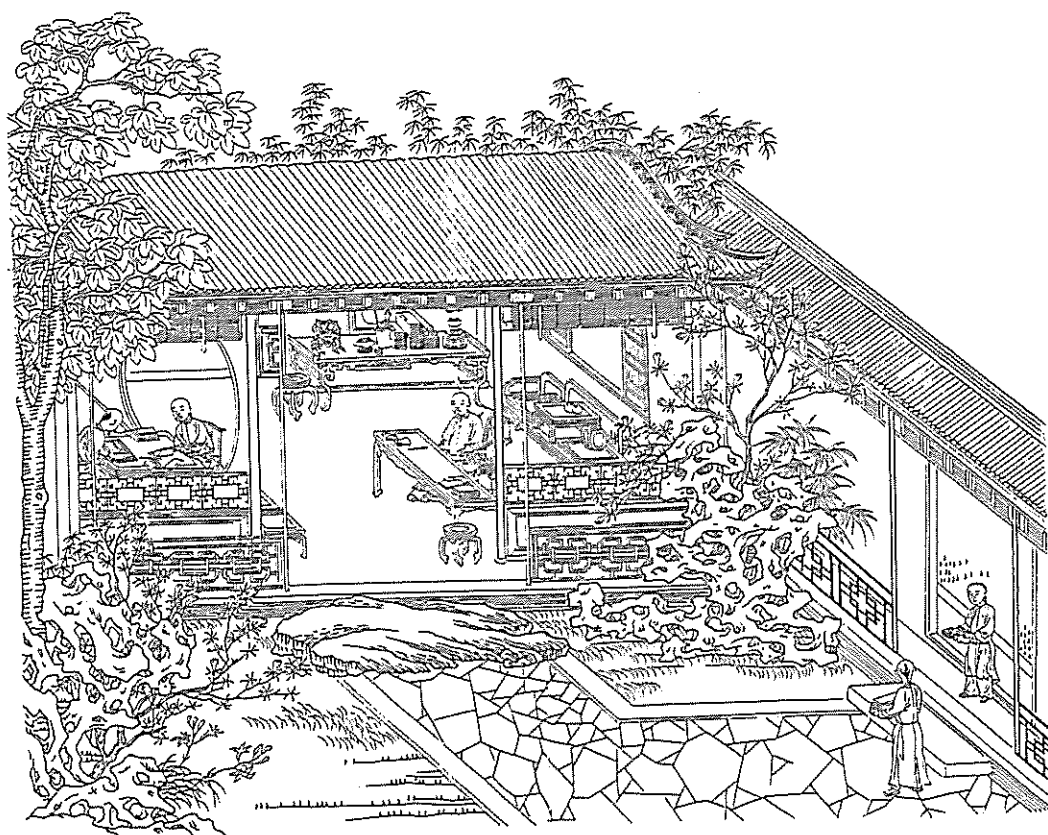
As to the searching for and arresting of urgently wanted criminals still at large, it behoved to organize the constables to superintend strictly the general and mutual watch for protection, to track down offenders and to follow up persistently any clues as to their whereabouts. It was not difficult to expatiate theoretically about this subject on paper, but actual performance and results must be demanded. Since Governor Yang had assumed office, he made it a practice to supervise his subordinate officers in this respect. They had searched for and arrested the Nian rebel Wang Fakui and others—altogether 215 persons; the robber Xie Tianguai and others—altogether 103 persons; the rebel Xing Mingshun and others—altogether 110 persons; the escaped robber from a neighbouring province Ji Bingyin and others—altogether twelve persons. I personally, in my capacity as Commissioner of Justice, during my tenure of office, had superintended the search and arrest of the religious rebel Nie Shizhen and others—altogether fifty-four persons. From the first month of this year up to the present I have arrested more than fifty Nian rebels. I do not include all the normal homicide cases.

I sent off my duly signed report to the fore-mentioned Imperial Commissioners for review and corroboration. They then memorialized the Throne concerning the facts submitted by me, and His Majesty was quite satisfied, and his mind was set at ease.

When I had started to draft this report, the twin pomegranate trees

in the courtyard in front of the *yamen* were about to burst into crimson bloom. By the time the Imperial Rescript arrived, conferring His Majesty's acceptance and approval, they were in full bloom and blazing with dazzling splendour. I gave a banquet to thank the members of my staff.

書治廳榴



No. 137 Reminiscences of the Past and the Tower of Lyric Incantation

The Reverend Master Jie'an, whose Dharma name is Juchao, and one of whose literary names is Qingheng, was once in charge of instruction at the Mount Jiao Buddhist Seminary. In my youth the fame of three monk-poets reached my ears—Jie'an, Guyan and Liantang. Now both Guyan and Liantang have passed away into Nirvana, and only the octogenarian Jie'an is still alive. He has retreated to the Monastery of the Pure Dharma on Mount Ping. His disciple, Brother Xingyuan, from time to time sent copies of my various poetical compositions, such as 'The Deliverance of the Crocodile', to his master, who would compose verses in response to mine and send them to me the very same day.

On my return trip I went to call on him at Mount Ping. We greeted each other with expressions of mutual regret at the lateness of our encounter. When it was time for me to leave, Jie'an walked with me, leaning on his staff, and saw me off. We passed by the Tower of Lyric Incantation to the west of Lake Baozhang. This tower faces east, and according to legend it was the very place where Su Dongpo composed (i.e. chanted) one of his lyrics to the tune 'West River Moon'. The present building was put up by a local gentleman named Li Zhixun.¹ In the twenty-seventh year of Qianlong (1763), His Majesty graciously visited this building and bestowed upon it its present name. There is an open terrace to the south of the tower, and thence by crossing a bridge you come to the Pavilion of Boundless Vista. Turning west and crossing another little bridge, you come to the Hall of Five Blessings, which is surrounded by mounds of earth. To the north of the tower, there is the Bower of Verdure, and behind this the Gallery of the Rising Sun. To the left of the gallery and over yet another bridge, lies the Hill Retreat of the Flourishing Cassia. To the east is a knoll constructed from piled up yellow rocks, with rising and falling formations and a rugged angular

¹A student of the profession of commerce in the local State Academy. By Imperial grace he was granted the honorary title of Director of the Board of Imperial Villas, Gardens, Parks etc. (LQ)

舊話樓詠



appearance. Above this knoll stands a small pavilion, and turning north along the path you come to the Double Painted Boat, also called the Boat of Flowing Fragrance.

The lay-out of the garden and its buildings has been preserved, but it is in an extremely dilapidated and desolate condition.

Jie'an pointed to the garden and said: "The glory of Mount Ping lies not in its rivers and hills, but in its gardens and pavilions. The glory of this garden has three aspects: at the front, the rocks; at the rear, the bamboos; and in the centre, the water. And then the way its long covered walkways interconnect, the way its intricately designed buildings are juxtaposed and joined—this is what makes it the glory of the entire Yangzhou district. I myself have personally shared in the pleasures of this garden. Now when I recollect the past and think of the present, I find the contrast between the 'gorgeous mansion' and this desolate 'hillside' unbearably poignant.²

I smiled and recited the aforementioned lyric verse of the Grand Old Poet, Su Dongpo. When I came to the lines:

Say not that
All of Creation
In the turn of a head
Is Void;
Before the head even turns
All is dream.

Jie'an brought his palms together in Buddhist salutation³ and said:

"How enlightened! How very to the point!"
Whereupon we both laughed, and bade each other adieu.

²This refers to lines from the poem 'Konghou yin' 箜篌引 by Cao Zhi 曹植: In life we may live in a splendid house, / But broken and fallen we revert to the mountain grave. Translation from George W. Kent, *Worlds of Dust and Jade* (N.Y.: Philosophical Library, 1969).

³The Buddhist salutation signifies homage and deference. Here the homage is paid both to the wisdom of Su Dongpo's 蘇東坡 line, and to the felicitous recitation by Linqing.

No. 145 Enjoying the Cool in the Lotus Pavilion

In the pond of the Garden of Clear Tranquillity¹ there is a pavilion which catches the first rays of the moon, with a serpentine bridge meandering to the left of it, like a 'thirsty rainbow'—I dubbed it 'companion of the rainbow and catcher of the moon'. Thirty-odd large willow-trees are dotted round the pond at pleasing intervals, and the entire pond is planted with lotuses. It reminds one of the Buddhist Lotus Throne. I composed a 'pillar couplet' as follows:

Green shade on every side is nurtured by the spring;
Red rain in the pond is a composition in water.

In the hot summer months I always used to bring some volumes of poetry and official documents with me and sit in the pavilion, to soothe away the unrest and purge the impurities of life.

In the summer of the year *bingshen* (1836), when I looked through the archives and found a host of unresolved cases, I decided to set up a schedule for myself—to read and resolve two cases each day. From the summer to the autumn I had succeeded in dispatching 266 such cases, and the same number of cases in the ensuing winter.

Then I found out that the recorded number of documents in the archives did not tally with the actual number of documents deposited there. So I memorialized the Throne about the matter, giving an account of my thorough investigations. Subsequently a certain Censor in the Central Government memorialized the Throne censuring various practices at this office such as the poor standard of construction work, the messy state of the accounts, corruption among members of the staff, the employment of senile and infirm officers, etc, etc. His Majesty appointed Board President Zhu Shiyan² to come down to the South to investigate. He arrived in the sixth month of the year *dingyou* (1837) at Qingjiangpu,

¹The residence of the Director of Southern River Conservancy, at Huai'an, Jiangsu province. (YTH) Linqing was Director of River Conservancy there from 1833 to 1842. (JM)

²Native of Jiangsu. Second on the list of successful *jinshi* candidates; posthumously titled as Wending 文定, and admitted to the Temple for the Sagacious and Virtuous 賢良祠. (LQ)

涼納亭荷



and called for the relevant documents and accounts to make a thorough-going investigation, as a result of which he rebutted the charges item by item. Then in the eighth month he inspected all the construction works, and memorialized the Throne in the following terms:

He found the works all to be strong and solid. He added that the water was flowing at a smooth rate. The Shen brothers had not been working in the *yamen*. Among the officers, apart from those who were already deceased, and staff who were working without any delinquency, there was only one person who was over seventy years of age, who should have been retired from service. The River Conservancy accounts were in a mess, and the Treasury Intendant should be dishonorably discharged at once. As to the multiplicity and complexity of the accounts items during the period from the eighth year to the sixteenth year, the River Conservancy Director-General had already memorialized the Throne about the thorough investigation being carried out. It was suggested that this matter remain the charge of the Director-General.

The Imperial Rescript indicated His Majesty's approval and acceptance of the memorial.

Then I set up a special bureau and appointed Liu Xiaowu³ and Wang Jingxuan⁴ to do the work of investigating the Treasury accounts, and appointed Prefect Chen Jucheng⁵ to be the responsible chief of this special work. The work was not completed until more than one year later. When the final report was presented to the Emperor, His Majesty ordered that it should be sent to the relevant Board for thorough scrutiny.

In the sixth month of the year *wuxu* (1838), I was sitting in the pavilion, when I received a special communication from the Board. Instantly I felt every vulgar dusty feeling vanish. I leant on the balustrade to gaze at the water in the pond, ruffled by a slight breeze, and watched

³Named Mu 穆, native of Jiangsu, a clerk. (LQ)

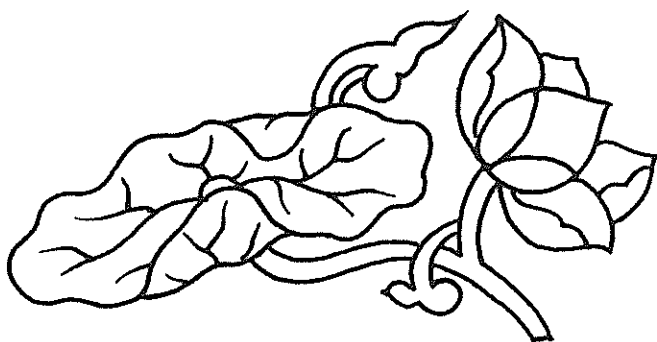
⁴Named Xiwen 熙文, a student in the Provincial Academy of Jiangsu, later promoted to Prefect. (LQ)

⁵Named Xunwen 勳文, a student in the Zhejiang Provincial Academy. (LQ) The title *Sima*, used by Linqing to describe Chen, was an ancient official title, not used since the Tang dynasty, and employed here by the pseudo-literary stylist to mean either a Prefect or a Sub-Prefect.

the bubbles emerging from below and popping continuously like flying stars chasing each other. My younger daughter Fobao threw some petals into the pond, and they performed a butterfly-dance—the red tumbling and fluttering with the green.

At that time my eldest daughter Miaolianbao, in respectful fulfilment of my mother's wish, had completed the continuation volume to my mother's *Anthology of Women Poets Compiled on Orthodox Principles*, and had also obtained two prefaces to the second volume, one by Aunt Pan Xubai and another by Miss Weng Xiujun. She came to see me with the manuscripts and prefaces for my comments, and as she crossed the bridge with a leisurely step, accompanied by her maid, she pointed to the cranes and the deer, and seemed to breathe in the poetry of the moment.

Now when I recall this scene, I realize how very precious such moments are—and how hard to come by!



No. 153 Sailing in the Boat 'Green Wilderness'

'Green Wilderness' is the name given by Mr Ruan Yuntai¹ to a little boat of his. After having served as Grand Secretary, he begged for leave to retire and returned to his native city of Yangzhou. His scholarly accomplishments and statesmanship were looked up to throughout the Empire. I respectfully called on him to pay my homage, with the due reverence of a disciple of the second generation. It was the cyclic year *gengzi* (1840), the third day of the third month, *guisi*, which is the first *si* day, the holiday known as the Day of Cold Food,² and the old man invited me to go for an outing in his boat to Pingshan Hall.

Soon after daybreak of that day I went to the outskirts of the city, to the riverside, and found him already waiting for me in his boat at the appointed place. We rowed westward, and saw the various gardens and villas along the bank, the water and trees fresh and radiant in the morning sun. Our first turn brought us to Red Bridge and the Poetry Club of Vernal Enchantment, the next turn brought us to the spot known as Bright Clouds at the White Pagoda. There Mr Ruan had provided sedan-chairs for us—he invited me to be seated in the chair that had been presented to him by His Majesty.³ We ascended Little Golden Hill, visited the Lotus Nature Temple, and took a little rest in front of the White Pagoda. Then we returned to our boat and rowed with gusto across Baozhang Lake, where the sparkling ripples were dyed green and the willows exuded a green haze. There was a gentle breeze on the water which dispersed every dusty mundane care. As our boat advanced, a

¹Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849). (JM)

²Nobody has ever succeeded in giving a satisfactory explanation of the origin and purpose of the Day of Cold Food 寒食. But people never minded about that. So long as there was a day in the folkways to celebrate, people were happy and duly celebrated it. The day is 105 or occasionally 106 days after the Winter Solstice 冬至 and two days before the Solar Term known as Pure Brightness 清明. *Shangsi* 上巳, the 'first *si* day', has been an important Holy Day since the Spring and Autumn era.

³Before his retirement he had been honoured with the special privilege of sitting in a sedan-chair in the Forbidden City, to wait upon His Majesty or to attend other Court duties and functions. (LQ)

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veritable 'green wilderness' unfolded before our eyes—compared with Pei Du's garden, that he named the Green Wilderness, ours was truly superior.⁴

Then, proceeding further northward, we passed Lotus Bridge, above which stood five pavilions, while below it there were four wings. Each wing had three arches beneath it, and these twelve arches together with the three main arches beneath the bridge formed altogether fifteen arches. Legend has it that on the night of the full moon, each of these fifteen arches has one full moon in it. I regret that I never witnessed this.

Still further north, we passed the Pond of Nine Turns, where the crowds of reeds become a sort of forest, and the undergrowth of plants in the water obstructed our oars.

Looking at the Hillock of Shu in the distance, I saw thousands of pines piling layer upon layer of greenness, their scales⁵ spreading and twigs and manes bristling. They formed a deep, dusky shade. When we reached the Hillock of Shu, we travelled up the steps in our sedan-chairs and entered the Monastery of the Purity of the Dharma, and then went up to Pingshan Hall. There the whole misty panorama of the Twenty-four Bridges, and the clear waves of the Thirty-six Lakes were laid before us to behold and enjoy. There are no hills or mountains in Yangzhou, but here the hills on the south side of the Great River all seem to come to the front of this Hall. Therefore we can most appropriately call this the Hall of Green Wilderness too.

Then I was invited to go the One-and-a-Half-Foot Tower.⁶ The Grand Old Man commented:

"The gardens in Pingshan were well kept and at their best in the days of the Emperor Qianlong. In the Jiaqing days they became gradually

⁴Pei Du 裴度, Lord Jin, was one of the meritorious Grand Ministers of the Tang dynasty. Disappointed with the unsagacious and selfish deeds of the younger politicians, Pei retired early and built a garden in Luoyang, naming the main hall Green Wilderness. Ruan Yuan used the name for his rowing boat to commemorate Pei Du.

⁵The rough bark of the pine.

⁶A queer name that nobody or book seems to have explained. It is perhaps not worthy of explanation. In the Tang dynasty there was a popular saying to the effect that the Wei and Du families were so wealthy and powerful, it seemed that they were only a foot and a half beneath the Heavens. Here it perhaps means that the tower seemed so high, as if it were only a foot and a half below the sky.

neglected. Now, forty years after Jiaqing, those gardens that have been in the care of monks have still preserved their former splendour. But those gardens belonging to people of the commercial class have merely been entrusted to employed gardeners, and most of them have become deserted and ruinous. This is the only one that has survived, with every one of its fountains, its springs, trees and plants still intact."

I replied:

"Prosperity and decline turn like a wheel. Such is the law of past and present. Since the springs and trees—the beauties of Nature—are still there, when the times become more prosperous, the former splendour will certainly be restored. It is only to be regretted that nobody has made a record of their glory in days of former prosperity. Visitors of a later age can only ask the wild hazels and creepers and tendrils for information."

The Grand Master said:

"Your regret is a correct and timely one. My fellow native of this place, the *xiucai* Li Aitang,⁷ did indeed compile a *Record of the Painted Pleasure Boats*⁸ in eighteen volumes, which I should send you as a gift soon."

Smilingly he intoned the line:

"Two men sailed a boat named Green Wilderness . . ."

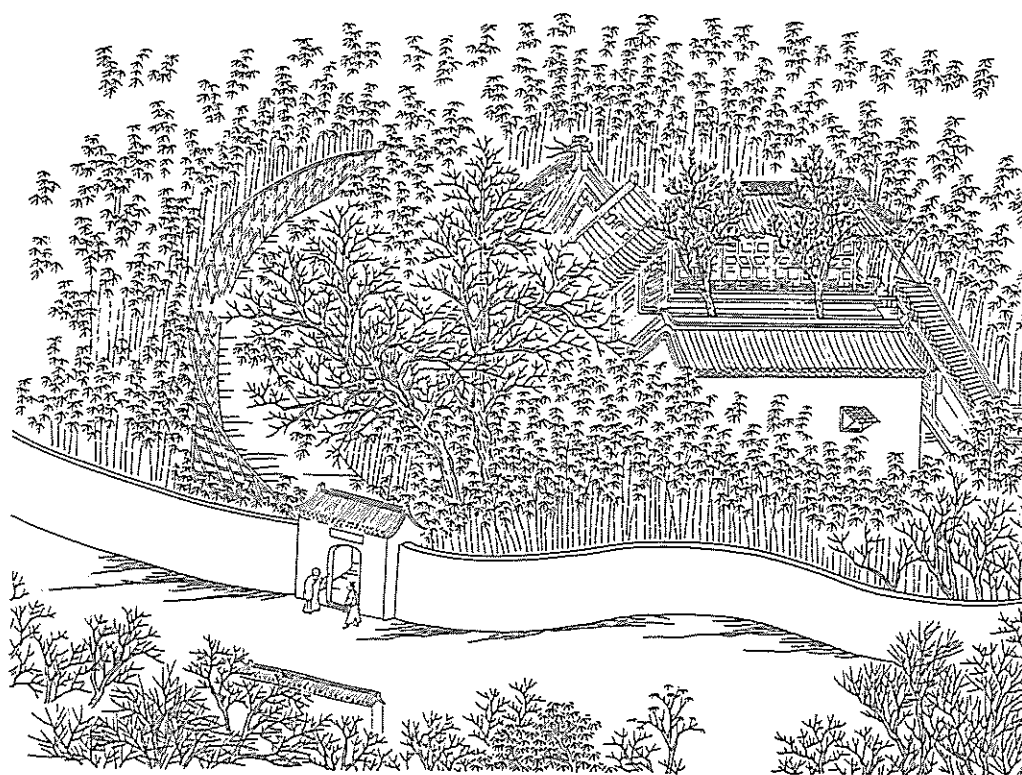
To which I responded:

"To observe the Spring Purification at Red Bridge."

⁷Named Dou 斗. (LQ)

⁸Editor's Note: See Li Dou 李斗, 'The Painted Barges of Yangzhou', translated by Lucie Borota, *Renditions* No. 46 (Autumn 1996), pp. 58–68.

花 尋 樹 雙



No. 154 In Quest of Flowers at the Priory of the Twin Trees

The Priory of the Twin Trees lies to the west of the Bridge of Eternal Spring, and east of the Twenty-four Bridges. I had returned with Ruan Yuan from the One-and-a-Half-Foot Tower, and we rowed our boat to the east. In the distance we saw a bay with peach blossom along the bank, fragrant grass fresh and soft, and a dazzling carpet of fallen petals. It had all the qualities of the ancient Peach Blossom Retreat.¹ South of the blossom stood a pavilion, on the wall of which was mounted a stone inscribed with the words 'Garden of Enchantment'.

My distinguished host commented:

"This is the misty rain of the four bridges."

To the north of the stream there was the rustling and whistling of trees and plants in the wind. There too were the irregular fences and hedges surrounding dwellings. Once again the Grand Old Man commented:

"This is the agriculture and sericulture of Yangzhou."

Going along the stream and following the flowers, we came directly to the gate of Peach Blossom Priory. We entered and saw the Hall of Enlightenment. I recollected that when I had been here last, it was in the sixth month of the cyclic year *bingshen* (1836). The lotus flowers had been in their full bloom and glory. Now it was the third month, and so the peach flowers were in full splendour. Then our conversation turned to the *qiong* or jasper flower.² My Grand Master said:

"The flower was once in the Fanli Temple within the city, but now it is unknown. The old records say that it was twice transplanted in the Song dynasty, and then once lifted up and transported in the Jin dynasty. It withered in the Yuan dynasty. Nowadays people consider the flower of the Eight Immortals (the hortensia) or the Jade Bud (hydrangea) to be the *qiong* flower, and so the controversy goes on.

¹Editor's Note: The description here closely resembles Tao Yuanming's 陶淵明 'Peach Blossom Retreat' 桃花源記.

²According to R.H. Mathews (Chinese-English Dictionary) it is 'a kind of hortensia which is said to confer immortality when eaten.' (JM)

"Lord Han Wei of the Song dynasty³ once wrote a poem on the *qiong* flower, as follows:

The flower of one tree in Weiyang⁴
 Has no peer in the world.
 Each year it blooms in the Earth Temple,
 Precious as the most precious jade.
 Within, it contains the fragrance of hail and ice,
 Without, it attracts the fluttering butterflies.
 The *tumi*⁵ has not its delicate scent,
 The peony⁶ is put to shame.
 It spreads its green around,
 Scatters its orient pearls . . .

"According to this poem, it seems to have been an unusual sort of flower. It is regrettable that no one has ever painted a representation of it. Recently there have been two magnolia trees in the Priory of the Twin Trees, and they are towering beauties in full bloom. Why do we not go and see the sight?"

So we directed our boat southward to the Bridge of Eternal Spring, and then disembarked and walked about two *li* until we saw a long wall winding its way around an enclosure, the lower part constructed of stone patterned like a tiger's stripes. When we entered the gate we saw myriad bamboos towering into the sky, casting a deep pool of green shade. Going further north-west along the fence, our sedan-chairs carried us into the Priory proper.⁷ As soon as we entered we saw two trees of a circumference so large that it would have required two persons joining hands to reach around one of them. The old trunks spread their branches out in all directions, reaching up to the empyrean and striving to reach the Milky

³Han Qi 韓琦, an important statesman of the northern Song dynasty.

⁴Yangzhou.

⁵The translator acknowledges his ignorance of the English name of this flower 茶摩.

⁶The *shaoyao* 芍藥 is generally called the peony, but though seemingly alike, they are in fact different flowers.

⁷*Shanmen* 山門—the common or conventional nomenclature for the gate of a monastery, Buddhist or Taoist.

Way. Turning right along the covered way, we could smell the drifting fragrance of the precious *qiong* flowers.

The monk Shengliang boiled water for tea and entertained us in front of the trees. He also brought out the portfolio of all the presented poems and paintings collected by his Master the Reverend Qing, to entertain us and for our comments. I wrote a complimentary colophon:

"In the cyclic year *gengzi* of the reign of Daoguang (1840), on the first *si* day in the third month, and coincidentally on the festival of Cold Food, the Grand Scholar from Yizheng invited me to accompany him to go boating in his specially made boat called Green Wilderness, and to observe the traditional rites of Spring Purification at Red Bridge; and then to take a little rest in the hills. Master Shengliang showed us this portfolio and asked for some comment. Scrutinising and enjoying the collection I have found all the poets and painters represented here to be renowned scholars and artists, which fact provides eloquent testimony to Master Qing's noble attainments. I avail myself of this opportunity to append these few words to commemorate the providential cause of the meeting."⁸

After I had written this colophon, we left the monastery, embarked on the boat and returned.

⁸The monk Shengliang 勝量 was doing what he had been trained to do every time a V.I.P. came to the priory. But unwittingly he caused these two magnates to have a very unpleasant experience, if not an ordeal. Ruan Yuan was a champion of Confucianism, and in public he had to maintain a distance from Buddhists. Moreover, he was a close relative of the titled representative of Confucius' descendants. Linqing was in a dilemma. He did not want to displease anybody, and he was himself close to the Buddhists. Though he wrote in a stiff style that showed his embarrassment, he did succeed in solving this dilemma.

No. 155 A Tea Party at the Peach Spring Fountain
given for my staff, as a token of my thanks for their arduous work
in helping me collect the arrears in sales and taxes

The *yamen* of the Salt Administration is in the inner city of Yangzhou. The main hall is called the Office of the Administration of the Laws,¹ and there hangs a specimen of the Imperial calligraphy of the Emperor Kangxi—the two horizontal characters *ziyuan*—Purple Wall (or Constellation). To the west are two buildings—the Hall of the Four Rarities,² and the Peach Spring Study, below the steps leading up to which is a stone well, named the Peach Blossom Spring.

In the second month of the cyclic year *gengzi* (1840), when I was attending the office, I received an official message from the Ministry, saying: "We have respectfully received the cinnabar command.³ 'In the triennial review of all officers, the important matter is to encourage them to do their work better than ever. Of all the officials, Manchu or Chinese, those who have worked loyally and industriously, and those who have worked wholeheartedly and painstakingly, should of course be singled out and commended. The Director-General of River Conservancy South of the Yangtze, Linqing, has been conscientious and meticulous in his work, and has maintained the River in a state of peace and tranquillity. Let him be additionally favoured by sending his name to the Ministry for deliberation and commendation. Let this be reverently obeyed.'"⁴

Just prior to this, in the first month, the Imperial legate, the Ministry Vice-President Engui⁵ and the Assistant Justice of the Supreme Court He Rulin⁶ were sent down from Peking to visit and investigate the

¹The Chinese word *tai* 臺 here means office, as in *Yushi tai* 御史臺 (the Censorate). The *taicheng* 臺城 in Nanking (first so called in the Southern dynasties, and still so called to the present day) means simply the city of the Central Government Offices—there has never been any terrace there.

²The source for this is Xie Lingyun 謝靈運.

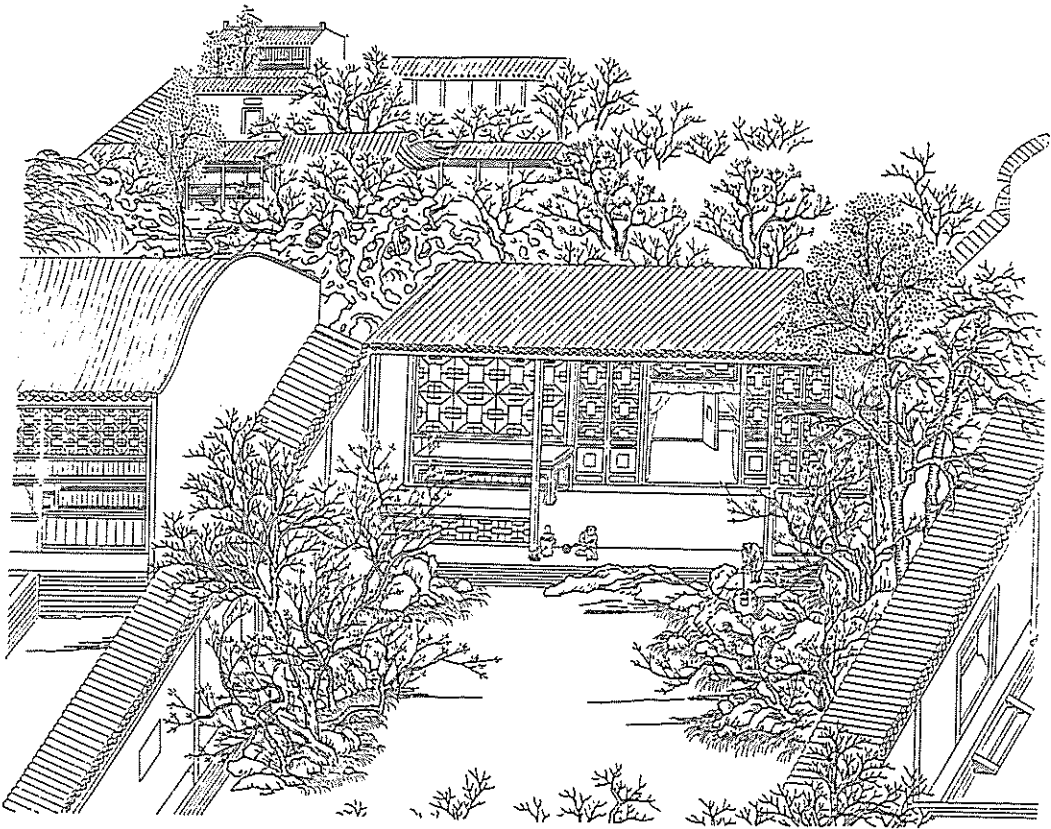
³Command from the emperor.

⁴The conventional ending for an Imperial Edict.

⁵An Imperial Clansman, a *jinshi* now serving as Ministry President, and footsoldier General Commander. (LQ)

⁶Native of Jiangsu, a Selected Candidate, now promoted to Ministry Vice-President and Councillor of the War Council. (LQ)

茗 煮 泉 桃



building materials and construction work on site. They found that the Conservancy construction materials stored at the Yangzhou grain stores were less than the reported quantity, and that the official work at the Su'nan Office was occasionally lax. They requested that the officers responsible be dismissed. The Censor explicitly impeached the Director-General for dereliction of duty. He later received an Imperial Edict. This stated that since the Director-General had not taken delivery of the said materials, the officers concerned should be leniently exculpated from any judicial investigation.

In my memorial of gratitude to the Central Government, I wrote the following words: "My humble and grateful thanks to my sagacious sovereign's Heaven-like Broadmindedness and Magnanimous Liberality, for forgiving my culpability and commending my insignificant merit. Your humble servant, stricken in his conscience, feels all the more shamed upon self-examination . . ." etc.

The salt from the area North of the Huai, regulated by the Ticket system, was reported as all sold, and the Throne was memorialized in the first month of the year. The Transport system for salt⁷ in the area South of the Huai should have its accounts completely settled by the second month of the year, according to regulations. When I assumed the post of salt administrator and received the seal in the previous year, my predecessor had already issued the Transport salt for ten months but had only collected 700,000 taels of silver. There were only two months left, and in those months there would be the 'closure of the seal'.⁸ I was terrified that the uncollected taxes would be classified as a debit amount. Moreover the system of amalgamated accounting practised over the past years had been disallowed by the Ministry in the previous year. Then I memorialized the Throne to borrow 360,000 taels from the Salt Administration of the North Huai area, offering to put down in writing that this amount would be fully returned within three months by the salt

⁷The Transport 網 system and Ticket 票 system were really the same. The first was the old-fashioned licence which had been in the merchant's possession for maybe generations; whereas the second was the reformed system whereby anyone could apply according to law.

⁸The New Year recess, extending to about three weeks.

merchants. This was approved by His Majesty. Reaching Yangzhou I considered and devised all kinds of methods to accelerate the collection work. I informed all the merchants in person. Any merchant who handed in the full amount due would be rewarded with a bonus. They were all enthusiastic and ready to pay the due amount. Thus the eighty-one percent of the Transport sales, the remaining unpaid amounts of the 'D' and 'E' categories of Transport sales, and also the appended 'B' tax were all duly paid, and altogether 2,290,000 taels were collected. This was certainly not what I had initially expected. The fortunate outcome was all due to the assistance of the many friends among my staff members. So, on the second day after the first *si* day, I held a tea party in the Peach Spring Study, and invited my staff members Xiao Meisheng,⁹ Shen Yonglou,¹⁰ and Shen Fengchao,¹¹ to enjoy some Biluochun tea¹² made with boiled water from the spring, and to appreciate some of my paintings and poems. We reclined, wandered about, sat or stood, adopting whatever posture we liked, speaking freely and without restraint. My only regret was that since none of us was any good at chess, we could not do justice to the chess handbook of Fan Xiping.¹³

⁹Named Lingyu 令裕, a Jiangsu man, a senior licentiate, in charge of salt matters and books. (LQ)

¹⁰Named Yuanjie 元杰, a Zhejiang man, clerk in charge of litigation and tax affairs. (LQ)

¹¹Named Tong 桐, a Zhejiang man, Exhibitioner student, in charge of Memorials to the Throne. (LQ)

¹²A kind of tea supposed to be the best of the green teas. This name was generally supposed to have been bestowed by the Emperor Kangxi. (YTH) This 'Green Snail Spring Tea' was for centuries known as 'Astounding Fragrance' 嚇殺人香. According to legend the Emperor Kangxi gave it its new name, after the tightly rolled spiral shape of its processed leaves. It grows on two mountains which poke out of Lake Taihu太湖. One is an island in the lake, the other a peninsula. "The water evaporating from the lake keeps them overhung with clouds and mist, thus the leaves stay moist." See Chow and Kramer, *All the Tea in China* (San Francisco: China Books, 1990). (JM)

¹³Named Shixun 世勳, a Zhejiang man working on Salt Commissioner Gao's staff, who had recently composed and published a widely read *Peach Blossom Spring Chess Manual* 桃花泉弈譜. (LQ) The chess game referred to here is of course the old native Chinese chess, known in Japanese as Go. (YTH)

