

Along Azalea Row

By RUTH B. SMITH

When one can return from the paradise of color which is Hawaii to write of the beauties of the Azaleas, the Rhododendrons, and the glories of our own Flower Show without even a mention of other beauty, it speaks volumes for what we have here. It also was character building but restraint can last no longer.

Hawaii is indeed the cross roads of the Pacific and here is found a blend of the East and the West where a study of the culture could be a long-time major pursuit but since this is a flower column, you will be spared that. The rainbows of color encountered all through the year are at their height in April and immediately draw the attention of the tourist as he lands. The golden Shower trees, the Royal Poincianas, the Bouganvilleas the soft bluish purple of the Jacaranda blossoms, the many species of the Hibiscus, of which there are at least six thousand varieties, all in turn cause one to catch his breath, while the Tulip trees, the Monkey Pods, the various forms of Ginger, the gorgeous Plumerias (probably our favorite) add to one's bewilderment.

Nor could one ever over-look that flower considered the world over as rarest and most prized—the orchid. One sees the humble little Vanda orchid everywhere. In the cities, the natives on the streets are busy making these little lavender and purple gems into leis for every occasion. Then as one drives through the country, on the island of Hawaii for example, there they are growing besides the cottages, reaching upward to absorb their needed moisture from the air. They are easily grown without benefit of green house, cost six cents apiece shipped to the United States, from a distance look like cosmos in type of growth, yet from them are now being developed a handsome spray of hybrids which are fast taking their places with the Cattleya and the Cymbidium in their gorgeous perfection.

We attended the Pacific Orchid Society's spring show, held in the Courtyard of the Honolulu Art Academy where were offered a mass of glamorous sprays and individual blooms which gave a study in horticulture for the expert of the amateur. One plant of sixty Cymbidium orchids was arranged with upright driftwood, its blossoms in gold and brown tones, measuring on an average of

five inches across. There was the Dendrobium Crumenatum, which is a one day orchid plant which blooms three times a year producing white blossoms only one inch across. A plant, Ph. Arnabiles, had as many as 12 blossoms to a spray—and many sprays—with each blossom measuring four inches, of white with yellow centers. Another, Dendrobium Mousmee, had an orange gold center with its petals of pale lavender fading to an apple blossom pink. These sprays were a foot long, each carrying about 36 blossoms, which measured only one inch across. This plant has been introduced from France and had taken fifteen years to reach its present growth.

Present, too, was one single plant (C. Susan Hye) bearing 4 blossoms of the large white Cattleya with its beautiful contrasting yellow-gold trumpet. There were the Vanda hybrids in blue, beige, lavender, pink - spotted brown, chartreuse and the lavender-pink combination. A gold, with brown inside, measuring two and a half inches across, and one inch long particularly caught the attention.

In arrangements, tiny brown spider orchids (the latest development in the orchid) against driftwood were unusual as was a four feet column of 10 inch sugar cane entwined with small white orchids and banked below were mangoes, a fruit of the island. One orchid looked much like the pansy; another exciting entry was the Dendrobium Broomfield of lemon yellow sprays. As breathtaking as any was the long-sprayed plant bearing thirty small butter cup yellow blooms with the deeper center, and again, banked under one of the courtyard trees were pink and rose orchids surrounded with Vandas and the new hybrid epidendrums. There were enough varieties so that almost every visitor could oh and ah over a different species, and from the comments overheard one could realize, too, that some of the observers even felt they could and had produced species which exceeded in beauty those there displayed.

We were in a concentrated paradise for an hour, a fitting conclusion to Sunday morning worship at the beautiful and noted Central Union Church. On the bulletin that morning appeared this brief message: "The secret of growth and of real achievement is selfgiving and selflessness. May we remember this: 'A candle is a lovely thing; It makes no noise or stir at all. But softly gives itself away, While, quite unselfish, it grows small.'"

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