

wood and river, refreshing to mind and eye alike. These are all the work of my hands, but there is, one, a gem, on an oval section of an elephants tusk four inches high and eight long showing the great Hall of Audience, in the Fort at Delhi, when the famous Akbar once sat on his peacock throne. This painting shows the long rows of pillars and the many hued mosaic floor, in lovely perspective

with a glimpse of blue sky and trees at the far end. I look at my treasures, and feel thankful that God has given me so delightful a home, and raised me up so many friends who have contributed many curious and pretty things to my collection. I nearly forgot a stone which is nearly two thousand years old, which was found in excavations about the ruins of an old Buddhist temple. When I

think of the changes that have come and gone, since that stone left the sculptors hands, I feel most grateful that I was born under the present dispensation.

I declare that this is a true and unaided account of My Room.

HELEN JACKSON.
Bengal,
India.

"MY ROOM."

(PRIZE, ONE GUINEA.)

THE room where much of my time is spent is a quaint yet comfortable one of a large and rambling bungalow in North China. It is general sitting-room, and we often spend a long day in it most comfortably.

It is full of souvenirs, and odds and ends, collected from many places in "The Far East."

The pattern of the wall paper is soft and beautiful. It has a gold base, on which are large peonies in harmonious shades of pink and green. There are two French windows opening on to a broad veranda, full of flowers, both in summer and winter. The room faces the west, and the outlook on to the garden is very pleasant. Below two grass terraces laid out in flower-beds are the tennis lawns, and behind them lies the shrubbery. Looking over it, and the top of a small white summer-house, the eye falls on the harbour, dotted over with countless junks, and never-resting 'sampans.'

On the opposite coast there are the near hills, on the top of the largest of which is a Chinese mud fort; and to the right is a large pine-forest, and a long stretch of sea and sand. Still further away are more water and more hills, till those most distant are mingled into a purple whole, gorgeous in the evening sun-set.

The ceiling is a low one of a deep shade of blue, bordered with a white cornice. In the centre, above the chandelier, are two large dragons, carved and coloured, and made to look as life-like as possible. Their bodies are curled round a white and gilt circle about four feet in diameter. Open-mouthed, their long teeth and tongues showing, and claws outstretched, they reach across to each other, fighting for a large imitation pearl that lies between them. The dragon is the emblem of China; his figure adorns the national flag; and the annual feast and procession held in his honour, is one of the most striking and interesting spectacles to be seen in the East.

On the floor, over the carpet, numerous soft rugs are laid before the lounges, door, windows, and fire-place.

The walls are hung with many oil-paintings, hanging brackets, (of old gold plush and gilt with a candelabra attached to each), plates, and jars fixed on to carved stands.

The room is full of small tables bearing jars of antique jars, some of rare china, others of the celebrated Foochow lacquer, clasonné, or of inlaid Japanese ware; books of photographs of places visited, of poems, and of arts; easy chairs; pots of small bamboos and palms; and tall vases.

On entering the room from the hall by the only door, one's eye immediately falls on the

well-known engraving of the meeting between Wellington and Blucher after the Battle of Waterloo. The original wall-painting by Daniel Maclise R.A. is in the Palace of Westminster.

A heavy black-wood table with a marble top, and inlaid with mother of pearl, stands under the picture. On it among other things is the figure of a man made from the root of a tree.

The Chinese are wonderfully clever in making different articles and ornaments from roots of trees. For this purpose the roots of the Banyan, which are very knarled and knotted, are principally used. Quick to see what the grotesque shapes the roots naturally assume most resemble, they model and prune them, so that with but slight alteration they take various ornamental forms.

A table made in the same quaint manner stands to one side, and on it a handsome bronze ornament is placed. It is shaped like a monstrous lotus, with a small bird perched on the top of a large pod, out of which it is pecking seeds. This ornament is in reality one of the many varieties of incense-burners, which are used by Chinese priests in the native temples. On the mantle-piece of white-marble—over which is a large mirror, and which is inlaid with a brass fire-place—there is among other photographs of well-known characters, a photo of General Gordon, ("Chinese Gordon" as we always call him). My parents met him in Tienstin some years ago, and for him my father prepared a house in which he spent a few days.

In that very house not long after I was born. Behind a sofa, and a tall standing lamp of brass, is that part of the room known as 'the Korean corner.' A collection of things made during a visit to Korea is arrayed here. There is an embroidered screen which was given to the friend who gave it to us by the late queen of that country. It is a folding one, about four feet in height, but it is of great length when stretched out to its fullest extent. It is embellished with wonderful temples, and trees, and men, depicted in gorgeous silks, and brightest colours.

A native dinner-service of brass for one person, consisting of eighteen pieces, on a characteristic table also attracts much attention. Quaint wine-cups, bowls, pipes, fans, boxes, hats, figures, shoes, and many other articles of like description are arranged on a Korean cabinet. The Koreans are rapidly losing the art of making the ornaments, and delicate nick-nacks, which are so much valued by travellers.

"MY ROOM."

(PRIZE, ONE GUINEA.)

THE room in which we usually sit, is the library; it is a large oblong room with two windows over-looking the street. The wall-paper is of a soft, dark-green shade which matched with the carpet, the two cosy corner-sofas, and the two low easy-chairs on both

sides of the fireplace, as well as with the covering of the table which is placed under the gaz-lamp in the middle of the room. The window-curtains are cream and pale-pink; the heavier ones over them are of the same dark-green stuff than the sofas and the easy-chairs.

Of all our collection, the most valuable thing we have is a red lacquer box of royal ware. The surface is divided into little squares, on each of which is a grotesque painting of an animal or plant. It was stolen from the palace in the scramble that ensued after the murder of the late queen. Koreans if not of royal blood are prohibited, under severest penalties, from having such a box in their possession. The bracket in this corner is draped with yellow, and native gods in china, marble and soap-stone stand on it.

Opposite to this corner, and behind a large and handsome screen of carved black-wood, with china panels on which are depicted scenes of Chinese life, is that in which the piano, violins, and other musical instruments are placed. To one side is a stand full of music books, and a tall lamp with a pink shade throws in the evening a softened light over the whole.

Between a lacquer table on which are chess-boards, draught boards, cards, and other games, and another blackwood and mother-of-pearl table bearing jars and boxes, is a corner devoted to art.

Here is an easel, draped with native silk embroidery, on which is a large painting, and another stand containing numerous books of art, both ancient and modern.

The bracket here holds small pagodas of fine soap-stone and fans.

In the fourth and last corner there is a large and comfortable lounge, over which is spread a satin cover, embroidered by the Chinese in which art they excel.

On the bracket above it, draped with red plush, stand an ostrich egg, and small ornaments of mother-of-pearl.

Before one of the windows is a black writing-table with silver-fittings and a Japanese blotter.

Between the door and the Korean cabinet, along with pipes four feet in length, is a short sword which is interesting as a trophy from the late war in Formosa. It is broad and thick, and the handle is red and octagonal in shape.

Many of the curios have an interesting history attached to them, and others from their rarity and quaintness merit attention, but space forbids each being separately mentioned; most bring back to the writer old faces, and scenes, and so varied and sweet is the association of the ideas that they bring, that I can never feel in this room the need of either book or companion.

MURIEL F. CARRAL.
Cheloo,
China.

Opposite the chimney is the piano on which there is a metronome; beside it, is a whatnot on the uppermost shelf of which is placed a group; it represents a shepherd sitting on the ground and dressed like the peasants of this country; he has a white shirt on, with sleeves