

MOSS OR WINGS?

The Chinese landscape gives wings to the beholder, but it does not rest him. He cannot linger on soft moss in a secluded grove, or in the shade of Corot's trees, he cannot find his home in a Ruisdael hamlet. He has to look at the woods from afar; he has to pass the hut by the wayside and journey to the pagoda on the hill, which will give him no shelter; he will take off from there into space filled with more mountains rising out of the mist of tomorrow. The Western landscape reminds us of some summer day of the past, when we ourselves have seen just that radiance of light and color in the country we love. To delight our eyes it blends the accidental beauties of color and planes, preserving a beautiful moment that otherwise would be lost.

The Chinese landscape promises to show us all the glories of creation, if we dare abandon our safe foothold on

that little part of the world over which we are master. It fulfills man's age-old longing for wings, the longing of Faust to follow the course of the sun:

Ah, that no wing can lift me from
the soil,
Upon its track to follow, follow soaring!

Then would I see eternal Evening
gild,
The silent world beneath me glowing,
On fire each mountain peak, with
peace each valley filled,
The silver brook to golden rivers
flowing.

The mountain chain, with all its
gorges deep,
Would then no more impede my
god-like motion,
And now before mine eyes expands
the ocean
With all its bays, in shining sleep.

MEDITATION

By Wei Li Bo

The evening rain has quenched the swirling dust
Raised in the heat of day by summer wind.

The yellow moon emerged from shadowy clouds
And through the plane trees cast her peaceful beams.

Through silence of the night from leaf and tree
Rings faint the reverent chime of silver drops.

*MODERN PHOTOGRAPHS OR
ANCIENT PAINTINGS?*

Fig. I This dramatic scene, photographed by Hedda Hammer in the Hua Shan of Shensi, might have been chosen as the subject for a painting in the T'ang or Sung dynasty

