

that the right hand branch (with intermediate sized flowers) was more like an apricot than a peach bloom. The photo of the large conspicuous white-flowered type some did not recognize as being a peach flower, though others said that kind was never cultivated in the orchards but only for ornament, as it never bore anything but scrubby little fruit, bitter and leathery. Now my own recollection, though I do not recollect ever having been through a peach orchard here in North China during flowering season, only passing them in the railway train, is that the orchards show white predominatingly, and I distinctly recollect trying to get some pink double flowering peach potted plants last spring and was rather struck with the fact that I could not find anything except clear pure white, as you say, not even the cerise colored ones which I know are abundant in south and west China and in Japan. Yet the ordinary name for pink is peach flower color, and notwithstanding the love of Chinese for color, it is used sparingly, in fact, owing to its being associated with the peach blossom, seems to have an unsavory significance, as I found when I came home one day with a pink satin brocade gown that I had just purchased. My people held up their hands in horror, and exclaimed it was a mercy that I did not intend to wear that here, it would only do for outside countries that did not know about peach flowers, which remarks led me to leave it in America when I came back, though it was a very lovely delicate color and one of my prettiest gowns.

"The reason for this prejudice is owing to its symbolism. Just as the violet is considered in western lands to be the symbol of modest worth, so the plum is that of feminine virtue in China and the peach flower the opposite. Not even the beauty of its color, whether delicate pink or deep cerise, redeems it from this fatal significance. In order that there may be no possible opportunity for a 'peach flower heart' to spring up unawares in some girl of respectable family, it is not considered wise to plant a peach of any kind near the bed room windows of the court yards inhabited by the women, yet peach wands are supposed to be especially useful to beat off all evil spirits, only they must be plucked during a solar eclipse and a hole bored through one end for hanging up by, during a lunar eclipse, which perhaps accounts for their fewness, as during those times in the old days the people were generally busily occupied in beating gongs and firing off crackers to drive away the heavenly dogs which were supposed to be devouring those luminaries, and no one had time to think of making peach wands! The lucky possessor of an efficacious peach wand is supposed to be able to sleep at night with it under his pillow in full confidence that no evil spirits can harm him!