MASQUERADING FLOWERS.

How Florists Dye and Perfume the Sweetest of Earth's Products.

Parading Under False Colors—The Green Carnation — The Lily-of-the-Valley Made to Blush—Lilacs with the Fragrance of Roses.

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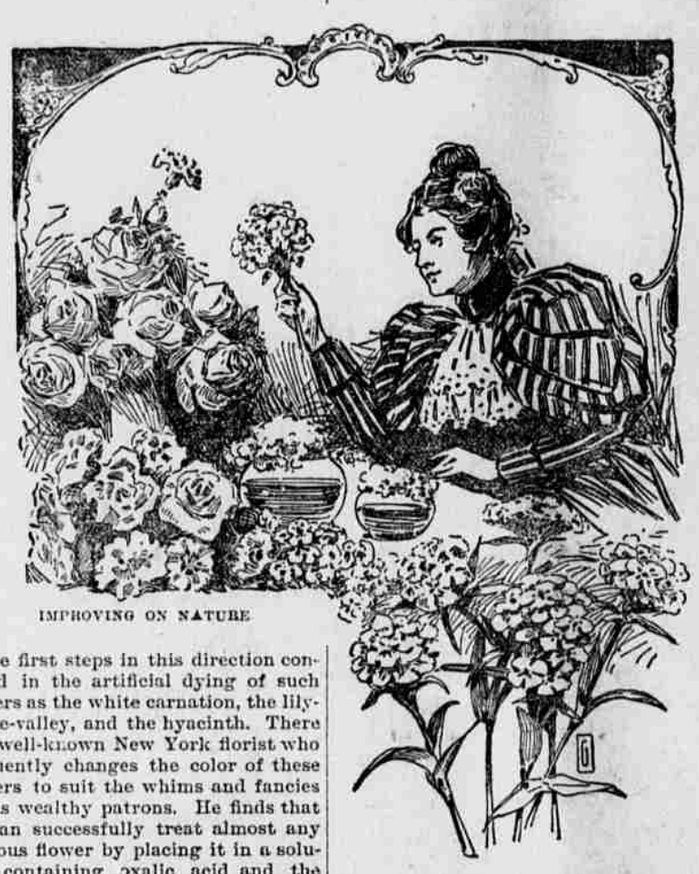
MODERN scientists and chemists have no respect for nature. They have lately taken her most delicate creations, the flowers of the field and the garden, and attempted to change their colors and perfumes. Strange to say, considerable success has attended their efforts.

Many fashionable florists both in American and European cities have established regular chemical laboratories in connection with their hot houses for carrying on this unique industry. The fad comes originally from Paris by way of London. The machinery necessary to prepare a flower to meet the demands of this fin de siecle craze is exceedingly elaborate. Syphons, carbonic acid generators, retorts of various sizes and designs, in short nearly every appliance of a well-equipped laboratory are called into use. The up-to-date florist must be an expert chemist as well as an artist and a horticulturist. The practice of coloring flowers to satisfy the taste of customers is another trick of the trade which is becoming quite common. This is carried out by a careful scientific method, and often as much trouble is taken as in any cloth dying establishment.



IMPROVING ON NATURE

The first steps in this direction consisted in the artificial dying of such flowers as the white carnation, the lily-of-the-valley, and the hyacinth. There is a well-known New York florist who frequently changes the color of these flowers to suit the whims and fancies of his wealthy patrons. He finds that he can successfully treat almost any bulbous flower by placing it in a solution containing oxalic acid and the special color which he wishes to impart to the petals of the plant. It was in this way that the "green carnation" of which so much was heard a year or so ago, was produced; a lily-of-the-valley can be changed from its pure white to a delicate blushing pink by placing the cut flower in red ink. The oxalic acid in the ink opens the pores of the plant and allows the coloring matter to be absorbed. This same New York florist has long been trying to produce a blue chrysanthemum, with the view of pleasing the patrons of the Yale foot ball matches. He has not yet succeeded, but he is firmly convinced that it will only be a matter of time before chemists enable the florist to produce every known variety of color in flowering plants.

Max Nordau has been recently quoted as saying that this fashion of changing the color of flowers is a mark of the degeneracy of the age, and that it is only done to satisfy the unhealthy cravings of degenerate persons. He does not blame the florist or chemist, but the man about town who wears his green carnation, and the fashionable lady who must have flowers artificially colored to match her costumes. Nevertheless, it continues to be done; and as long as new and striking effects can be produced there will be a demand among a certain class for the colored flower.

"Beauty," says a French writer discoursing upon this subject of artificial colors, "is but a vain ornament in flowers when unaccompanied with fragrance. What good is there in this display of bright colors that delight the eye if the flower has no odor, or if it exhales an insupportable one? He proceeds to tell of a friend who undertook to deprive the African marigold of its ill odor, and who succeeded with little difficulty. He soaked its seeds for two days in some rose water in which he had infused a little musk, then allowed them to dry slightly and sowed them. These flowers were entirely deprived of their bad odor, but were, nevertheless, slightly improved. He then sowed the seeds of these plants after preparing them as above stated. The result, he says, was the production of flowers that in sweetness of perfume were capable of competing with jasmines and violets.

In perfuming flowers, and especially in artificially strengthening and reviving the natural odor, florists have gone much further. It would seem that in this line there is really no limit. In order to revive flowers exhausted by time or carriage, their extremities are immersed in vessels containing a weak solution of sal amoniac. Their odor is then strengthened by moistening them with an alcohol solution of the perfume or essential oil corresponding to the natural scent.

This is done on a very large scale with violets, roses, hawthorns, etc., the perfumes of which are manufactured largely in France. Two such perfumes are "violettine" and "geranioline." The former is composed of 100 grammes of alcohol, 100 of glycerine, and ten of essence of violet; the latter is a similar preparation in which the essence of violet is replaced by geranoil or artificial oil of rose. The glycerine in these preparations is added in order to fix the scent, which would otherwise rapidly evaporate.

A more scientific method of strengthening the odor of flowers before shipping them or placing them on sale is frequently used. They are put into a wooden box cooled externally with ice. In the bottom of this box lies a tube provided with perforations; and through it is sent a current charged with carbonic acid gas and the odor characteristic of the flower. This current is produced by the evaporation of the liquid carbonic acid contained in a cylinder, and its flow is controlled by a regulator. The carbonic acid gas, slightly heated by a spirit lamp as it passes through a coil or worm, bubbles up through the essential oil contained in another receptacle, and finally passes into the box where it gives up the perfume with which it is charged. Again, in order to fix the odor, the flowers are sprinkled with a very small quantity of glycerine.

Not content with adding to the strength of scented flowers by this means, the flower dealers, aided by the suggestions of chemists, have gone the length of depriving flowers of the natural odors and substituting others. They have given the fragrant lilac the odor of the rose, the pink the perfume of the violet, and the humble corn flower the aristocratic scent of the jasmine. It is a delicate operation and one that does not succeed with all flowers. It consists in immersing the flower in a bromide solution which divests it of nearly every trace of its natural fragrance. After this it is washed, and then perfumed with the odor desired in the manner already described.

The results of these attempts to improve upon nature are not always satisfactory. Flowers which have been doctored or revived by artificial means rarely last long enough to afford any pleasure to those who purchase them. There is, after all, nothing that can rival the natural beauty and fragrance as a flower as it comes fresh from the garden or hot-house; and, happily, there are still millions of people who would give more for the fragrance of one sweet violet fresh from the woods than all the artificial productions of New York or Paris.

Moving a Whole Town.

The moving of an entire city to another point, which offers strategic and commercial advantages superior to its present location, is being proposed in the far north of Russia. The City of Kola, on the peninsula of the same name, is now situated at the confluence of two rivers, the Luttojoki and the Notosero, forming the Kola river, about 50 miles from the Arctic ocean. While the rivers and the bay below are navigable for even large vessels, Kola is situated so far inland that it is shut off from the sea by ice much longer than other seaports situated even farther north than Vardoe, in Norwegian Lapland. The governor of the province, Archangelsk, Baron Engelhardt, to whose jurisdiction the district of Kola belongs, has proposed to transfer the city to a better port nearer the mouth of Kola river into the Arctic ocean. Imperial and ministerial consent having been given, active preparations are now being made to transport Kola, house by house, by sleighs on the river, to a spot 43 miles below. The new location affords great advantages to navigation, and since it is surrounded by hills, which will take but little expense to strongly fortify, it will certainly become a point of great strategic importance.—St. Louis Republic.

CONDENSED NEWS

Gathered From All Parts of the Country by Telegraph.

The republican convention of the Eleventh Illinois congressional district named Walter Reeves for congress Thursday by acclamation.

The house committee on merchant marine and fisheries Friday favorably reported a bill appropriating $10,000 for a fish culture station at Spearfish, S. D.

The senate Thursday confirmed following nominations: Fttzhugh Lee, of Virginia, to be consul general at Havana. Postmasters: Wisconsin—Geo. B. McCall, Chippewa.

A fire at Manchester, Ct., early Friday morning destroyed property valued at $50,000. Hartman Bros., whose tobacco warehouse was completely burned, are the principal losers.

The president, with the gentlemen who accompanied him on the fishing excursion to Leesburg, returned to Washington at a late hour Thursday night and was driven immediately to the executive mansion.

Advices received at Athens from Crete says that fighting has occurred at Episkopi between Christians and Turks. Fifty persons were killed or wounded and the Cretans have appealed to Greece for assistance.

At Sandowne park, Liverpool, the Esper stakes (handicap) of 1,000 sovereigns, one mile, was won by Lord Rosebery's Quarrel (formerly Tarrare). Baron de Rothschild's Medicis was second and Lord Ellesmere's McNeil third.

Controller Eckels has been advised that the Grand Forks national bank, of Grand Forks, N. D., failed Friday. Its last statement showed its assets at $604,000. The bank capital is $200,000 and it owes depositors and other banks $369,000.

Two outlaws attempted robbery at T. J. Brasher's residence, ten miles west of Eufaula, I. T. Brasher killed one of the robbers and was himself fatally shot through the right lung. The other robber escaped without any booty.

James K. Culbertson, who shot and killed Lily McCormick at Chicago Wednesday and then shot himself twice in the chest, died Thursday at the county hospital. An inquest was held on both bodies and a verdict of murder and suicide was returned.

The United States civil service commission will hold an examination in Washington and other large cities May 15, to fill two vacancies in the position of scientific assistant to the fish commission, the salary of one position being $720 per annum and the other $1,200.

Two longshoremen, while discharging a schooner Thursday afternoon at McCarthy's wharf, Boston, got into an altercation on the coal run and both fell to the wharf, a distance of over forty feet. One of the men was instantly killed and the other died on the way to the hospital.

The Weather.

WASHINGTON, April 24.—For Ohio—Saturday generally fair; warmer in northeast portion; fresh to brisk southerly shifting to westerly winds.

For West Virginia—Probably fair Saturday; winds shifting to westerly.

For Kentucky—Generally fair Saturday; slightly cooler; westerly winds.

For Indiana—Fair and cooler Saturday; fresh westerly winds.

The Williams Bill a Law.

COLUMBUS, O., April 24.—Senator Williams' bill extending the law prohibiting the contraction of a debt where funds to meet it are not in the treasury to all counties except those of the first class, passed the house Friday morning and became a law.

Legal Notice.

Notice is hereby given that on March 2d, 1896, William H. Myers made application to the undersigned for relief under the laws governing assignments to avoid arrest, and said applicant is notified to appear in the Probate Court of Washington County, Ohio, on the 30th day of March, 1896, and file his petition therein.

B. E. GUYTON,
Commissioner of Insolvents.

Republican National Convention at St. Louis June 16th, 1896.

The T. & O. C. Extension R. R. will sell tickets for this occasion, one fare for the round trip, (limit announced later.) This route is the shortest between Marietta and St. Louis, with the following schedule of time: Leaving Marietta 9:00 a. m., arrive at Columbus 2.25 p. m.; leave Columbus via Pennsylvania Lines 8:00 p. m., arrive St. Louis 7:00 a. m.

Parlor Car to Columbus and Pullman Drawing Room and Sleeping Cars, Columbus to St. Louis.

Excursion to Cincinnati.

The B. & O. S-W. Ry. will on April 25th run special train to Cincinnati, selling tickets at rate of $2.40 for the round trip, account Base Ball games on the 26th and 27th, between the Chicago and Cincinnati Clubs.

Home Seekers' Eocursion.

The Baltimore & Ohio Southwestern Railway will on April 7th and 2 st, and May 5th, sell Home Seekers' Excursion Tickets, at rate of one fare plus two dollars for round trip, to points West, South South-east and East.