

QUEEN OF FLOWERS.

Theme of the Poet and the Artist—
the Rose.

GUY ELLIOTT MITCHELL.

Roses—queens of the American flower garden!

The increasing tendency of people to patronize the rural sections, and the steadily increasing love for flowers, with the impulse to cultivate the small garden found in the city and the rural homes brings into prominence the flower of kings and of favorites—and of the humblest menial—the rose.

It is astonishing what varied types in nature there are of this flower, and how world-wide is its distribution. Wild roses are found from frigid Lapland to tropic India. The rose has the honor of being the first cultivated flower. For a long time it was a rare possession, but with the general and active love of nature that is a marked characteristic of the present times much has been learned about the culture of flowers in general, and of the rose in particular, and its special requirements are better understood.

While verandas and trellises of country homes may have their honey-suckles, and lilacs may bloom in abundance, nothing excels in beauty or fragrance the climbing roses when in their gorgeous and glorious bloom. There is no flower best with more difficulties to grow, yet its cultivation is increasing. The harder it is to produce a beautiful thing the more highly it is prized.

Most Important Groups.

Roses of to-day are of complex lineage, for old and new species have been crossed and recessed until now our cultivated roses are divided into more than thirty general groups. The most important of these are: Moss, Rugosa, Hybrid Teas, Persian roses and a few June roses among the stiff, upright growing sorts of medium to tall growth; Polyanthus, upright but dwarf, and Teas, of low or half-recumbent habit. The latter, by some classifiers, are again sub-divided into China, Bourbon, etc., of which classes the teas and hybrid teas are the most beautiful. They bloom longer than other types, hence they have been most widely grown.

For colder climates the hybrid perpetuals are a most valuable class, being generally hardier and larger bloomers, though they do not bloom so

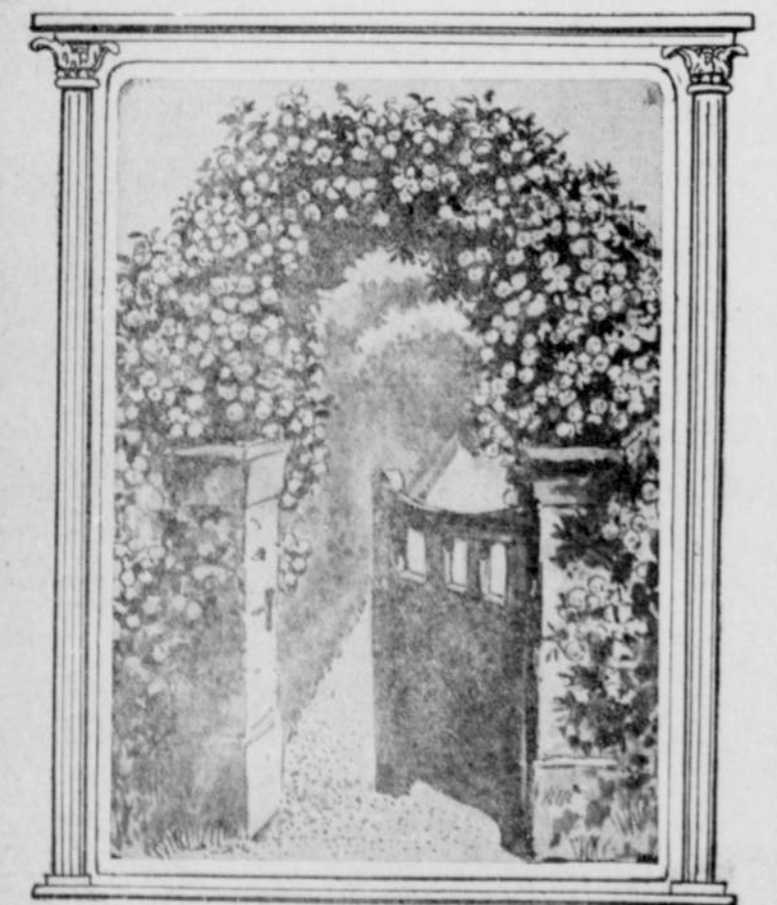


THE GOLDEN ETOILE DE LYON.

long as the teas. These have been obtained by crossing the French and Damask roses with the China rose.

Roses are propagated by cuttings, by budding, grafting and layering. All varieties will not root equally well from cuttings and layers, and budding is largely done.

The budding roses have to be carefully watched, for being started on strong briar and Manetti roots they



THE OLD FASHIONED MARY WASHINGTON ROSE.

are quite apt to throw out shoots from their own roots which are vigorous and soon overtake and run out the bud. They may be readily discerned when they do come out, for their leaves and wood are of a different character from that of the bud, the wood being covered with fine, prickly spines and the leaves being seven in number of three serrations instead of five, as in most of the budded kinds.

Budded roses should be planted deep so that the bud is at least three inches below the surface of the soil, when there will be less trouble from the suckers. The roots should be examined and any eyes or buds that are starting upon them should be carefully taken out.

Roses must have good air and plenty of it, without being too much exposed; hence an elevated situation is better than one that is lower or stagnant. They should not, however, be exposed to too violent winds, for the foliage cannot stand whipping.

Sometimes the protection of a clump of trees is sought, but unless the plants are set well away from them they will be robbed of plant food by the roots of the tree. To take advantage of this kind of protection the roses should be set twenty-five feet further away from the trees than the latter's height.

The protection of buildings should be avoided, for so completely do these stop the circulation of air that mildew and blights follow from sheltered locations of this character. There are, however, exceptions to this rule, for sometimes in an elevated position there will be suitable circulation of air even close to a building. This depends largely upon the prevailing winds and the exposure of the locality.



THE QUEEN BEATRICE—ONE OF THE NEWEST ROSES.

The hot noonday sun is very hard upon the blossoms, and if the rose bud could be so located as to get a shadow cut from a clump of trees for two hours after noon such a location would be ideal.

The greatest pleasure to be derived from flowers is to have them for the freest possible use and to give to friends and others who may otherwise not be able to have them.

The soil needs to be well suited and properly prepared. For hybrid perpetuals a heavy soil is better, one that has some portion of clay in its composition. The rose requires for its best development a cool, moist soil, and for this reason the heavier type is better, carrying, as it does a large amount of moisture, and being also a little lower in temperature.

To root from semi-dormant wood: About the beginning of autumn, September in the North, October in the South, take your cuttings. Several may be made from one cane, as pretty well ripened wood roots after this method as well as any. Make the cuttings about 6 inches long. Cut just below an eye, making a slanting cut, and trim off the lower leaves. Now dig a hole by the parent bush. Put a handful of sand at the bottom if you have it, and put in your cuttings, setting them one inch apart and firming the earth very solidly about them. Only about an inch of the upper stem should project above the ground. Put a glass jar over the cuttings, and sink the jar well into the ground, then bank up the earth a couple of inches around the can. Let the cuttings, jar and all, rigidly alone until spring is well advanced. It will be found then that nearly every cutting has rooted. This plan seems to be a success wherever it is tried, North, South, East or West. Nearly all hybrid teas and perpetuals root well in this way. So do moss, memorial and ramblers roses.

In the culture of roses the greatest trials and disappointments are met with in the insects that persistently attack them and of which there are many. One of the first in the early summer is the green fly or aphid.

How to Kill the Aphid.

This will be discovered on the tips of the bushes and also upon the buds and about their stems. The insects suck the sap from these tender parts and greatly check the growth and development of the buds. Dusting with hellebore will keep them in check, or they may be sprayed with one pound of caustic potash, whale oil soap dissolved in eight gallons of water. This is easy work.

One of these insects will be the progenitor of over 5,000 million descendants at the end of five generations, which makes the discovery and prompt treatment of the first ones highly important.

The leaf roller is another enemy that rolls up the leaves and also works upon the buds, eating small holes in the ends.

Then there are other caterpillars, the young of moths and butterflies, that feed upon the foliage and also upon the buds. These should be hand picked or crushed, as it is difficult to reach them after they have protected themselves by the folding of the leaves.

The rose bug or rose chaffer is a small brown beetle that appears in

of great value in getting the finest blooms and the longest bud development. Good wood dirt is excellent.

Fine, strong plants, set while entirely dormant, should give a satisfactory quantity of flowers the first summer. In planting the tops should be cut down to two or three buds.

Many fall at this point to prune close enough. On well grown plants there is usually too much wood left. The desire to obtain blossoms the first summer is so great that frequently the entire top is left to grow, which is too much for the root to support.

The reverse should be done, for by close pruning the few buds left will develop into strong, vigorous shoots that will produce buds, and only by this practice can they be surely obtained.

A good general rule to follow in pruning is to cut severely all teas, hybrid teas and kinds that do not make strong growth, and to cut all strong growing kinds moderately. The more luxuriant a bush grows the less pruning will be required, but the weakest growing kinds require the severest pruning.

While florists have their own way of propagating roses, amateurs usually get a start of everblooming roses either from cuttings of the blooming wood, or from cuttings of mature wood rooted during winter while in a semi-dormant

condition. The latter is the surest method for the inexperienced flower grower.

How to Grow Cuttings.

How can you root summer cuttings? Make a 4 or 5 inch cutting of a rose branch that is coming into bloom, or is just through blooming. Cut just below an eye, leaving a small "heel" or strip of bark attached. Trim off the lower set of leaves even with the wood. Leave the end leaf entire and trim the leaf or two remaining, back to the first pair of leaflets. Insert these cuttings in wet sand up to the last eye. Put them in the window and keep constantly damp until they root, which should be in from 3 to 4 weeks. Teas root easily by this method.

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June and usually in large numbers. The eggs are laid in the soil, generally in light or sandy land; they are not often troublesome in heavy soil.

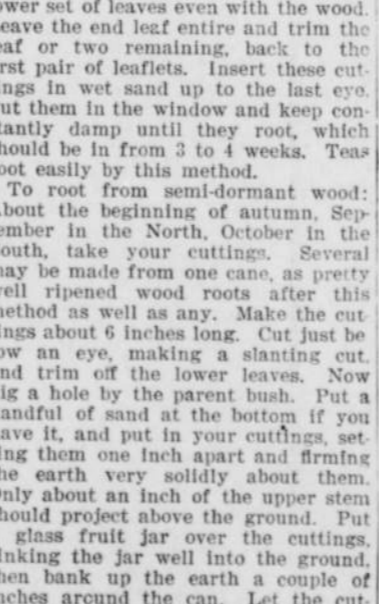
Paris green and other poisons do not have much effect upon them. Arsenate of lead, when used in strong solutions (two and a half ounces to a gallon), will keep them quite well in check, but this material discolors the foliage.

In the early morning, when the bugs are somewhat dormant, they may be picked off by hand, or knocked into a pan of kerosene held underneath the branches. This is a most difficult pest to control. It will also attack grapes and other fruits.

The rose slug is the larva of the saw fly, which comes out of the ground in May. The female deposits eggs in cuts made in the leaves. The eggs hatch in about twelve days after they are laid.

They are a soft-bodied insect similar to the snail, and may be readily destroyed by dusting with hellebore or by the white oil soap spray. They soon seriously injure the foliage if not kept in check.

Another very troublesome insect and enemy of the rose is the rose hopper or thrips. These are small, white flies that come in swarms, and they work mainly on the under side of the leaves.



They will fly off when you are attempting to treat them.

The white grub is another parasite upon roses, the list of which is becoming somewhat formidable. This grub comes from eggs deposited in the ground by the June bug or May beetle.

After pairing, the male dies, when the female bores down in the soil, depositing her eggs from six to eight inches deep. The small white grubs which are hatched from these live upon the grass roots or the roots of other plants.

In making up the soil for the rose beds frequently put in the bottom to decompose have these grubs in them, and as they live in the grub form for three years, they frequently eat the roots of the roses, causing them to wither and often to die. On the first discovery of a white grub in the soil should be dug over to find the grubs.

Toads Are Friends.

There are no better friends to have in the garden than the toads. If they could be protected and encouraged to live there they would eradicate many of the grubs and cutworms that do so much damage to garden plants.

The great enemy of the toad is the small boy. Bands of schoolboys have been known to go out, and in a single day, kill as many as 300 of these useful animals. The boys regard this as innocent sport, being untaught and not knowing that the toad is a most valuable insect destroyer.

To the lovers of the rose, these difficulties in its culture, great as they are, are not altogether too discouraging. They rather incite to greater energy and determination to overcome them, knowing that eternal vigilance is the price to be paid to win and to enjoy this queen and most beautiful of all flowers.

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