

## LAHORE.

The Shahlimar Bagh, or Imperial Garden Palace, some six miles east of the Lahore Fort, was designed and built in 1637 A.D. for Shâh Jahân by Ali Mardan Khan, in development of Jahângîr's Shahlimar gardens on the city lake at Srinaggar in Kashmir. This latter well-known summer retreat, measuring 500 by 207 yards, is enclosed by a masonry wall 10 feet high, and arranged in four terraces. A mountain stream traverses the water channels and cascades of the garden. There are various pavilions, the uppermost being the best and surrounded by fountains.

The Lahore garden, measuring about 520 by 230 yards, is shut in by a masonry wall 20 feet high, and arranged in three terraces with a number of alcoves, gateways, and isolated pavilions; on the east side there is a Turkish bath, or hammam. Water from the Bari Doab Canal traverses the channels, cascades, and fountain tanks from south to north.

The disturbed state of the Punjab in the eighteenth century placed the palaces and buildings at the mercy of Afghans and Sikhs. The invading army of Nadir Shah encamped in the gardens in A.D. 1738. Ten years later Ahmed Shah's camp was fixed in the vicinity. Shortly after, 1799, Ranjit Singh restored the gardens, which had gone to ruin during the troublous times of Ahmed Shah, but he removed the marble pavilions and substituted plaster structures in their place.

As will be seen from Plate 78, the arrangement of the Shahlimar Gardens follows the usual formal plan of the Muhammadans. On entering the gateway to the south, there are four square plots separated by water channels and a row of fountains down their centre. Each plot is alike, arranged as shown at O. Between the west and east enclosure walls are two pavilions, one now used for natives, the other for European visitors. The latter was probably the women's apartments, as it is shut in from outside by a small projecting garden (not shown on the plan). Passing up the centre avenue, one reaches the principal pavilion and large tank, L, filled with fountains and surrounded by ornamental flower beds. South-east of this pavilion is a building called the Khwâbgâh, or sleeping room, and in the centre of the east boundary wall of the grounds a Hammam, consisting of various domed rooms, fitted with brightly painted doors. The terraces flanking the large central tank east and west are 14 feet below the upper garden, and 4 feet 6 inches above the lower garden. The tank and its walks are raised some 4 feet 6 inches above this intermediate terrace, forming, with its fountains and pavilions, the chief attraction of the place. The lower garden is broken up into four square plots, each arranged as at B, and separated by water channels and walks. The gateways at D and E are decorated with tiles. The brick-on-edge walks are damaged by the overflow of the water from the channels, and the trees and shrubs closely packed present a jungly appearance.

Writing on 6th May 1820, Moorcroft says: "I started at three, and at nine reached Shahlimar, the large garden laid out by order of Shâh Jahân, where I took up my abode in a chamber erected by the Raja close to a well, and a reservoir which it supplies, and from which jets-d'eau are made to play so near to the apartment as to cool the air at its entrance. Ranjit Singh has to a considerable extent put the garden in repair. It is said to contain 100 bigahs, the whole enclosed by a wall, in the course of which are several buildings. The grounds are intersected by canals, and the walks are formed of bricks laid edgeways. In the middle of the garden is a large square basin for holding water, furnished with copper tubes for fountains, and a white marble slope, carved into a surface of leaves and shells, divided into compartments by lines of black marble. There are some open apartments of white marble of one storey on a level with the basin, which present in front a square marble chamber, with recesses on its sides for lamps, before which water may be made to fall in sheets from a ledge rounding the room at top, while streams of water spout up through holes in the floor. This is called "Sawan Bhadon," as imitative of the alternation of light and darkness with clouds and heavy showers in the season of the rains. The ground is laid out in platforms and is covered with fruit trees."

Plate 81 shows the marble details of the fountains, &c., in the great tank at L on the General Plan.

Much has been done to improve the condition of the grounds and prevent their being flooded, but the flow of water through the channels is still out of control, and the lower terraces get frequently swamped, thereby causing deterioration of the masonry walls and walks. Repairs have also been applied to some of the pavilions, &c., but a good deal remains to be done before the place can be said to be in proper preservation.

Muhammadan princes all over the world showed as much taste in their dwellings as in their mosques and tombs, but as the conditions of climate, custom, and religion necessitated a special type of building, their palaces were not compact masses like those in Europe, but consisted of a number of detached pavilions, reception rooms of great and little state, sleeping and other apartments, scattered over large spaces and separated by trees and gardens; they were therefore more liable to succumb to the ravages of time and weather, or to mutilation by invaders and conquerors.