GARDENS

A major civic improvement proposed by the Ministry of Culture is the re-creation of the royal gardens in the area between Chehel Sotoon, Hasht-Behesht and Chahar Bagh. The acres of devastation, 1, preparatory to the creation of this public park in the very heart of the city where land value is highest, presents a remarkable sight to a European accustomed to the high densities of city centres resulting from speculation. The gardens have not yet been designed but it is essential that they should not imitate Western example and in particular the kind of fragmentary municipal gardening seen in the Maidan. Instead the model should be the geometric patterns and rich planting of the traditional Persian garden, with its oriental planes, poplars, fruit trees and water channels. Furthermore they should not be thrown wide open to the Chahar Bagh but entered more gently through archways beneath the street buildings, 2, or through protecting walls, 3.

From the Boland basaar an unexpected entrance could be via an archway into a small transitional space—a courtyard with orange trees, overhung with vines, 4, 5.

Key plan showing area of the proposed gardens tinted.

Key

a. Chahar Bagh
b. Lower Chahar Bagh
c. Hekmat Neyazi Avenue
d. Huz-e-Silas Avenue
e. Abdorrazzaq Avenue
f. Soor Ershadi Avenue
g. Hasht Behesht Boulevards
h. Maidan-i-Shah
i. Shah Abbas Avenue
At the intersection of the water channels would be garden kiosks, 6, with the Hasht-Behesht or Pavilion of the Eight Paradises (see p. 258), now being skilfully restored, as the focal point with its waterways, fountains and bosky setting carefully recreated, 7. Where, on the east side, it is necessary to cross a busy road (Soor Esrafil Avenue) this might be effected by a high arcaded perimeter wall screening the traffic with a broad pedestrian underpass beneath it—also arcaded and with a central pool providing welcome summer shade, 8.