TO A CHINESE SACRED LILY: BY PHYLLIS WARD

I stand and worship at thy pagan shrine,
Thou flower of the mystic East! and see
With inward eye that priestly pageantry—
A nation going forth to worship thee!
Thy fragrance, like a rising incense sweet,
From some old Chinese temple, fills the air,
And with its magic seems to show them there,
Ascending slowly the pagoda stair,
Bearing within their arms thy creamy blooms!
How many million souls have nurtured thee
Down through the ages till you come to me,
To open out upon the world and see
No kneeling forms or high, dim temple roof,
Only an alien worshipper, intent
On thee, thou mystery of the Orient!