



Floral Designs and Room Decorations
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Fashions in flowers and the modes of constructing designs now vary considerably from what they were formerly. Since the rage for roses began, a dozen years ago, it is safe to say that nine-tenths of the whole bulk of flowers used are roses. These are largely used in making up bouquets, baskets, and all kinds of floral ornaments for the table, and, in a majority, these are made up exclusively of roses, while for corsage bouquets little else is used in winter, and those often contain as many as two dozen roses of one color. In figure 1 is seen a basket tastefully arranged with roses, lily of the valley and fern leaves, figure 2 represents a hand bouquet of roses, and figure 3 a corsage bouquet. In the fall and early winter months chrysanthemums are perhaps used to a greater extent than any other flower. In the months of November and December, nearly every other well dressed lady to be met with on the fashionable streets of New York, is found wearing a corsage bouquet of chrysanthemums, and from their great range of color almost every shade of dress can be matched except blue. All roses are now used with long stems, in fact, since the use of loose bunches of flowers has come in vogue, replacing to a great extent the formal bouquets and baskets, flowers of nearly all kinds that can be cut with long stems, are so gathered. One of the present fashions of using flowers for decoration of rooms is, to select colors of flowers to match the furniture, thus, if the furniture is pink, the flowers used are, as far as possible, of that color, if of orange or yellow, flowers of yellowish tints are used, if of crimson, the flowers as near to that color as possible are employed, and so on.

A beautiful and novel style of wreath for funeral work is formed from the pressed leaves of the Imperial Silver Tree (*Leucodendron argenteum*), which many of the enterprising florists are now importing. The leaves, when pressed and dried, gladden like silver and form a most graceful casket or wreath. There have been some attempts made, I believe, to grow the plants here, but as its leaves are valuable only when pressed and dried, it seems, if it is to come into general use, the cheaper way would be to still import the leaves in that state from Italy, where it is hardy enough to stand in the open air. Designs of every imaginable description are now made of flowers—shields, rainbows, canopies (un-



FIG. 2—HAND BOUQUET.

der which the marriage ceremony is performed), etc. A well-known florist of New York informed me that he has received \$400 for the floral canopy supplied for the marriage of the daughter of one of New York's best-known citizens, and the flowers used for the decoration of rooms in all totaled up \$3,000. These are rare occasions, however, though \$500 and \$1,000 are not unusual. The charge for the halls of the American Club, of New York, in Tweed's palmy days, often cost \$4,000 for a single night.

PLANTS USED FOR DECORATION OF ROOMS.
In many cities of Europe, but particularly in London, an immense business is done in loading plants for the decoration of public halls, churches,

and private dwellings. For the past dozen years a good deal has been done in it in our own large cities, but our climate in winter is often such that it is a very hazardous matter to transport tropical plants, even for a short distance, when the thermometer stands at zero, with a high wind. Unless tight-covered wagons are used, with some means of heating them inside, even a distance of half a mile may be fatal to the plants. Taking these risks into consideration, together with the injury often done to the plants by gas, by getting dry, or by other

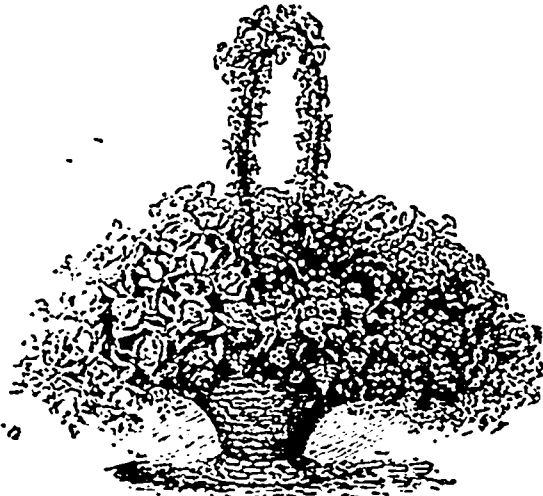


FIG. 1.—A ROSE BASKET.

accidents, at least twenty-five per cent. of the value of the plants should be received per night for the loan, that is, for each plant, the selling value of which is ten dollars, the nightly rent should be two dollars and fifty cents, if for one night only; and, of course, if for a longer time, the price might be reduced accordingly. Again, the distance and the time of the year should enter into the question. If the distance is great and the weather severe, the risk to the owner of the plants is increased, and he should charge accordingly.

The kinds of plants used are comparatively few and are such as are valued for grace of form and foliage more than for flower. The place where the plants are to be used must determine their size and their kind, if for very large halls, then large palms—often six feet in height and diameter—are used; but if for church decoration, to be simply used on the platform, plants from one to three feet are best, and here flowering plants, particularly at Easter, are used in preference. Among the palms best suited for decoration are: *Lactinia Barbiana*, *Sceptraria elegans*, *Crataea Australis*, *E. Minorensis*, *E. Falcata*, *E. Wendlandii*, *Areca intermixta*, *A. Pinnata*, *A. Verschaffeltii*, *Raphis saliciformis*, *Phenax raphide*, *P. ovata*, *P. trivialis*, *Corypha Australis*, *Chamaerops excelsa* and *Corypha Weddiana*, of *Draecena*: *D. terminalis*, *D. latifolia*, *D. Cooperii*, *D. fragrans*, *D. draca* and *D. Australis*. The "rubber plant," *Ficus elastica*, *Ficus virens*, *F. Trichilia*, are all much used. Plants used in fruit or flower, such as *Solanum Lindleyi*, *Ardisia crenata*, Chinese Primrose, *Dianthus*, *Hyacinth*, *Clematis*, *Aspidistra*, *Geraniums*, *Hyacinths*, and *Tulips*, *Miscanthus*, *Malva Flandria*, or other white roses, are all used for decoration at Easter, and on other occasions for church work. For decoration at any date previous to January, nothing is equal to well-grown plants of chrysanthemums, which are now largely used for such purposes.

For the terraces of summer hotels—or such places as plants are used for decoration during summer or early fall months—the fancy-leaved *Coleus* of which there are now a most extensive variety, truly wonderful in their leaf markings (a description of which it is useless to attempt), are best adapted, as they are of the easiest growth during the hot months. Plants from three-foot pots in May may be grown to a width of one and one-half to two feet by September. The fancy

kinds of *Coleus*, though most of them are useless for planting in the open ground, are easily grown under glass, and make grand plants for summer or fall decoration, as their beautiful markings become fully developed when sheltered by glass.

Crosses and Hybrids.

In common usage, the result of the crossing of two different plants is called a *hybrid*. Even intelligent horticulturists, to whom we look for accuracy in the use of terms, make this mistake. *Hybrids* are rare, but *crosses* are frequent. Both are produced in a similar manner, and the result may be a cross or a hybrid according to the degree of relationship between the two parents. A cross is the offspring of two varieties, as the hybrid is that of two species. This implies that we should define the difference between a species and a variety. As this is a subject upon which much has been written, and but little decided by the most profound botanists, we will content ourselves with the horticultural definition: A species generally comes true from seed, while a variety rarely does so. We are aware that this definition may be criticised, but it is generally correct. For example, the European and the American Red Raspberry, the Black Raspberry, and the Blackberry are all three distinct species of the genus *Rubus*. The "Clarke" and "Hornet" Raspberries of our gardens, are varieties of the European *Rubus Idæus*. The "Doolittle" and "Mammoth Cluster" are varieties of the American *Rubus occidentalis*, the Black-cap Raspberry. The "Kittanning" and "Dorchester" are varieties of the Blackberry, still another species of *Rubus*, *R. nigrus*. Were the flowers of the "Clarke" Raspberry to be fertilized with those of the "Hornet," the result, being the progeny of two varieties, would be a cross. If, instead of the "Hornet," the "Clarke" were fertilized with the "Doolittle," and any progeny resulted, that, being the result of two distinct species, would be a hybrid. Hybrids are of so much less frequent occurrence than crosses that the term should never be used as a synonym for cross.

In producing crosses and hybrids, we have, in the first place, to use every possible care to prevent the flower from being fertilized by its own pollen, and, secondly, to apply to the stigma that from a



FIG. 3—CORSAGE BOUQUET.

flower of another variety or species. As soon as the flower to be fertilized opens, the anthers are cut away by the use of small scissors, and the pollen from the flower used as a fertilizer applied to the stigma produces an abundance of pollen, merely shaking the flower will suffice. Generally, however, it is best to collect the pollen upon a small camel-hair pencil, and transfer it to the stigma. After pollen has been applied to a stigma, that stigma should be covered with mesh to prevent insects from bringing other pollen and interfering with the work,