

FLOWERS AT JUNE WEDDINGS

By H. H. Battles



ONCE heard a man about to be married earnestly ask the advice of a friend as to the most suitable necktie for the bridegroom. The friend laughingly replied: "My dear fellow, that is not of the slightest importance. You need give yourself no uneasiness. Nobody will look at you. Of course, it is necessary for you to be there, but I assure you that the interest of the occasion centers in and around the bride." The truth of this cannot be questioned, and the little belongings necessary to a bride are, therefore, of importance.

FLOWERS FOR THE BRIDE'S BOUQUET

THE bride's bouquet should always be made of white flowers. In England, eucharis, gardenia, orange blossoms and stephanotis are frequently used; with us, very seldom. The most fashionable bouquet in America consists of white orchids, lily of the valley, or of white roses, following in the order named. Lily of the valley is frequently mixed with either orchids or roses, but orchids and roses are seldom used in the same bouquet. They are rival queens that are happiest apart. A pretty idea to arrange the bride's bouquet is to have it composed of several sections, that, after the bride leaves the house the maid of honor may distribute to those friends whom the bride may wish to honor. The ribbon can remain on the section intended for the bride's mother. At times the bride has a favorite flower, or there is a bit of romance or sentiment attached to some colored flower, such as a violet, or a Jacqueminot rose, and she wishes this included in her bouquet. When they are used let it be a small bunch, partly concealed. After the reception, it may be taken from the bouquet and worn on the traveling dress. The ribbon for the bouquet should be either three yards of three-inch ribbon to match the gown in tone and texture, or twenty or thirty yards of very narrow ribbon, with long bows, the ends extending down at different lengths, with delicate flowers attached to a number of these ends. Sometimes a large bow of ribbon is tied and arranged as though it were coming from the center of the bouquet. The ribbon thus used has no meaning, and is very apt to become soiled by the moisture on the flowers.

THE BRIDAL PRAYER-BOOK

SOME brides desire to carry a prayer-book in order to have a lasting souvenir. That there may be some personal association with flowers on that day, a few can be held in the prayer-book, and to prevent the stems and foliage from soiling the book the stems can be protected by silver foil or waxed paper.

THE MAID OF HONOR'S BOUQUET

THE bouquet carried by the maid of honor depends entirely on the complexion. If she is a decided brunette, there is nothing better than a big bunch of Jacqueminot, or Ulrich Brunner roses. If a blonde, let it be the delicate pink Catherine Mermets, or Mrs. John Laing roses. The arrangement of her bouquet should in some way differ from those carried by the bridesmaids.

FLOWERS FOR THE BRIDESMAIDS

THERE are a number of pretty and effective ways that flowers can be arranged for bridesmaids. The conventional way is to make a round bouquet, arranged carelessly, using the foliage of the flowers of which the bouquet is composed. As the bride's bouquet is always white, those carried by the bridesmaids should, as a contrast, have some color. If the bride, in choosing her attendants, has been fortunate in securing decided blondes and brunettes, strong and beautiful color contrasts can be obtained in both gowns and flowers. The flat cluster, or "rustic bunch," is often used. In arranging such a cluster it is wise to have it arranged carelessly, or rather not to interfere too much with nature. The effect should be as if the hand that carried the flowers was the hand that gathered them, with no thought of arrangement. The flowers should have long stems, and be allowed to fall as they will.

Baskets of various shapes filled with flowers are often used. Leghorn hats, drawn together in the shape of a basket, are among the prettiest arrangements. Draw the ribbon around the center, and tie a loop and bow on top. This can be carried either with the arm through the loop, or as a basket in front. The flowers in this case should be arranged very loosely, not only giving the impression that the hat is full, but flowers tumbling out.

The most picturesque arrangement for bridesmaids to carry is the "Directoire stick." These sticks are about five feet long, made of wood, either polished or covered with silk or celluloid, with a knob on top and a large bunch of flowers fastened with a bow of ribbon about a foot from the knob. A noon wedding in the country is the most appropriate at which to use these. Old-fashioned and picturesque gowns and Leghorn-hats add very much to the effect.

PAGES AND THEIR DUTIES

NO fashionable bridal party is complete without little children acting as pages. Many little duties can be assigned to them. If ribbon is used across the aisles, they can be stationed there to lift it as the ushers pass. One of the pages can hold the bride's bouquet

while the ceremony is being performed, another can carry a plush case for the prayer-book, if the bride wishes to use one, and, finally, they can gather up the ribbon, if it has been drawn the whole length of the aisle. As to the flowers these little folks should wear, much depends upon the size and costumes. If very little fellows dressed in white, get as large a rose as possible, a Baroness Rothschild, or an Ulrich Brunner. Let the stems be fully eighteen inches long, and pinned diagonally on the breast with all of its beautiful foliage. If lads of between twelve and fifteen, let them wear large buttonhole bouquets of some strikingly contrasting color to their costume. If little girls are to do the honor as pages, or maids of honor, let them carry very large or very small baskets; the smaller the child the larger the basket.

THE GROOM, BEST MAN AND USHERS

THE groom should wear a buttonhole bouquet, not very large, made of the same kind of flowers as the bride's bouquet—possibly one rose and two or three sprays of lily of the valley. One white orchid, if this be very small, and several sprays of lily of the valley are very effective. Gardenias are much sought after, and have been the favorite flower in London for wedding boutonnières for a number of years. Six sprays of lily of the valley also make a very pretty bouquet.

The best man should wear a larger bouquet than that worn by the groom, made of the same kind of flowers as the maid of honor carries. The ushers should wear very large, white bouquets—four carnations is none too large, often as many as six are used. Either twelve sprays of lily of the valley, or six sprays of Roman hyacinth, arranged compactly, make a pretty bouquet.

The mother of the bride can either wear or carry a cluster of flowers that will harmonize with the gown that she wears. If it be a formal wedding, to carry the cluster is preferable; it should be a little smaller than the bouquets carried by the bridesmaids. If the bride has sisters, and should they not be of the bridal party, let their bouquets be decidedly different from those carried by the bridal party. The father of the bride should wear a boutonniere bouquet much similar to that worn by the best man.

DECORATIONS AT THE RECEPTION

SEVERAL tall palms placed at the entrance of the house make an effective entree. These, with their graceful foliage, are combined so as to form an arch eight or ten feet high. It is then necessary to decide what is the most conspicuous point in the hall which the eye rests upon; make some effective grouping of palms here, massive if the space permits. The newel post is a feature which should be carefully considered, and made as effective as possible. Never put greens on the banister rail, as they interfere with its use in going up and down stairs. Unless the stairway is very wide, the outside is the most effective place. A line of laurel wreathing under the rail, with festoons of smilax caught up with several carnations, is very pretty. If you use wire in fastening the greens, see that no ends stick out that may endanger the gowns of the guests. All the mirrors and chandeliers should have attention. Pretty effects can be had with festoons over doors and arches. A few of the very choice flowers on the dressing case in the ladies' room is in good taste. In the reception room is where the most beautiful effects should be studied. The end of the room in which the bridal party receive should be literally made a bower of flowers. A large canopy of white flowers is generally arranged over the place where the bride and groom receive. This can be made a work of art in the handling of delicate flowers. On either side of this, and extending from the ceiling to the floor, should be large curtains of asparagus or smilax, caught back with a band of flowers. The mirror over the mantel can be framed with flowers. Two beautiful vases on the mantel can be filled, one with exquisite orchids, the other with long-stemmed hybrid roses. The floral decorations in the room where the refreshments are served depends entirely upon the size of the apartment. Often in country homes the porch is enclosed with canvas or boards; these are covered on the inside with evergreen trees, laurel branches, or what large and effective greens can be had. The most valuable and inexpensive green called wild smilax has recently made its appearance from the south. With it you can produce effects which would be impossible to obtain with any other greens that are now on the market. It comes in long, beautiful sprays; all that is necessary for you to do is to hang it up; nature has arranged it for you. The porch thus enclosed and decorated, small tables placed there in addition to those in the dining-room, a few flowers, possibly wild ones, arranged in dainty receptacles on each table are touches that are always appreciated. In city houses, where the dining-room only is used, the table is simply used for refreshments. On this table some high arrangement of flowers should be placed. It is not practicable for anybody to sit at it, consequently the escorts and waiters serve the ladies in different parts of the house. A very sensible fashion at formal noon weddings is to have a separate room where the bridal party may breakfast. In addition to the bridal party, if there be distinguished guests, or those from a great distance, they can be included in this party. Nothing but green and white should be used in this room. The table decorations should be most delicate and dainty. Low effects only should be used, as there should be nothing to obstruct the view at the table as the bridal party are seated.

CHURCH ORNAMENTATIONS

THE interiors of churches differ so much that it is difficult to lay down rules that will apply to all. If the interior of the church is constructed of natural wood, and the chancel decorated with dark colors, laurel wreathing is best, and the broad-leaved latania barbonica is the most suitable palm. If the interior is more delicate in form and color, the finer and more graceful palms, such as arecas lutescens and cocos weddelliana are desirable, while for garlands smilax or cultivated asparagus plumosus are the most appropriate. In placing the plants the idea to have a background for the lighter colored costumes should be borne in mind. Care should be taken not to obstruct the view, and an unobstructed passage from the vestry-room must of course be left. The font should be filled with large, white flowers; a few palms can be used with good effect on both sides of the aisles. Tall ones are placed so that they may form an arch, and they do not obstruct the view of the guests too much. A pretty way to designate the front seats, reserved for the families of the contracting parties and guests of honor, is to tie large clusters of flowers on the ends of the pews thus reserved. Another and more common way is to have broad ribbon, with balls or baskets of flowers on each end; this is drawn across the aisle with the ends thrown over the pews. Another pretty and useful way to use ribbon is, after the guests have been seated, to have the ushers or little pages draw the ribbon the whole length of the aisle, resting on the top of each pew. This serves as a gentle reminder, as well, that it is the wish of the bride that the guests remain seated until the bridal party march out.

If you live at a distance from the city, and do not want to go to the expense of employing a florist to do the work, you can give some of your friends the pleasure of helping to decorate; often you can get the advice of a practical florist, which will be more valuable if he can see the house and know the material you have at hand. Many beautiful things can be found in the woods, and with time and willing hands the church and home can be decorated nicely. If there is a chancel rail get two strips of wood about seven feet long, placing them perpendicular at each side of the entrance to the chancel. At the bottom fasten them to the rail, and on top fasten a heavy piece of wire or a barrel hoop, thus forming an arch; cover all with greens, including the rail, and you have a very pretty effect. If wild flowers can be had, use them in large clusters tied here and there with white ribbons. If there is no chancel rail one can be made, with an arch in the center, at a very little cost. If it is practicable, get a few palms; place them in the foreground, after making a background of evergreen trees. At an evening wedding, where lamps are used for illumination, you will add much to the effect by substituting many candles for a few lamps. Candelabra around the chancel are most effective.