

FLOWERS AT FUNERALS

BY H. H. BATTLES



WHEN death has visited the home of a friend there is no more delicate way of expressing one's sympathy than by sending a few flowers. Several years ago the florists invented many monstrosities in the way of "funeral designs," which caused among the cultivated a distaste for such "emblems." The better class of florists do not now offer these designs, and consequently the beautiful custom of sending flowers to funerals is increasing. One other point the thoughtful florist of to-day is careful to avoid—that the chosen flowers be not too fragrant. At one time tuberose were extensively used, and the odor from them was so oppressive that with them lingers in many minds the association of death. Lettering on designs of flowers is generally in bad taste. If it is desirable to say anything let it be neatly written on the card which accompanies the flowers.

THE CHOICE OF COLOR

CLUSTERS of flowers are always pretty if the flowers are well chosen and arranged gracefully. It is advisable to arrange the clusters flat on one side that they may be laid down with no fear of bruising the flowers. In selecting flowers for an infant it is well to choose very delicate white ones. For young people a little pink is in good taste, and for elderly people purple violets and pansies are used with the white. An effective arrangement can be made by tying two of the clusters together by the stems, allowing the ribbon to fall gracefully among the flowers.

Should one not wish to send anything, but desirous to pay some little tribute to their friend, a pretty idea is to carry a handful of flowers and place them on the casket, or on the grave. A wreath of laurel, of the common box (*buxus sempervirens*), or of any "ever-green" foliage is pretty, and should this green have been gathered from some spot that the deceased was fond of there will be many loving associations attached to it. A wreath of white flowers, chrysanthemums, carnations, or balsam compactly arranged with a cluster of pink flowers on one side, or a wreath of ivy leaves with a few flowers arranged as if apparently lashed on with a band of purple violets or pansies, or a small wreath of the blue forget-me-not, or this dainty little flower on a white wreath, are appropriate. A crescent wreath is also very graceful, one side very much smaller than the other and tied with ribbon with flowers drawn through the knot.

CROSSES, BASKETS AND ANCHORS

CROSSES can be made in a great variety of ways. The same combination of flowers as that suggested for wreaths is pretty. When making an ivy cross, ivy leaves should be wired separately and laid flat. A few sprays of ivy gracefully twined around the cross, relieving the stiffness, or a few flowers at the junction of the arms lashed on with a band of flowers, is very effective. A beautiful cross may be made by arranging pure white flowers very compactly, though the effect will be as if it were chiseled out of marble. Over the arms throw a garland of delicately-colored flowers, or some delicate vine apparently climbing over the cross.

Flat baskets loosely arranged with flowers and maiden-hair fern generously scattered through are always effective. A flat panel of ivy leaves forms a beautiful background for a cluster of flowers; if lilies can be had, it is pretty to use a large cluster of them with their long stems. Palm leaves are emblematic of victory. Two of these tied with ribbon are often used. When more than two, it is well to give a decided curve to one of them. Sometimes a few flowers are used in addition, and instead of tying with ribbon, several leaves of the striped *pandanus veitchii* are used for the knot. An anchor, emblematic of hope, is pretty. When these forms are used the outline of the design should be strictly adhered to. Boxes of loose flowers are always acceptable, and can be arranged with good effect at the grave.

In place of the crape on the door a pretty custom is to tie a cluster, or wreath of flowers, with touches of color as suggested in the wreaths.

FLOWERS AT THE GRAVE

UNTIL cremation becomes the accepted means of disposing of our dead there will be graves. If the women of the family go to the grave much of the danger to their health can be lessened by placing carpet, matting, or boards on the ground where they walk or stand. If it storms there should be an awning placed that may protect them. Death has often been traced to exposure at the grave. The family are frequently in a low physical condition caused by long and anxious watching, and are particularly susceptible to cold.

Much of the horror of death may be avoided by lining the grave with greens of various kinds, also covering the mound of soil with green. The flowers that were sent to the house can be taken to the grave by a special carriage and may be arranged before the family arrives. It is here where well-chosen flowers and designs are appreciated, and see to it that there are none that will leave an unhappy impression, such as a clock pointing to the "fatal hour," or a broken ladder, which suggests climbing, struggling, but at last falling, or a "setting sun" with the rays two or three inches wide, or words made of poorly-shaped letters and saying nothing that touches a pleasant chord in the minds of the bereaved. Let there be none of these, but in their place let there be an abundance of greens and flowers sent by loving friends.

And the impression left on one's mind will be far, far different than though nothing but the cold, naked earth were seen.