THE TRAIL OF JAPANESE INFLUENCE IN OUR MODERN DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE:
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The "Spirit of the Orient" appears to be invading not only American trades and market gardens, but its art and architecture. From the solemn groves of Nikko, from ancient castle moats and mountain shrines, from the wet, shining leaves of water gardens in old Nippon, from the soft curves of the flowing roof lines and the tender tones of the untouched wood surfaces, our modern house-architects are drawing inspiration for new and delightfully "different" effects. Local character in architecture is always a fascinating study, and the high standard of culture in Japan, the refinement of art developed through centuries by a people devoted to the ideal, must of necessity impress itself upon their architecture.

While the mere draughtsman, wedded to conventional forms and accustomed methods, would find Japanese architecture only absurd and impracticable, there are architects who are artists as well, and who find in these sources a delightfully suggestive and enriching field of study. They know that thatched roofs and light sliding partitions are not practicable for American homes, nor do they desire to copy Japanese ideas merely because they are foreign and strange. Charming and interesting as is Japanese tradition in architecture, it is so for Japan and not for us, and it would be foolish indeed to attempt to naturalize in this country many of their local idiosyncrasies.

But the sympathetic student of architectural forms finds much real beauty that can be used to impart a fresh interest to jaded ideas. In the houses here photographed, Messrs. Green & Green of Pasadena, California, have attempted to naturalize in a new world environment the usable and livable features of Japanese architecture. The highly picturesque character of the natural surroundings—the houses being situated on high ground overlooking the wild gorge of the Arroyo Seco—is admirably suited to a certain irregularity and picturesqueness of architectural treatment, and the introduction of Japanese suggestion accentuates the charm.

Although the motif is picturesque, it is not carried to extremes, but an effect of simplicity is obtained in a composition which is in itself rather loose and complicated by the simple treatment of detail. The Japanese system of bracketing, for instance, said by authorities on art to be the acme of perfection for wood, has been adopted in these designs with happy results.

Without employing the queer quirks and angles of Japanese roof lines, their graceful curves, so difficult to achieve, are sufficiently marked to render impossible an effect ordinary or commonplace. While there is a decided Japanese feeling, nothing has been carried to extremes, and the slightly foreign accent has been so modified by principles of good domestic design as to give a wholly normal and satisfying result. The different features are harmonized with admirable skill and a sane and sound judgment.

The photographs give a front and side view of the larger house, which stands upon high ground of a rugged and picturesque character, the site alone costing twenty thousand dollars. The natural irregularities of surface have not been modified, but simply worked into the treatment; as, for instance, where the high retaining wall necessitated in the rear has been picturesquely treated in a postern arch
TWO VIEWS OF THE HOUSE OF CHARLES SUMNER GREENE. “IN THIS HOUSE THE ARCHITECT HAS ATTEMPTED TO NATURALIZE IN A NEW WORLD ENVIRONMENT USABLE AND LIVABLE FEATURES OF JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE.”
"THE HIGH RETAINING WALL IN THE REAR HAS BEEN PICTURESQUELY TREATED IN A POSTERN ARCH AND DOOR WHICH LEADS TO THE GARDEN AND ENCLOSURE."
"A CLOISTERED WALK AT THE SIDE, BETWEEN HIGH LATTICED HEDGES, LEADS TO A JAPANESE WATER GARDEN."
"THE CHIMNEYS ARE STRONGLY SUGGESTIVE OF JAPANESE INFLUENCE."

THE ANGLES OF THE JAPANESE ROOF LINES ARE SUFFICIENTLY MARKED TO RENDER IMPOSSIBLE A COMMONPLACE EFFECT.
and door, which leads to the garden enclosure. A cloistered walk from the side, between high latticed hedges, leads to a Japanese water garden; this walk, as also the broad terraced esplanade leading to the entrance, is paved with large, square tiles of hard-burned brick. The steps and porch pavements are the same. Hard-burned clinker bricks set roughly in dark mortar are used in the foundation and in the entrance pillars and chimneys, strikingly combined with large, mossy boulders brought from the near-by mountains. The warm purplish-brown of the brick in combination with the mossy boulders and the soft grays and browns of the wood construction give a color effect of great beauty and softness.

The chimneys are strongly suggestive of Japanese influence, as are also the treatment of the windows and the open rafter work. Great simplicity characterizes the construction, which is all exposed and made to form the decorative features. The timbers are mortised together with oak pins, and nails are used scarcely at all in the construction.

While groups of mullioned windows are largely employed, Japanese suggestion is again felt in the narrow slits of windows which open on the side terrace, with but one long, narrow light, divided in the center by a single wood muntin.

The house contains seventeen rooms. No attempt has been made to introduce Japanese ideas in the interior arrangement, which is that of the usual high-class modern home. The living and dining rooms are heavily wainscoted and beamed, the solid ceiling beams of the construction being exposed in true Craftsman style. Simple Craftsman ideas are carried out in the finish and furniture.

Most of the walls are plastered and colored with oil stains; though some of the bedroom walls are wood paneled. One chamber has walls of pale blue, a cedar floor to which a bluish tone has been given, and fireplace facings of blue tile, the tile cut in a continuous decorative design.

Another bedroom has pale green walls with a fireplace of green and gray-brown tiles in Indian basket pattern. Clerestory windows, glazed in opalescent glass, are a feature of this room.

All the upper rooms open upon an upper court inclosed with glass, in which there is a fountain, plants, vine-covered trellis and built-in seats.

Two views are given of the architect’s own residence, which nearly adjoins the house just described and which embodies similar ideas. That all appearance of sameness or monotony of treatment should be entirely absent from designs based upon the same general picturesque motif is evidence of the skill and fertility of the designer.

Such architecture can be the result of no hard and fast rules. Not only must the architect possess the artist temperament to begin with, but the trained eye for harmonious detail, the eye as sensitive to discords of form and color as the trained ear of the musician is to discords of sound. It is the aim of these architects to interpret these subtle harmonies by their work, and above all things to have all construction and materials true to their own nature, believing that brick treated simply as brick, stone as stone or wood as wood, is better than any disguise that can be put upon them.