

England, and other men in France, began some pioneer work in cross-fertilization of roses, a new era began in the world of floriculture, and the role which the rose has played in the efficient development and understanding of the art of plant improvement is only realized when we compare a modern plant catalogue, and especially a rose catalogue, with one printed less than fifty years ago, and then, few, we suppose, really grasp the meaning of the difference in such lists.

But let these few last words be for the consideration of the real role of the rose. One has said "What muse has been able or language sufficient, to do justice to a plant that has been denominated the Daughter of Heaven, the Glory of the Spring, and the Ornament of the Earth. . . . To paint this universal emblem of delicate splendor in its own hues, the pencil should be dipped in the tints of Aurora when arising amidst her aerial glory. Human art can neither colour nor describe so fair a flower. Venus herself finds a rival in the rose, whose beauty is composed of all that is exquisite and graceful." And it may be justly concluded that to possess such a flower and to grow it for its fragrance and beauty has been a potent desire which has led to the creation of many of those beautiful gardens not only around the "Stately Homes of England," but in ever increasing number on this continent also, and standing in one of these gardens and beholding the roses, or sitting in the doorway of one of the humblest cottages of the land, and scenting the fragrance of roses climbing around tiny windows, can any being revel in gross selfishness or remain unconscious to the fact that such flowers would win him to magnanimous conduct and invite him to be their messengers to carry fragrance and cheer to the sick and afflicted of mankind? And is there a man who can sell himself to pure utilitarianism when around him are examples of a type of beauty which has won multitudes of mankind to taste through the joys of the aesthetic life the real fulness of living? And surely none can be mere animal only in passions when forms so perfect in symmetry and shape appeal to him to witness their perfect modesty and grace?

The rose, Queen of Flowers, has a true role in this world, and that role no mortal may dare make light of. To take chief part in shaping the aesthetic taste in man, to encourage the love of the garden, the love of fragrance, of beauty of form, of exquisite color is a task of no mean order, and yet the modern rose is encouraging, more than ever before, a more clamorous appetite, a truer aesthetic thirst for these things, a true indication, surely, that her supremacy is secure and her role a beneficent one.