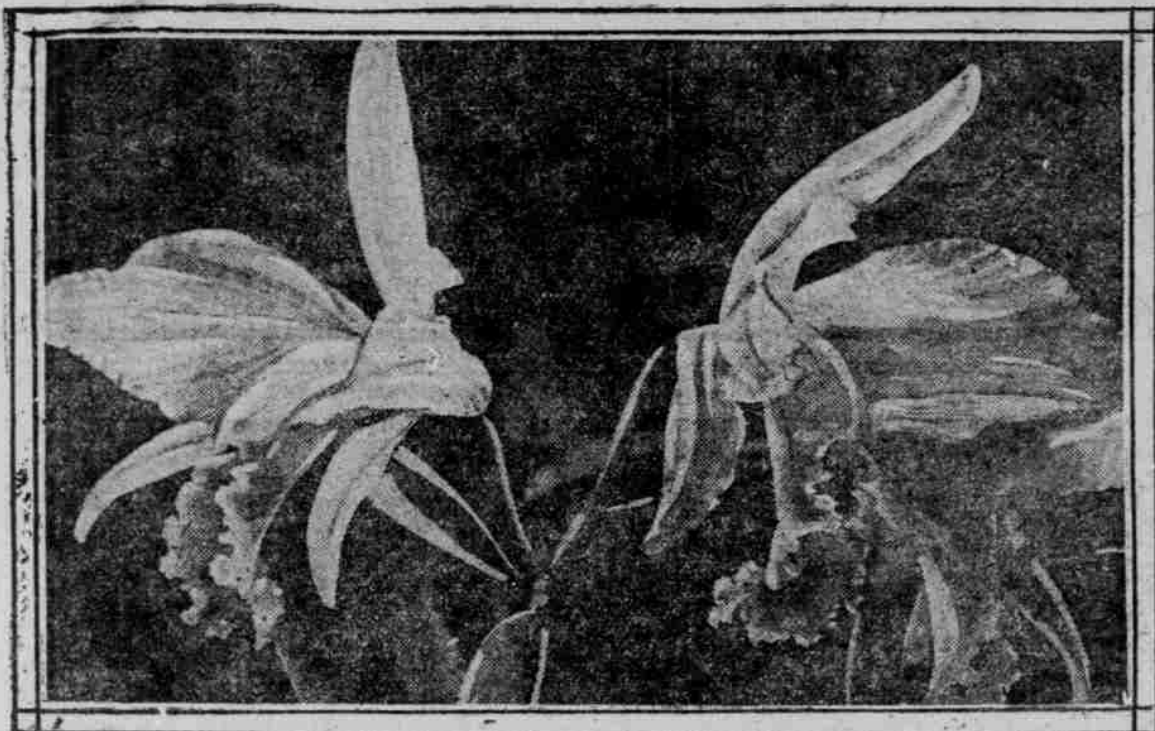


# U. S. HAS NO FLOWER BUT WHITE HOUSE HAS: THE ORCHID

The Next First Lady of the Land Will Have One of the Largest Collections in the World of These Marvelous Blooms from All Quarters of the Globe



A Purple Flower From The Amazon.



An Orchid From Venezuela.



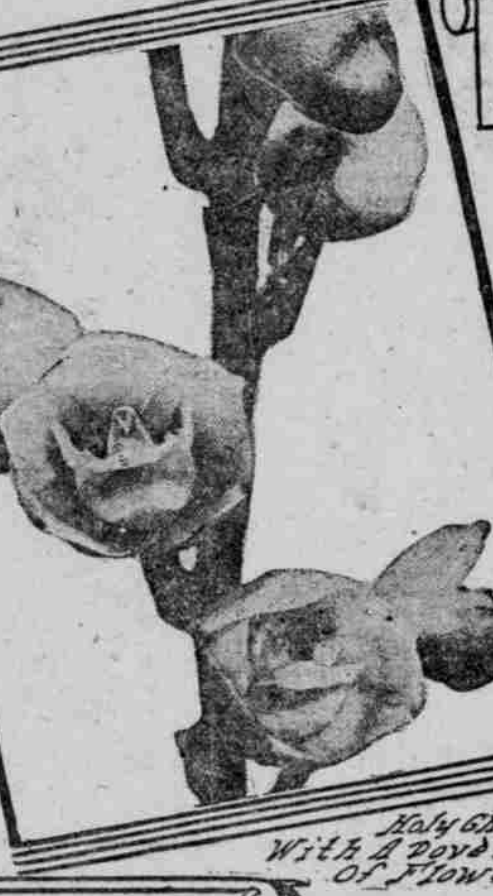
The White House Flower.



A Yellow Wonder From Arabia.



A Blue Flowering Variety From Siam.



The Holy Ghost Orchid With A Dove In Center of Flower.



The Lady's Slipper Orchid From the West Indies.

BY RENE BACHE.

NEARLY always, when seen in public, Mrs. Wilson wears a bunch of orchids; and, indeed, it might be said that the fashionable favor now enjoyed by orchids is at least largely attributed to her fancy in this regard.

Mrs. Wilson has been heard to say that one of her most enjoyable privileges as mistress of the White House is that of being able to have orchids unlimited. They are so expensive to ordinary folks that most women cannot afford to buy them. But the president has one huge greenhouse devoted to these exotics, and its entire output is at Mrs. Wilson's disposal.

The greenhouse in question is at the south end of what used to be the presidential farm, for in earlier days the White House was in a way a farmhouse, and its farm embraced, in addition to the present spacious grounds, the so-called white lot and also the hill on which stands the Washington monument. In fact, the farm extended to the Potomac's banks and included a small sheet of fresh water at the foot of the monument hill, since drained off, which was known as Babcock's lake. There was an orchard where the war, state and navy building now is located; the site of the treasury was the president's kitchen garden, and beneath the front portico of the White House was a dairy, to which was brought by pipe from a spring in Franklin square, several blocks away.

After the Civil war a big greenhouse was built at the west end of the mansion, the main corridor opening directly into it; and this glass house was supplemented by a smaller one, which later on was devoted to orchids.

It was during the Grant administration that a minister plenipotentiary from Brazil or some other South American country gave to the president's wife a number of rare orchid plants. At that time orchids were almost wholly unknown in the United States, and Mrs. Grant was delighted, finding them very interesting and their flowers wonderfully beautiful.

Diplomats from other countries were thereby inspired to offer gifts of orchid plants; and, at Mrs. Grant's suggestion, the department of state requested American consuls at tropical seaports all around the world to send to Washington any desirable varieties they might be able to procure.

In this way was at length built up one of the most remarkable collections of orchids in existence, which included many exceedingly rare and precious kinds. Amateurs interested in curiosities of the sort came from all parts of the world to see it.

Some kinds of orchids grow in earth, others are "epiphytes," growing on trees and deriving their sustenance from the air; their long rootlets waving in the breeze. The White House gardener, however, has developed a method of treatment which serves equally well for both sorts. He wraps the roots in moss, which is kept damp, and suspends the plants by wires from the roof of the greenhouse. Under these conditions they thrive admirably.

In serried ranks they hang, hundreds on hundreds of them, each one in its moss jacket. Very many of

them are "cattleyas," because orchids of that tribe bear profusely in the wintertime, and their huge flowers are of a beauty no less than gorgeous. Many orchids present imitations as striking as to be positively weird. For instance, there is the variety called the "butterfly," which when in bloom looks as if big gaudy-winged insects hovered over it. The "bee" orchid, the "spider" orchid and the "lizard" orchid are equally remarkable. One species bears a flower in the likeness of a grinning monkey; another suggests the aspect of an opera dancer suspended by the head.

The "cradle of Venus" is shaped like an old-fashioned cradle with a bottle-like body and a cover at the head. Instead of a baby, the flower-cradle contains a little bird that resembles a robin in miniature. Bird and cradle are pale yellow.

In Venezuela is found an orchid whose blossom has the shape of a dog. A Colombian variety bears a huge flower that looks like a duck, and almost as big, hanging head downward.

Most remarkable of all is the extremely rare Holy Ghost orchid of Panama, each one of whose blossoms (borne on straight spikes) contains a perfect representation in miniature of a snow-white pigeon with outspread wings. This wonder-plant grows in almost impenetrable swamps, fever-haunted and infested by venomous snakes, and the natives of that region are firmly convinced that when the flowers are fully developed, the pigeons "come alive" and fly away.

Great numbers of orchids are sent to market from Venezuela and Colombia, where they are collected by Indians in the forests, usually by cutting down and stripping the trees on which they grow. In the mountains of Colombia occurs a much-prized variety of "odontoglossum" that brings a fabulous price. Next in importance are various cattleyas. The splendid "golden orchid" is a cattleya.

Orchids for export must be gathered in the hot season, when they go out of the flowering business for a while, drying up and counterfeiting death. In this shape, if carefully packed, they stand a sea voyage very well.

Our own country is not wholly devoid of orchids. In New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland one may find, in wooded and moist places, the pink or yellow "lady's slipper." But orchids are plentiful only in warm latitudes. The most beautiful ones grow in luxuriance where a tropical climate develops their exquisite vegetable forms on branches of living trees, or on the decayed bark of fallen trunks or sometimes running over mossy rocks.

The leaves of the "bromelias" form cups that hold water for weeks, and in these little vases an aquatic plant (from seeds dropped by birds) flourishes.

The "coryphanthes" (American tropics) throws out a network of interlaced rootlets that form an oval, bag-like mass, hanging from creeper or tree branch. Strike or shake the plant, and out will swarm great numbers of fierce-biting ants. The bag is, in fact, an ants' nest. The plant is subject to attack by cockroaches and caterpillars, and, to protect itself

against such enemies, it provides comfortable quarters for a garrison of carnivorous ants. In return for the accommodation, they are ready to rush forth and fight at the first alarm.

An odd point about the coryphanthes is that its flower is designed to attract one particular kind of insect—a handsome metallic-green bee. From the base of one of its bulbs a long flower-stem is developed, upon which hang a number of exquisite cups, and into each cup a liquid drips from two "horns" in the upper part of the flower.

Flying to the flower, as moth to candle, the bee falls into the liquid in the bottom of the cup and, wetting its wings, is unable to use them. Look into the cup and you will see perhaps a dozen of the insects swimming round and round or vainly trying to climb the slippery sides. If it is the second day after the opening of the flower, one or two bees may be found drowned. It was never the intention of the orchid, however, that their lives should be sacrificed; but, on the contrary, that they should as-

saps, and in doing so perform the office for which the whole contrivance is designed.

Under the "flag" is a narrow opening, through which the bee can push its way out. In doing so it ruptures the pollen case and carries off some of the pollen on its back. Crawling over the spike of blossoms, the bee conveys the pollen to other flowers of the same plant, thus fertilizing them.

Orchid hunting is a business that engages the efforts of many courageous adventurers, who explore the wildest and most remote parts of the world in the hope of finding rare or new varieties. Success in this kind of enterprise may bring large reward, inasmuch as a single plant may have

a market value of thousands of dollars.

On the other hand, the market price of a scarce and precious orchid may be reduced to next to nothing by the discovery of a profusion of the same variety in some part of the world previously unvisited. Only a few years ago a collector in India came by chance upon unlimited supplies of a species that was then bringing an extraordinary price in London. He sent home secretly large consignments of the plants, which were put on sale gradually, at first only two or three and later a dozen or so, until the market was broken and the erstwhile treasure became a drug.

Perils, no matter how frightful, are ignored by the orchid-hunting enthusiasts. Many of these adventurers in tropical wilds have been killed by savages, held as captives, eaten by cannibals, or bitten to death by venomous snakes, not to mention deaths attributable to fevers and other diseases. Not very long ago a New York man, traversing a Venezuelan forest on an exploring expedition, came upon a hut wherein were found the skeletons of a man and thousands of dead orchid plants. From between the ribs of one of the skeletons grew an orchid of rare

beauty. The three unfortunates had evidently been murdered.

Rather interesting is the story of the "lost orchid"—a previously unknown variety received about 70 years ago from Assam by an apothecary named Fairree, in Liverpool. It was but a single plant, and by an unhappy accident was destroyed. For many years hunters vainly sought another specimen. In the hope of winning a prize of £2000 (about \$10,000) offered for it by the British Horticultural society, it is said that 16 lives were lost in the attempt. Then, at the period of the Russo-Japanese war, Captain L. L. Seabright discovered the long-sought treasure at the top of an almost inaccessible cliff in Tibet. He collected 179 plants of it, which he sold in London for \$2750, receiving the reward in addition.

The forests of the Philippine islands have a wealth of orchids, and many fine varieties, some of them rare, have been brought to this country or shipped to Europe since the late acquisition of the archipelago. The orchid market has its center in London, where at intervals auctions of the plants are held, attracting buyers from all over the globe.

For a long time it was supposed that orchids could not be subjected to the uses of the gardener—in other words, that, owing to the peculiar manner of their growth, they, and more particularly the epiphytic varieties, were not susceptible of cultivation. Experience, however, has shown that they can be brought to as high a perfection in the greenhouse as in their native woods. The Holy Ghost orchid and certain other kinds obtained from regions not far from the equator demand a temperature and degree of moisture strongly suggestive of the Turkish bath.

In one way orchids are rather economical, inasmuch as the blossoms retain their freshness for a surprising length of time. Ten dollars' worth of them will last longer than \$50 worth of roses.

great deal of scandal had attached to her and made her a by-word to satirists as well as historians of the succeeding ages. Whether there was any truth in the scandal stories may well be doubted, as it is not conceivable that so discerning and honorable a man as Titus would honor for a moment entertained a wish to marry a person of so dissolute a character as Berenice has been pictured by her enemies.

Yielding, nevertheless, to the popular clamor, both Titus and Berenice realized that their marriage would be fraught with danger to the young emperor, and so, reluctantly enough, they decided to part company. Berenice returned, heart-broken, to Palestine, and Titus died two years later. And, although historians are silent in regard to the point, it is not unreasonable to suppose that repining for his Berenice may have contributed to the hastening of his end.

What happened to Berenice after she left Rome is not recorded in any work extant at the present day.

**Naval Warfare to Change.**  
London Mail.

An invention by a French wireless engineer, M. Dunoyer, will completely change the character of naval warfare, if its claims are fulfilled. It consists of what he calls an "electric safety lock." The mechanism to direct the course of a torpedo and secure its explosion against an enemy warship can be worked not only by wireless waves of the right length, but also by a proper sequence of Morse signals. Any error in the right sequence of dots and dashes would render the mechanism down to zero again and render the torpedo harmless. Each torpedo launched would have its own key sequence of dots and dashes, and so the enemy would be unable to tamper with it.

**Strawberries Come Cheap.**  
KEATINGES, Vancouver Island, B. C.—The Co-operative Fruit Growers' association of this district is producing an average of 300 tons of strawberries per season, and marketing them with an overhead of but 5 cents

## QUEEN BERENICE, BEAUTIFUL SISTER OF KING AGRIPPA OF INDIA, HATED BY ROMANS

Three Times Married and Beloved by Emperor Titus, Her Hope of Sharing Greatest Throne in World Shattered by Opposition to Her Rank, Nationality and Character.

WHEN the British troops entered Jerusalem one of the avenues they passed through was the so-called Cheesemakers' street, which is the oldest thoroughfare in the world. Besides being the oldest, it has the distinction also of probably being the only street which has not changed its character since it was opened thousands of years ago. It is the rendezvous of makers and vendors of cheese, from whom it originally obtained its name.

Not far from Cheesemakers' street is the site of the palace of Queen Berenice, the beautiful sister of King Agrippa. Students of the Bible will recall that Berenice was present with her brother at the hearing of St. Paul before Festus, on which occasion Agrippa exclaimed, "Almost, Paul, thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

Few even of the most assiduous students of the Bible, however, know much more than this about Agrippa and Berenice, although there are scarcely any other characters in history more interesting than these two. For Agrippa, who had received his training principally at Rome, Athens and Alexandria, was a sort of composite Charles II and Gentleman George, and in almost every respect, except that of cruelty, Berenice resembled Cleopatra, the vampire queen of Egypt.

**Berenice Daughter of Agrippa.**  
Berenice was the daughter of Agrippa I, king of Judea, and, like her brother, she received a careful training in everything that constituted the humanities of that period. She was accounted not only the most beautiful but the most accomplished princess of the age she lived in, and was sought in marriage by kings and princes from the far corners of the earth.

Her heart, however, decided in fa-

vor of Marcus, the son of the Alabarch Alexander of Alexandria, and she became his wife. Alabarch sounds big, but meant really nothing more than the chief and most influential man of the Jewish population at Alexandria. Berenice was a slip of a girl when she married Marcus and her love for him was of the Juliet kind; so much so that when he died within a very few years after their marriage, her grief was so poignant that fears were entertained that she might attempt her own life.

For some state reasons, hard to understand, her father shortly afterward compelled her to marry his own brother, King Herod, of Chalcis. She was barely 17 at the time. Either the memory of her first husband was still too green or else her new husband had qualities which repelled her; at any rate, she did not seem to care very much for him, and probably felt grateful to him when he died.

Berenice was now in her twentieth year, and more radiantly beautiful than ever. Kings from the remotest regions came to Jerusalem to ask her hand in marriage and offered to renounce their own religions and embrace Judaism if only she would say "Yes."

**Third Husband Soon Tires.**  
She decided in favor of Polemon, king of Cilicia. To us of the present time, Cilicia is interesting mainly for the reason that its capital, Tarsus, was the birthplace of St. Paul, who refers to it as "no mean city;" and because the memorable first meeting between Cleopatra and Antony took place on the river Cydnus, in Cilicia. Although the latter event was of but comparatively recent date when Berenice married Polemon, the romance of it was not sufficient to in-

vest the country itself to keep her vivacious mind from roving. Whether Polemon did not prove as ideal a husband as he had promised to be or whether her pleasure-loving soul craved more excitement than Tarsus was able to supply, is not recorded, but the fact remains that Berenice soon tired of her third husband's company, and bade him a lasting adieu.

Whether Polemon ever took steps to recover his queen no extant record shows. Even if he did, they must have proved fruitless, for Berenice remained under the care of her brother until the Jewish uprising against the Roman rule, which resulted in the siege of Jerusalem by Vespasian, who afterward became emperor.

**Mob Burns Palace.**  
Agrippa and Berenice spoke Latin as fluently and well as Romans and had no end of influential friends at Rome. So, seeing their own countrymen rent by factions and on the point of starvation in Jerusalem, they went to the Roman camp, to implore Vespasian to allow at least enough food to enter the city to feed the women and children.

When news of the failure of the embassy of Berenice and King Agrippa was circulated in Jerusalem, the infuriated mob, hearing at the same time that what appeared to be an attachment had sprung up between the queen and Titus, wreaked its revenge by burning her palace.

This act of vandalism alienated the affections of both Berenice and Agrippa from their countrymen and they made no further efforts to avert the fate impending over the doomed city. When Vespasian went to Rome to become emperor, on the death of Nero, A. D. 69, the operations against Jerusalem were entrusted to Titus. He

performed the task so well that the city, which had resisted the siege three years, fell into the hands of the Romans shortly after Vespasian's departure.

**Titus Unlike Vespasian.**  
Vespasian was a man of quiet, modest tastes, and led a life more like that of a busy private citizen than of an emperor whose word meant life or death to anyone throughout half the world. Not so Titus. He was good-hearted and good-natured enough, but so given up to voluptuousness that people feared he would fall into the ways of Nero when he came to the throne. In one respect only was he constant in his affections of the heart—he never once faltered in his love for Berenice.

In A. D. 75, he returned to Palestine and Tacitus, the historian, says, in the second book, second chapter, of his "Historiae," that he was regarded to have been actuated by love for that queen to make the journey. Certain it is that when he returned to Rome, Berenice went with him as his fiancée and her residence in Rome during the ensuing four years was one long drawn out series of splendid entertainments, reminiscent of those given by Cleopatra and Marc Antony.

The reason Titus did not make Berenice his wife was that the Roman populace opposed the match. There were so many mutterings that even Vespasian dared not defy them, and he bade his son, whom he loved dearly, beware.

**Berenice Now Forgotten.**  
When Titus came to the throne in A. D. 79, after the death of Vespasian, he still had hopes that he might overcome the opposition of the Romans to Berenice. But they made it clear that his marriage to her would never be forgiven for three reasons: she was a queen and the title of royalty which had become abhorrent to the Romans from the time they banished the Tarquins, nearly eight centuries before the time of Titus, was no less abhorrent to them now, although the power of the emperor was incalculably greater than that of any king; secondly because she was a member of a subject nation, and thirdly because a



Imported From Tropical Africa.