

THE ORCHID IS THE FASHION FOR BRIDES



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BRIDE ROSES, the great white La Marques that used to be so fashionable, are out of date. Smart brides are carrying nothing but orchids this season. Queen Wilhelmina of Holland did not exactly set the fashion, but she put the seal of her approval on this rare blossom. Queen Wilhelmina's bridal bouquet was of orchids.

Local brides have been in the habit of having their bouquets made of their favorite flower—roses, usually; sometimes orange blossoms. But the real *seigne* *siecle* brides, those that like to do things as New York does them, will have nothing but orchids. Margaret Cole had a bouquet of the most beautiful orchids that were ever seen at a wedding when she married Lieutenant Martin Crimmins. The exquisite blooms were not, however, lovelier than the blonde beauty who carried them.

It was orchids that Colonel Walter Martin sent to Miss Mary Scott during the period of his courtship—a cluster of orchids every day.

On Christmas and Easter the seven altars at St. Ignatius Church are decorated with many thousands of dollars' worth of orchids, bowers of the snowy blossoms making a sight that draws large numbers of visitors, especially tourists from the East and Europe. These costly flowers are the gift of Miss Gately and of Mrs. Andrew Welch, the mother of Mrs. Eugene Lent. Mrs. Welch has no conservatory of her own, but buys the orchids from private growers in the country.

An annual exhibition of orchids, such as is held in New York, will be the next thing, now that the orchid flower has become the rage in swifdom. Out in Golden Gate Park conservatories are some rare orchids, and in the private greenhouses of our wealthy families the orchid grows in variety if not profusion. Orchids do not multiply by propagation, as do roses and carnations; the majority of them have been imported from their native wild homes. The European and Eastern florists keep men employed all the year round in the tropics collecting orchids.

Since they became the favorite adornment for dinner tables at set functions the demand has far exceeded the supply. In the conservatories of Timothy Hopkins' country place are found the most magnificent orchids of this part of the world. Mary Bates McClellan's greenhouses also contain rare orchids, as do the conservatories of D. O. Mills and other Menlo Park and Burlingame residents.

Miss Jennie Flood, Mrs. Eleanor Martin, Mrs. Sherwood, A. B. Forbes, Mrs. Sloes, Mrs. Gerstle, Miss Nellie Dore, Colonel W. M. Lent, Mrs. Will Crocker, Mrs. William M. Pierson, Dr. Brigham, Mrs. Mau—these are a few of San Francisco's prominent orchid collectors.

To discourse intelligently upon orchids one has to study the subject, for it is as complicated as the study of porcelains. If you talk to a florist about orchids he will be able to explain what are Cattleyas or Cypripediums or Odontoglossums or Oncidiums. He will tell you the orchid family of plants is divided into two groups—Epiphytal and Terrestrial. The former are commonly called air plants, and in-



clude Cattleyas, Oncidiums and Phalaenopsis. They grow on trees and rocks for support only. Terrestrial orchids grow like lilies and larkspurs, on the ground; the Cypripedium and Masdevallias are examples.

They grow all over the world, the Terrestrial abounding in the colder climates, while in the tropical regions are found immense varieties of Epiphytal orchids. El Spirito Santo, a very rare orchid, comes from Panama and the Phajus from India. Soldiers returning from the Philippines brought many lovely orchids from the islands. The vanilla orchid is the most valuable from an economic point of view, as from it we get the bean and flavoring extract of common use.

The florist tells one that he divides his orchids into four groups—hardy, cool, intermediate and tropical—according to their temperament. Cultivators prefer the winter blooming kinds, which are the best known and least expensive.

One rarely sees a blue orchid. Orange and scarlet are more often found, but white orchids are the least rare. The white orchids are the easiest to raise, but require care, attention and a personal feeling of interest in their growth.

Evening and Seden, the great London orchid specialists, have succeeded in growing orchids from seeds. They began with the ordinary varieties and continued their experiments with wonderful success to the rarer varieties.

The most valuable and expensive col-

lection of orchids in America is that of F. L. Ames of North Easton, Mass. It is valued at \$200,000. Hicks Arnold of New York has a valuable collection, and W. S. Kimball values his orchids at \$125,000.

In the conservatories of the Duke of Marlborough, Consuelo Vanderbilt's husband, are beautiful orchids. In the lifetime of the old Duke these orchids helped in a manner to maintain the household. It is considered quite the thing among impetuous noblemen in England who own conservatories to sell the products of their gardeners' skill. Of course, this is done *sub rosa*, and the "city" man—the banker or broker of means—whose elegant dinner table is garnished with rare orchids, does not know that the exquisite blossoms came from a private conservatory.

The price of an orchid depends upon its size, quality and general condition of health. The *Laelia Callistoglossa* is worth \$500 a head. One thousand dollars was paid for a *Vanda Sanderiana* by a Mr. Osbourne of New York—the largest price ever given for an orchid in this country. It was originally the property of Mrs. Morgan of "peach blow vase" fame.

Among commercial florists Pitcher & Manda of Short Hills, N. J., have the

largest and most valuable collection in the United States, the value of which is placed at \$100,000. Siebrecht & Wadley of New Rochelle have the next in value. Among florists who make a specialty of orchids are W. Matthews of Utica, N. Y.; F. Mau of Weehawken, N. J.; Brackenridge & Co. of Govanston, Md.; John Saul of Washington, D. C.; I. Fosterman of Newton, L. I., and Henry Dreer of Philadelphia. In our part of the world Timothy Hopkins, above mentioned, is about the only florist that grows the orchids on a large scale. The smaller florists buy of him and he thus may be said to possess a "corner" in orchids.

Vetth & Son of London and B. S. Williams, also of the great metropolises, are large sellers of orchids to the orchid collector of this country. The four greatest orchid growers—professional—of England have permanent agencies and greenhouses in Summit, N. J. Probably with some en-

couragement they would establish similar agencies out here.

A bouquet of orchids at one of our florist's costs \$50, though a smaller one almost as effective can be bought for \$35. It is scarcely to be wondered at that this rare flower is not more common as a hand bouquet when its price keeps at this figure. But when a wooer presents his lady love with such a nosegay there is no doubt that his sentiment is sincere. In New York cattleya flowers can be purchased for 75 cents each; cypripediums at 25 cents up to 50 cents. Sprays of the odontoglossum retail at 25 cents for every perfect bloom on the spray. Colognyes are rarely used, except in funeral pieces. The local price of orchids went up like the proverbial rocket as soon as the date of President McKinley's visit was determined upon. In every kind of function designed for Mr. McKinley's pleasure of an indoor nature the orchid appeared as

orchids, nevertheless, are paid for at the full price, for they cannot be used again. Sometimes orchids are used in other ways, with more lavishness than the basket designer permits, and then their cost easily runs up into the thousands.

On occasions such as large receptions and afternoon teas orchids can be made the most effective decoration possible. The growing plants should be left in their own pots or baskets and permitted to follow their own flowing graceful habit. If arranged in banks they should follow the idea of the larger ones in the background and the lesser ones toward the outer edge. Ferns must be used with great freedom between and among the orchids, and as drapery for mantels. Fringes of orchids—the *Ficus repens* and *Isotopsis gracilis*—make an artistic finish. Fern fronds and cut blossoms of the orchids may be placed among the plants and elsewhere when the eye sees such a need. Calanthes, with their arching wands of pink and white flowers, can be left with their roots on and lightly covered with moss; they then have the effect of cut flowers. It does not injure the orchid plants to use them in this way, but, of course, the flowers will not live long after being exposed to such a change of temperature. Odontoglossums, oncidiums, sopherites, masdevallias and cypripediums are the most likely to live after the temporary transplanting.

The orchid is certainly the fashionable flower, as every florist avers. To carry a bouquet of orchids is the ambition of every society girl who is invited to a swell function. The orchid is so popular in the East that poems are written about them almost every day, and what can be a greater proof of fashion's favor than this?

In Walter Malone's recently issued "Songs of North and South" one of the prettiest bits of verse is:

ORCHIDS.
Like blossoms changed to butterflies
With wings of purple, yellow, brown,
Or pleasant plumes with ebon eyes
And soft and clouded silken down.
Serpents in garnet, gold and green,
With graceful neck and glossy crest,
Or humming-birds of brilliant sheen,
With glowing throat and dotted breast.
Swart, rich-robed princesses, that hide
In tangled Afric jungle shades;
Fawn-footed Indian maids that hide
By wild Brazilian forest glades.
With flowers such as these, of old
The witch unwreathed her golden head;
They grew in Greece's haunted wood,
Or peeped in dreamlands of the dead.

Dr. John Milne of the seismic section of the Royal Society says that vibrations travel faster through the interior of the earth than through the densest body known to scientists. This is proof, he claims, that the interior is neither a molten mass nor a hollow space, but solid matter under such a degree of stupendous pressure that the contraction of the mass causes geysers, hot springs and volcanoes, which are but local manifestations of this.

SAVED A SHARK'S LIFE BY "STIRRING HIM UP."

THE shark that for two years has been seen swimming about in one of the wall tanks of the ground-floor tier on the salt water side of the Aquarium was recently removed to the ampler waters of the greater central pool to preserve its life.

In the two years in which the shark had been in the tank it had increased in length from two feet to about four feet eight inches. The tank being small, the shark could not get the exercise it required. This made its removal necessary.

In making the transfer a serious difficulty was encountered. The salt water in the shark's tank in the Aquarium is usually at 71 degrees. The water in the great central pool is just now about 55 on the bottom, where the cold water supply comes in, and about 60 at the top, where the warmed water is supplied. This would do for such fishes as have wintered in it, but it would kill in short order a shark put into it from water at 71 degrees and left to itself. Therefore when the shark had to be removed the Aquarium people got ready to keep it alive in the big pool until it could look out for itself. It was to be kept from lying down and giving up and succumbing to the chill by practically the same methods followed to ward off stupor in the case of a man who had taken an overdose of some narcotic, name-

ly, by keeping him moving.

They shifted the shark over from the tank it had lived in for two years, and dropped it in the big pool on Friday week at 5 p. m. Almost the moment it slid into the pool the shark stood, literally speaking, on its head, perfectly inert. The difference in the temperature of the water would have killed it in quick time if left to itself. But that is just what they didn't do. They had a man stationed on the coping of the pool with a pole and for seven hours this man was kept tolerably busy keeping that shark on the go.

The minute the shark drooped head downward in that fashion, just letting go and giving right up on the spot, the man touched it up with the pole, to get away from which the shark would right itself up and start swimming. That was what they wanted it to do—to keep swimming and swimming.

Sometimes the shark might not need attention more than twice an hour, some times it had to be moved every few minutes. Once or twice it turned over on its back, but the man was after it, quickly spurring it on, and the shark would right itself at the touch and start ahead again. And so they kept at it until midnight, by which hour it was pretty well warmed up and going nicely.

A NEW COIN WITH A HOLE IN THE CENTER.

UNCLE SAM, it is said, is to coin a new 3-cent piece. The new coin is to be of nickel, and its radical difference from all other coins with Uncle Sam's mint mark on them lies in the fact that it will have a hole in the center. It is the supposition that this hole in the middle will enable the hurried handler of the coin to detect its value by the sense of feeling. Some such safeguard is considered necessary for the reason that it is to be about the size and weight of the present nickel 5-cent piece. The size of the center hole in the proposed coin will be large enough to make it merely a ring of metal, this hole being about one-half the diameter of the coin. It will prevent one of the difficulties which handlers of small silver coins were troubled with when the metal money began to circulate after the era of paper money. The small coins, which got into the hands of children and some classes in the remote districts, were treated as curiosities and great prizes. To secure their safekeeping a favorite method was to punch a hole in them and tie them on a string. This destroyed the circulation of the coins, and dealers who subsequently took them in had to stand the loss, a fixed scale being finally arranged for deduction for punched dimes, nickels or other pieces. The new piece can be strung without injuring it.

It is the general opinion of government officials that there is no crying need for an additional subsidiary coin of small value and large bulk and weight, the 3-cent nickel piece and the copper 1-cent piece being considered ample to meet the wants of the people of the West. Bank people and treasury officials have a very lively conception of the bother there is in handling the present 1-cent pieces, the larger institutions getting hundreds of pounds of them sometimes on hand. The weight as well as bulk cuts quite a figure in these cases, and the addition of another intermediate between the 5-cent piece and the cent piece would, it is believed, but add to this trouble. Vault room for storage purposes and drying facilities would have to be provided in proportion.

The old 3-cent silver piece which was coined several years ago did not meet with popular favor, and it was found impossible to keep it in circulation. The sub-treasury people fear that the attempt to put out a new one will be but a repetition of this experience.

In the West and Southwest the 1-cent piece was slower in coming into favor than in the East, and the coinage of the new piece is supposed to meet a demand which the 5-cent piece is too large for and the 1-cent too small. This would indicate if it is correct that the Western people are relinquishing their old idea that nothing less than 5 cents was worth counting in a business transaction.