SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Camellia

SOCIETY BULLETIN

VOL. 10:8

SEPTEMBER 1949

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PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SOCIETY, INC.

A Non-Profit Organization

40 No. San Rafael Ave., Pasadena 2, Calif.

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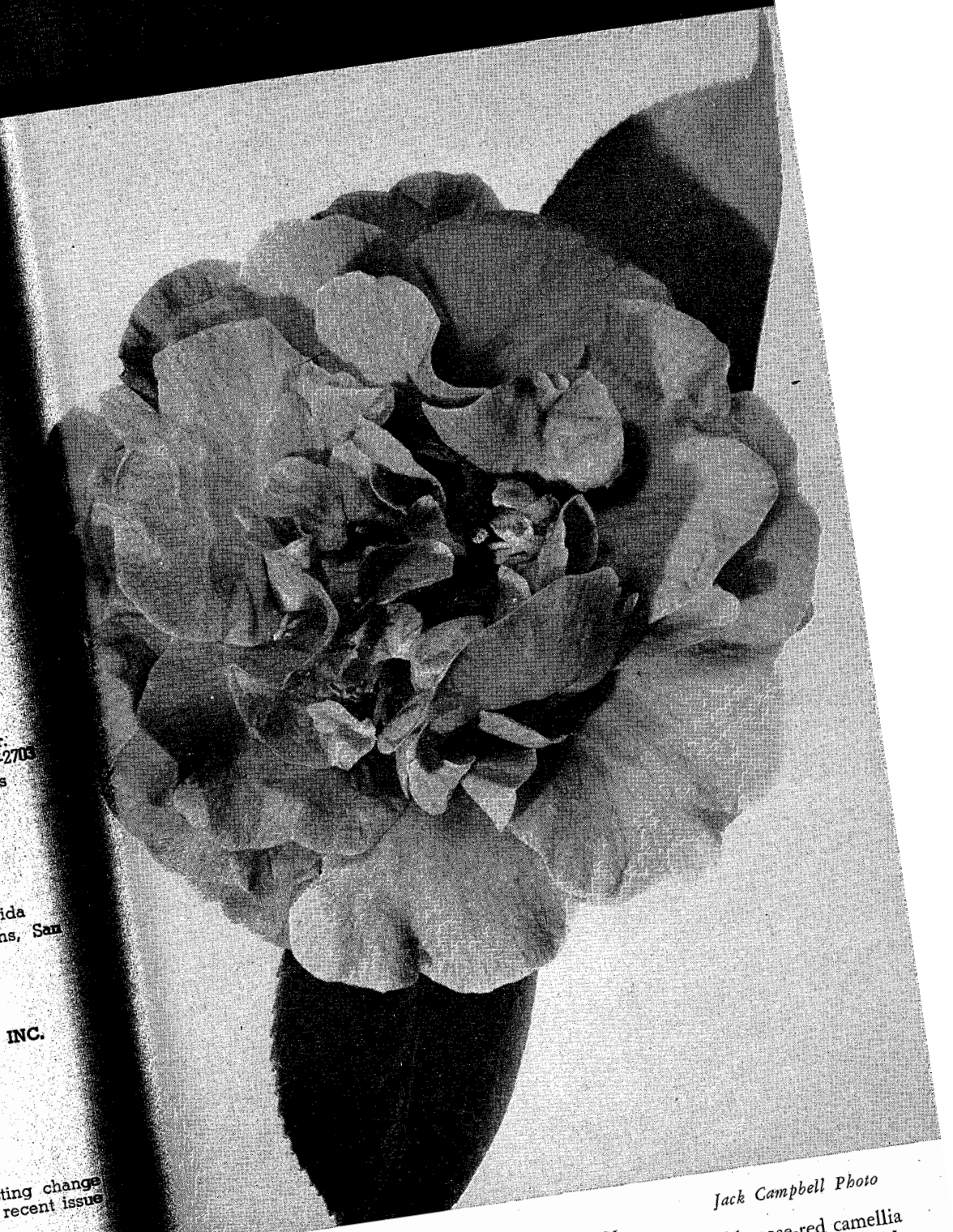
Editorial office: 2203 W. 21st Street . . . Los Angeles 7, Calif.

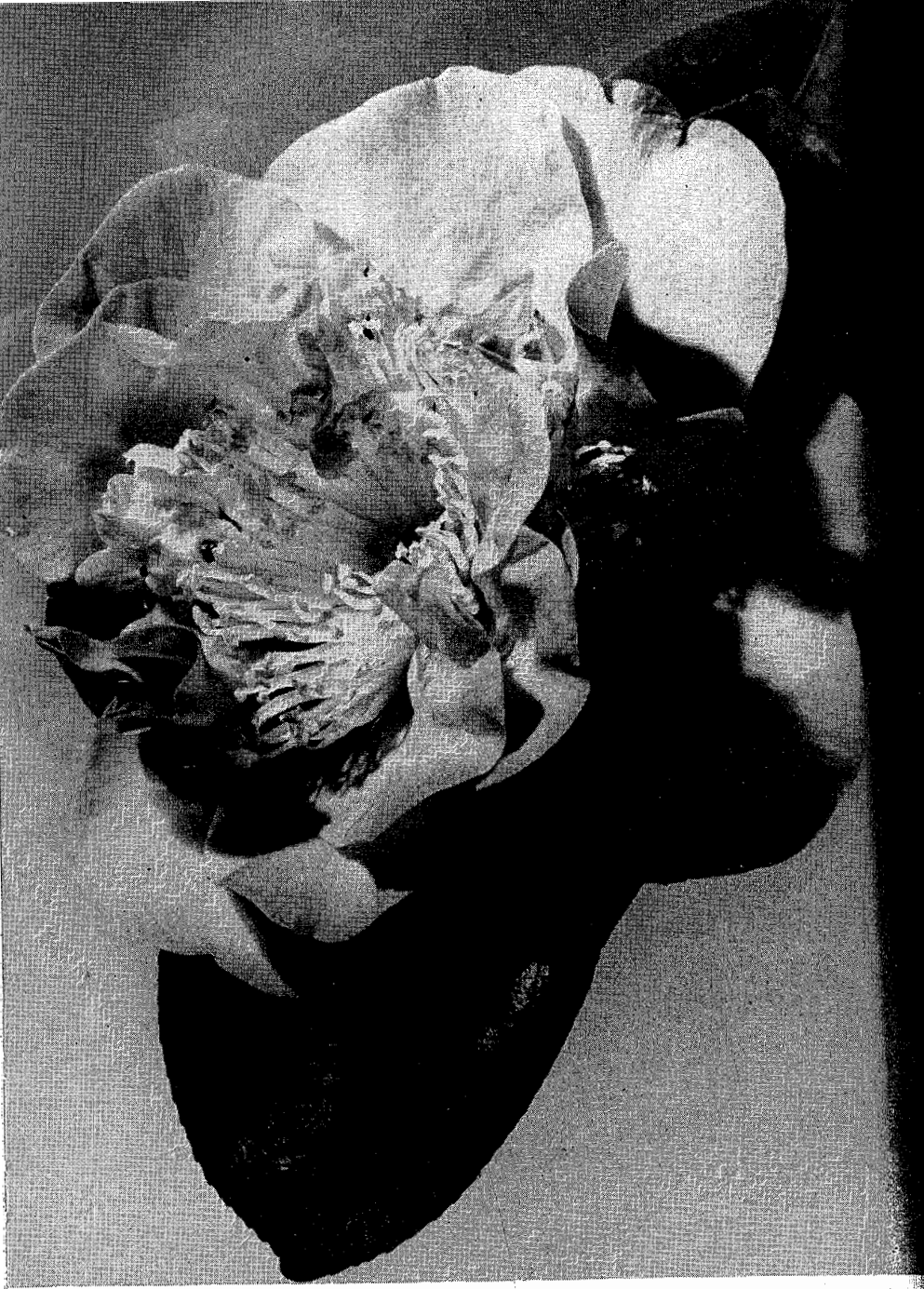
Published monthly from November to April, and in June and September.



Jack Campbell Photo

MARGARET HIGDON

Margaret Higdon or Elizabeth Grandy is a large semidouble rose-red camellia which occasionally shows beautiful white margined petals. It blooms in mid-season and is a vigorous, compact, upright grower.



Jack Campbell Photo

PINK POPPY

A very unusual soft pink single to semidouble camellia. This is a seedling from G. G. Gerbing, Fernandina, Florida.

REPORT ON CAMELLIA PETAL BLIGHT

Because they are of vital interest to all California camellia growers, the following articles are reprinted from the September issue of Home Gardening *magazine. The first is a condensation of a report by J. S. Tormey, pp. 174-176, 190; the second, "Q-Day in California," is by Ed. Arnesen, p. 169. For further information regarding the petal blight readers are referred to the illustrated article by Dr. D. G. Milbrath in the February 1949 issue of the* Bulletin, *pp. 8-10.* —Ed.

The July 1949 issue of the American Camellia Society *News-Letter* carried the first report of drastic action taken by several Southern states to prevent entry of camellia flower blight from California. Western growers read the article with amazement; the strict quarantine was as unbelievable as it was unexpected. The least significant of camellia diseases, actually unknown to 99.9 per cent of Californians, had overnight seemingly become a national menace.

Our agricultural authorities were as surprised as we. The county agents had to call state officials in Sacramento for confirmation; even there information was meager—no one was forewarned, everyone was amazed. A careful reading of the *News-Letter* report made us wonder just how well informed the whole action had been:

For several years camellia growers, nurserymen, and plant quarantine officials in the Southeast have been concerned with respect to the entry from California of camellia flower blight *(Sclerotinia camelliae)*, a destructive fungus disease which attacks the blooms of camellia plants. The quarantine officials of several of the southeastern states have agreed on a uniform quarantine to become effective July 1, 1949. After that date, only properly carefully bare-rooted and disbudded plants grown in California will be permitted entry into Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The quarantine also prohibits the entry of cut flowers from California. The Florida quarantine will also apply to Fulton County, Georgia, where the disease is known to be present in one private property. Quarantines of the other states will probably apply only to the one infected property near Atlanta. To date, quarantine officials of Alabama and North Carolina have not announced their intention to take similar quarantine action.

Camellia growers who have seen the injury caused to camellia flowers by this disease, or who have read articles on the disease, will appreciate the need for this restrictive action. For some time quarantine officials of the Southeastern States have been considering such action. The need for restricting the movement of plants and flowers was the chief topic of conversation at the meetings of the Georgia Nurserymen's Association held at Jekyll Island, Georgia, on May 16-17, 1949, and at the meeting of the nurserymen's branch of the Florida State Florists Association at Jacksonville, May 23-24, 1949. The Florida and Georgia nurserymen went on record as being in favor of quarantine action.

At the meeting of the Alabama Nurserymen's Association held at Montgomery on June 10-11, and attended by nurserymen from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Tennessee, a number of individuals spoke in opposition to a quarantine. Dr. D. L. Gill, Assoc. Pathologist, Division of Fruits and Vegetable Crops and Diseases, B.P.I., S.A.E. USDA, Spring Hill, Ala., gave an excellent talk on the subject, and described in detail the manner in which the disease might be transmitted as well as the destruction of blooms affected by the fungus. Opponents of a quarantine pointed out that camellia plants growing in soil have been moved into the Southeast for a number of years and that if there was any risk of dissemination of the disease in this manner it should have made its appearance in a number of places in the South by this time. They were also fearful that such quarantine action would have to be taken with respect to any nurseries in this section in which the disease might make its appearance, in which event the owners of the affected nurseries would be ruined.

Proponents of the quarantine met this last objection with the statement that owners of affected nurseries would not be ruined by a quarantine, as they would be able to sell bare-rooted plants, although it was admitted that large plants could not

be moved bare-rooted with any great degree of success. It was also argued that if the disease does make its appearance in the Southeast the demand for camellia plants on the part of the buying public would in all probability be greatly curtailed, as many individuals would be reluctant to pay from ten to thirty dollars for a plant which might be affected with camellia flower blight, and therefore not liable to produce perfect flowers.

The Southern Plant Board adopted two resolutions petitioning federal officials to interest themselves in the flower blight problem. One requesting that a survey be made in camellia plantings of the South during the blooming season in order to determine whether the disease has made its appearance in this area, was addressed to the Chief of the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine USDA. The other was addressed to the Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering USDA and requested that research investigations of the disease, with particular reference to development of control measures be undertaken at a suitable place in California at an early date.

It is possible that as a result of research investigations information could be developed which would provide for the movement of balled or container grown plants from infected nurseries without risk of spreading the disease.

Like many strange things the article had its humorous side. To those few of us who have actually seen flower blight and controlled it, the quarantine makes as much sense as trying to crack a peanut with a steamroller. This simple disease is nothing at all like Azalea Petal Blight—though I am sure many of our Southern friends have the two hopelessly confused by now. There is no wholesale destruction of blooms, no contamination by carriers, no need for repeated sprayings. A few flowers in thousands *may* brown a few days sooner than they normally would; removal of old blooms and ordinary garden cleanliness are enough to control the disease in any locality. But how could our Southern friends know of this if they had never experienced it or asked those few of us here who have actually worked with it?

Q-DAY IN CALIFORNIA

We, in common with the camellia growers throughout the United States, deeply regret the action recently instigated for the quarantine of all container camellias from California. The thinly veiled pretense that camellia petal blight could conceivably be of sufficient economic importance makes this entire action all the more ridiculous.

Here in California the disease is of far less importance than the mildew of roses or the control of aphis. If the members of the American Camellia Society who toured the important nurseries, private and public gardens of California last winter observed any widespread prevalence of petal blight it was not evidenced by the tone of their many glowing letters. They were highly pleased with the camellia shows, the myriads of perfectly blooming camellias both in containers and in the ground, and with the mighty interest in camellias we Californians have. If they were impressed by the prevalence of blight, then you Southerners should be quaking in your boots for after ten years of lurking in your gardens, this disease should conceivably be able to completely ruin all of your famous camellias. It would be too late to slam the doors.

Since the quarantine became effective in six Southern states we have had letters of protest from our many Southern friends, customers, and nurserymen. Had agitation in this direction been instituted ten years ago, it might possibly have had the appearance of being well intended. Under existing conditions, the only conclusion we can reach is that the movement is directed toward the restraint of intersectional camellia trade. It is unfortunate that this action should come just at the time when the most wonderful gains yet made were soon to be available to all. Trade between the West Coast and the South must

(Continued on page 10)

CAMELLIAS AROUND THE WORLD

By Ralph S. Peer

Since I have been greatly interested in the translation of the Italian book which has been featured in the *Bulletin* recently, I thought I would investigate the present status of the Mercatelli Nurseries in Florence, and accordingly requested my office in Milan to get in touch with them and to ask for a list of available camellias.

Here is a translation of their reply:

We reply to your letter of 8th instant received only yesterday.

As a matter of fact, our firm specialized in the production of *Camellia japonica* from 1880 to 1890 and propagated numerous varieties mainly from the seeds obtained in the gardens of collectors of camellias in Florence and other places in Italy. During this period there were numerous such collectors who were very fond of this hobby.

We did actually arrive at the point where we had approximately one thousand different varieties, and in 1882 we published a Special Catalogue (of which unfortunately we did not preserve one copy!) in which we listed 300 selected varieties of the best types.

Toward the end of the last century, the Camellia passed out of fashion, and therefore, we abandoned its cultivation. Also, the gardens of the camellia lovers in Florence were permitted to go to ruin, and for this reason the greater number of the varieties which existed in Florence (and we believe also on the Ligurian Riviera and in the lake districts where the cultivation of this plant was concentrated) were lost.

For the last twenty years, fashion has once more been inclined toward the Camellia, and in other countries, especially Belgium, cultivation has again commenced. Specialists in camellias now limit their production to a restricted number of varieties. In Italy, and especially on the Riviera (Genoa-Nervi), it is still possible to find both old and new types. Generally the latter differ greatly from the older varieties because in the old days the flower was valued only if it was double and regular. Today the most precious types are the irregular types, either single or semidouble (Chandleri).

We have, in fact, again started the cultivation of the camellia, and have been propagating for several years, but more as lovers of the Camellia than for any commercial purpose. The small quantity which we produce is more than absorbed by local consumption. Under present conditions, we find that the cultivation of camellias is not remunerative. The growth of this plant is so slow; before the flower is available for sale at least seven or eight years have passed.

The letter then refers me to a firm in Belgium and one in Genoa, with both of whom I have had correspondence which led to nothing.

I also received the following letter, dated July 25, from the Guichard Soeurs Nursery of Nantes, France. You will understand that I sent them a copy of the June *Bulletin* containing the photograph of Ville de Nantes and its peony sport, and since the former variety originated with them, their comment is especially interesting:

We received your kind letter and the very interesting Bulletin of the camellia society.

Each year before the war, we sent many beautiful camellias to Mr. Mercatelli in Italy, and the advice Mr. Mercatelli has given (in your Bulletin) for the cultivation of camellias is good.

We very often have double flowers with Ville de Nantes, but this flower is very heavy and the sport not given to good vegetation.

Have you seen the variety Oki-No-Nami (pictured in the Bulletin)? Is the glowing color really *orange* red?

We are very grateful to you for all your kindness and we remain, always yours very truly,

Signed—Guichard Soeurs

P.S.—The article by Dr. Lammerts about rapid development of seedlings is marvellously instructive.

During World War II a great many Americans were in China, and a large number of them, especially members of the Air Force, were stationed in Kunming, the capital and principal commercial center of Yunnan, the vast southern province of China. Some of these people knew about camellias and came back with fantastic reports concerning the wonderful varieties they had encountered in Kunming gardens. I understand that color photographs now in this country prove without doubt the existence of these unusually beautiful specimens.

When Mrs. Peer and I started on a trip around the world last fall, we had already made an unsuccessful effort to obtain camellias from Yunnan by air express. While flying around the world, we obtained information from a totally unexpected source, which led us to a solution of the problem. After visiting England, South Africa, Egypt, and India, we spent several weeks in Australia. We met many people interested in the development of camellias, and obtained much worthwhile information about the varieties popular in Australia. Mr. Walter Hazlewood, head of the Hazlewood Nurseries, near Sydney, learning that we intended to visit China, asked us to rush along a shipment of plants which he had ordered from Kunming, provided, of course, that we visited that city. I explained that Kunming was quite inaccessible, but that if I found a way to help him I would do so.

His correspondent was a Professor Tsai of the Yunnan Botanical Institute at Kunming. While I was in Hongkong, and later in Honolulu, I exchanged various telegrams and letters with Professor Tsai, ascertaining that the Hazlewood shipment had gone forward by air express. Much to my astonishment, I received, also, a list of twenty varieties of *Camellia reticulata* which Professor Tsai offered to ship to me. Eventually, I ordered these twenty plants and now have them in Hollywood. Unfortunately, after the long journey from Kunming, they were given a heavy fumigation by the Plant Quarantine, and only a few of them will survive.

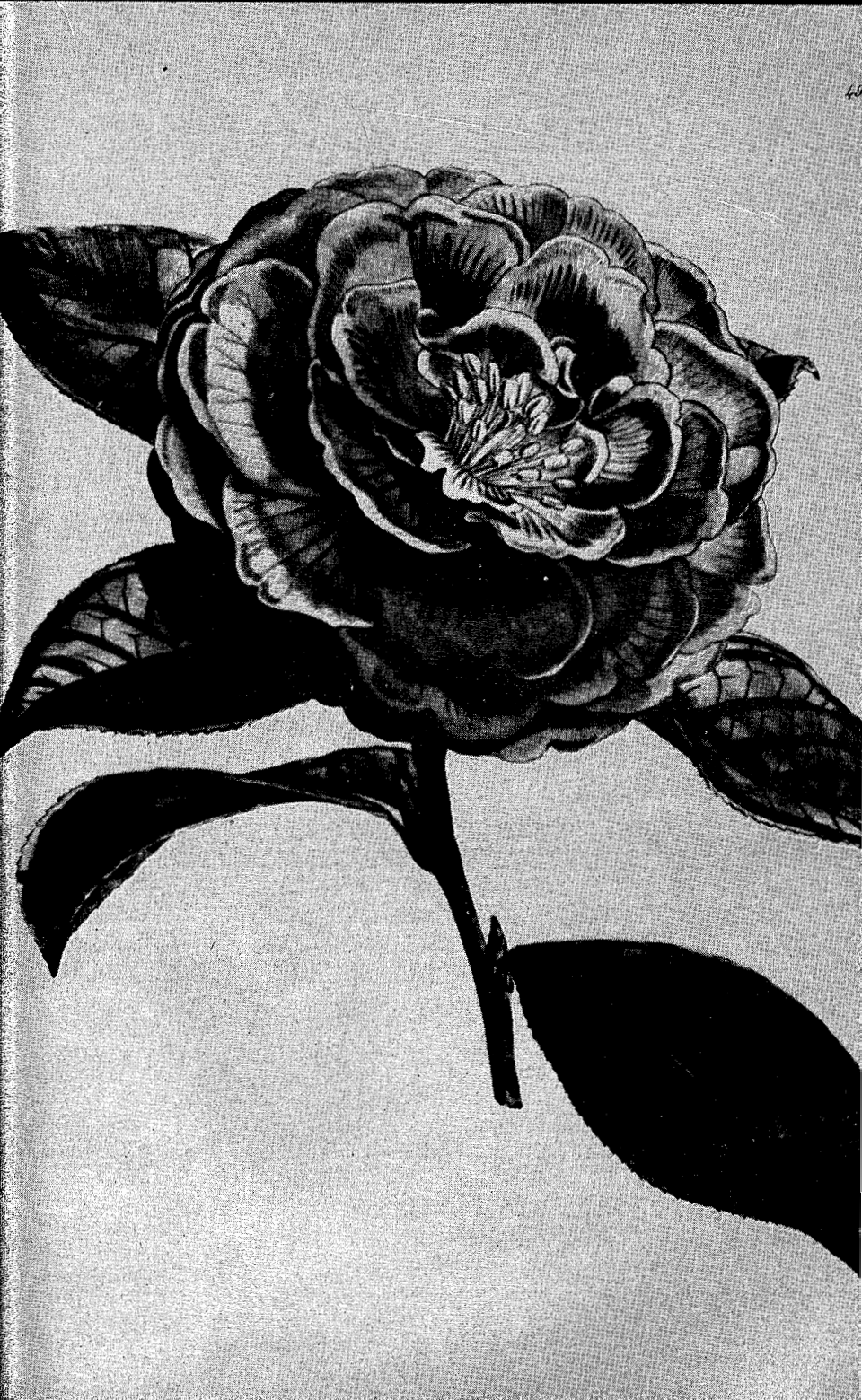
Although I have not yet seen the blossoms, the leaves on these plants are undoubtedly Reticulata, and I have been able to gather together enough supporting information to make it quite certain that there are available in Yunnan a great many more than twenty different varieties of this species. I suspect that between sixty and eighty different Reticulata varieties are now being grown in this remote part of he world.

During March 1949, a shipment of camellias was received by a Chinese nurseryman in Hongkong from a grower in Kunming. Upon inspecting these plants, about fifteen varieties of Reticulata were noted. Four of them were set aside for me and will be shipped from Hongkong in December.

Those who have seen the blossoms on the Kunming Reticulatas assert that they have all of the fine characteristics of the semidouble rose-pink Reticulata, well-known in the United States and in England. There is a complete range of colors from red through pink to white, including variegated forms.

Unfortunately, the unsettled political conditions in China are interfering with the development of this rich source of new varieties. My line of communication with Professor Tsai appears to have been cut, as I have had no answers to my letters for several months. It is certain, however, that slowly but surely the Kunming Reticulatas will be brought to the Western world.

These notes on the Kunming Reticulatas first appeared in the September newsletter of the Oregon Camellia Society. Reproduced on the following pages are plates of the long-sought double Reticulata from Curtis' Botanical Magazine, *April 1, 1857. They were very kindly supplied by Mr. Peer.*—Ed.



CAMELLIA RETICULATA; *flore pleno.*

Netted-leaved Camellia; double-flowered var.

Nat. Ord. Ternstrœmiaceæ.—Polyandria Monogynia.

Gen. Char. (*Vide supra*, Tab. 2784.)

Camellia *reticulata*; foliis oblongo-ovatis acuminatis subopacis reticulatis, petalis amplis flaccidis undulato-plicatis patentibus, calyce pentaphyllo colorato, ovario sericeo.

Camellia reticulata. *Lindley, Bot. Reg. t.* 1078. *Hook. Bot. Mag. t.* 2784.
Double-flowered var. (Tab. Nost. 4976).

Dr. Lindley was assuredly quite correct in describing *Camellia reticulata* as a very distinct species from *C. Japonica*. Fine a plant as it is, and a native as it is presumed to be of China, does not appear to have been known in Europe till about 1820, nor to have flowered in this country till 1826. Not only are the leaves very different from those of *C. Japonica*, but the flowers also, the "petals being much undulated and irregularly and loosely arranged, with none of the compactness and regularity for which the *C. Japonica* is so much admired." Nor, it may be added, are the colours so brilliant. But that it is a first-rate ornamental shrub, if properly grown, will be readily conceded by all who have had the privilege of seeing the specimen in the conservatory of William Byam Martin, Esq., of Bank Grove, near Kingston, Surrey. Upon this* we made the following notes in 1849, and we know that it has increased in size and beauty since. "On the death of Sir John Broughton Bank Grove was purchased by Mr. Byam Martin, whose good taste and love of plants induced him to set a high value on the Camellias then on

* An excellent woodcut, representing the entire plant in flower, figures being introduced to show its relative height, was published in the 'Historic Times' for April, 1849.

the property. A skilful gardener was directed to give his best attention to them, and particularly to a fine specimen of *C. reticulata*, which was planted out with other shrubs in the conservatory, and was said to be one of the first introduced to this country. It was desirable to afford the latter more space; and, whatever the sacrifice might be, it was deemed expedient to remove the other Camellias, noble specimens in themselves, and devote the entire house to this individual. The consequence is that this has attained to very great perfection. Its height was (in 1849) thirteen feet, the spread of the branches was sixteen feet, and the circumference fifty feet! During the last ten years it has grown nearly ten feet. Unlike other really fine specimens of *reticulata* we have seen, the present one does not form a straggling bush, with leaves and flowers so sparse that the branches may everywhere be seen; but its beautiful and ample foliage, and its still more beautiful, and, for a Camellia, almost gigantic flowers (eighteen to twenty inches in circumference!) constitute a dense mass of rich green and red, mingled in such equal proportions that it is at first sight difficult to say which predominates, the flowers or the leaves. Every blossom seems to be in its right place, and the number of these is not the least remarkable feature of this unrivalled plant. In the beginning of October, 1848, the multitude of flower-buds was so great that it was requisite for the health of the plant that 2600 should be removed; and assuredly, though it was difficult to count them, nearly an equal amount (say 2000, and we are sure we speak within bounds) were allowed to remain: and these were in the perfection of blossom in April of 1849!"

This plant, now described, like all hitherto known in Europe, had the few and lax petals which are peculiar to this species. In January of the present year I received a plant of which a solitary flower is here represented, from Messrs. Standish and Noble, Bagshot Nursery. It was sent some years ago by Mr. Fortune from China, as a "double *reticulata*;" and it will be seen at once that the flowers, though retaining the size of the ordinary *reticulata*, are of a brighter colour, and the petals are twice as many, and of firmer texture, and disposed with much greater regularity.

THE EDITORIAL

With this issue of the *Bulletin* we end a year of trial and error, twelve months of experiment that have somehow added up to success. We began Volume 10 printing 650 copies each issue, we close it with 1,200. And more surprising still, in this year the *Bulletin* achieved a national and international circulation far beyond our plans and hopes.

But Volume 11 cannot be like any one of these past issues; it must reflect the net result of this year's experiments. We will begin with a splendid new cover designed by Barbara Burke, more photographs and drawings than ever before, a yearly index and a better balanced selection of articles in every issue. This last feature is perhaps most important. It is easy to forget the beginner and his problems, easy to get involved in the learned double-talk of the "experts." There will be more practical camellia culture, more honest appraisal of varieties, and greater emphasis on the idea of camellias for everyone.

This is your *Bulletin*. It can be anything you want it to be. Your kind letters of praise and criticism have done much to shape its course; your continued interest will help us know what you need and want.

CLAUDE CHIDAMIAN

PETAL BLIGHT . . .

(Continued from page 4)

flourish if the progress already made is not to come to an untimely end. Furthermore, it is logical to assume that if this petal blight could ever attain any importance in the South, it has had plenty of opportunity, for during the past ten years countless thousands of California camellias have been imported into all the Southern states.

The entomologists of the states that inaugurated this quarantine displayed their lack of knowledge of this disease in demanding that *all* soil and *all* flower buds be removed from any California camellia plant before being admitted. The fact that no California nurseryman and few Southern nurserymen had any knowledge of the pending action nor had any of the California nurserymen an opportunity to present their side of the story gives the feeling of a sneak attack.

If the officials of the American Camellia Society are genuinely desirous of helping the camellia lovers, let them intiate a fair and complete investigation of this monstrous outrage. But let them give the parties concerned a chance to voice an opinion; have the entomologists and pathologists of the various states sufficiently versed in the subject to be able to pass an honest judgment. Let the nurserymen who, after all, have underwritten the majority of camellia advancements, have their chance at bat.

We do not feel that this quarantine will terminate the shipment of camellias into the South. For years we have shipped camellias bare-rooted to points far distant and have letters of testimony from customers in Cairo, Johannesburg, Tokyo, Manila, and Honolulu. What we do resent is the implied intent of the quarantine. We sincerely hope that the minority rule may not be allowed to prevail to the disparagement of the wonderful hobby of camellia culture.

TEST GARDEN TOPICS

By David W. McLean

IT IS ODD BUT INTERESTING that camellia society and committee activities are greatest when the camellia itself is as near dormant as it ever gets, that is while it is in bloom; and that camellia fans go as dormant as they ever get while the plants are active, busily growing and building buds for next season's flowers.

The Test Garden committee never goes entirely dormant, and especially not its secretary, who is camelliadom's perennial dynamo. At this point he bobs up with information that he has obtained from William Wylam in advance of distribution, and at prices which constitute donation from Bill, two much desired items for the Test Garden. Here is the secretary's report:

> Again the Test Garden is indebted to our friend Bill Wylam. This time for making available to us fine plants of Mary Christian and J. C. Williams, those much talked of and difficult to get English hybrids. The Committee is most gratified that we have been able to add these very important names to Curator Townsend's rapidly growing list.
>
> For those readers unacquainted with these new varieties let us state that none other than the Hon. Francis Hangar, Curator of the Royal Horticultural Society's Gardens at Wisley, England, has said of them that they are "perhaps two of the best plants of garden origin introduced during this century."
>
> Both Mary Christian and J. C. Williams are hybrids resulting from crosses between species *C. saluenensis* and *C. japonica,* producing most unusual flowers and foliage. Both, we are told, are extremely hardy (species Saluenensis comes from the mountains along the Salween River in China, and is found at high altitudes). Both are said to be prolific bloomers, especially the J. C. Williams, and both received the Award of Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
>
> If, as has been said, the future of camellias lies in crossing the various species, the Test Garden hopes to be in the vanguard of hybridizing with the several species and hybrids which now are in the Garden, and additional ones which we expect will soon be made available to us. It is hoped, also, that these two new hybrids will not prove to be sterile, as is the case with the cultivated form of *C. reticulata* known as "Captain Rawes," which is now common in most of our gardens.
>
> Our "lines are laid" for that other famous hybrid, Cornish Snow, which resulted from the crossing, also in England, of *C. saluenensis* with *C. cuspidata.* We will tell you about that, too, when we have been able to obtain a plant of it. We do not know how readily it lends itself to grafting, but if any of our readers has a scion which he or she wishes to contribute during the coming winter we can assure you that Curator Townsend will honor it by placing it on one of the choicest understocks in the Garden.

THE LATCH STRING at the office suite occupied by Curator Emeritus Hertrich and Curator Townsend of the Huntington Botanic Gardens is always out for Jerry Olrich, Superintendent of the State Capitol Gardens and friend of the Camellia Test Garden here. It would be out if Jerry always came empty handed; he is the sort of person for whom latch strings do hang out. But when he turns up at the office, he usually has a plant under his arm; his interest in the Test Garden never flags.

Our secretary reports again:

> On his last trip down from Sacramento, Jerry brought from his own garden three fine specimen plants—two of them bearing labels of new and rare varieties, and the other bearing an old name but a new face. The name is Contessa Lavinia Maggi. We hope that Bill Woodroof and his Nomenclature Committee are not watching too closely, but it is our understanding that although the name Contessa Lavinia

Maggi has been used as a synonym for Lallarook and Laurel Leaf for many years, it is now the belief of informed sources that the name Contessa Lavinia Maggi has no connection with this variety but belongs to another camellia going back to Verschaffelt's time and beyond. Maybe so, maybe not. At any rate Jerry brought us a Contessa Lavinia Maggi which he thinks may be a direct descendant of one of those originals so long lost while the name strayed with newer varieties. If this be true could there be a place better suited to establish the fact than our Test Garden? Thanks Jerry.[1]

OUR PREDICTION Is that when and if the new Contessa Lavinia Maggi proves to be a descendant of an old and honored line, entitled to the family name long usurped by others, Bill Woodroof and his Nomenclature Committee *will* be watching closely. Bill has welcomed the suggestion that his committee work in close cooperation with the Test Garden in order that it may fulfill Ann Galli's first concept of it as a proving ground for varietal nomenclature. At the moment Bill is busier than three men and a boy, preparing the society's new nomenclature book; all indications are that it will ring the bell. Don't let your membership run out!

Viewing the magnitude of the present-day tangle in the varietal nomenclature of the camellia, one stands aghast at the thought of what it may be in another decade if the rate of varietal increase continues on a projection of the recent upward curve, and if nothing can be done to control the naming of new varieties. Years ago this society launched a program for registration of new varieties; the fee for registration was purposely made low: two dollars. A description of plant, leaf, and bloom is published in our *Bulletin,* carried into far corners of this country and the world. Pretty cheap advertising! You certainly couldn't get that much space elsewhere in the *Bulletin* for anywhere near the price.

Objects of registration are (1) to make sure the proposed name is available, (2) to publish the approved name, with a description of plant, leaf, and flower. This "fixes" the name for that variety and protects it from duplicate use on other varieties. Sports may be given an available name but must also carry the name of the variety from which they came in brackets.

Simple isn't it? Yet only a very small percentage of new varieties are registered!

The committee is happy to announce its new member, Mr. Ralph S. Peer. Those who heard Mr. Peer tell, last spring, of his camellia adventures around the world, will realize that we are fortunate to have him working with us; those who know him as an outstanding businessman and collector will underscore the sentiment. As we go to press, plans are set to take Mr. Peer through the Test Garden within the next few days, and to luncheon with Messrs. Hertrich and Townsend afterward—the first bud of the coming year's committee activities!

[1]There is good reason to suspect the accuracy of Contessa Lavinia Maggi as a synonym for Laurel Leaf, Lallarook, etc. G. B. Tirocco describing the variety now current in Italy says: "Flower about thirty centimeters in circumference; ground pure white, streaked with cherry rose. Very beautiful form." Other European lists give similar descriptions.

Many old European varietal names now applied to our camellias may be found inaccurate. Some growers have used Verschaffelt and Berlese plates to identify lost-label plants, assuming that resemblance was fair evidence for applying an old established name. In other cases importations from abroad have come in mislabeled or the tags have been mixed here. Only time and endless research can re-establish true varietal lines and clarify the almost hopeless confusion in camellia nomenclature.—Ed.

NEWS NOTES

TEMPLE CITY CAMELLIA SOCIETY will celebrate its first anniversary with the October 1949 meeting. Just a year ago the Society was formed and they have been going ahead ever since. Beginning with a nucleus of about eight members, they were a full-fledged society with close to one hundred and fifty members at their final meeting in April of this year.

As an affiliate of the Southern California Camellia Society, they are working hand in hand with other camellia societies to further the cause of and interest in camellias.

When Temple City held its annual Camellia Festival last March, the Temple City Chamber of Commerce asked the Camellia Society to put on a camellia show. The members went into the project wholeheartedly, and with Mr. R. F. Hertenstein as chairman and only two weeks to organize committees and plan for displays, a most gratifying response was received, both in attendance (with $1200.00 gate receipts) and in displays. L. W. Strohmeyer, of San Gabriel, was sweepstakes winner. His blossoms were outstanding.

As a special interest, we are planning an extensive library on camellia culture and history.

Dr. Gill Sefton was re-elected President for the coming season and Mrs. Amy C. Green, Secretary-Treasurer. Under Dr. Sefton's enthusiastic leadership we are eagerly awaiting the opening of our second year with the October meeting.

REPORTS OF EARLY CAMELLIA BLOOMS have come in as follows: Aug. 28, *C. sasanqua* Minina in full bloom in Hollywood; Sept. 1, Yohei Haku, Colletti Maculata, *C. sasanqua* Momozono Nishiki in Altadena; Daikagura and High Hat in steady bloom in Temple City; Sept. 2, Pink Perfection blooming profusely in two Los Angeles gardens. There is every indication that this will be an early and abundant blooming season.

THE NEW S.C.C.S. NOMENCLATURE BOOK soon to be released marks a tremendous advance in varietal research. Unlike the former volume which listed only 480 Pacific Coast varieties, the new edition covers 1,100 varieties and more than 1,500 names as applied to camellias in the entire United States. Ninety varieties of Sasanquas alone are named and described as well as all the species and new English crosses recently imported. Like the former volume this one has a very complete section on history, culture, and nomenclature problems —but more than 30 plates have been added to illustrate the processes and varieties. Each S.C.C.S. member will receive a copy of the new nomenclature book as a part of his membership. Additional copies may be secured from the Secretary or at your favorite nursery or bookstore at $1.25 each.

DR. J. WALTER REEVES is now well on the way to recovery from his long illness. All our friends and members join in sending Dr. Reeves best wishes and hope that he will be on hand to take part in the coming season's activities.

CAN ANYONE SPARE A COPY of the November 1948 or February 1949 *Bulletin*? Extra copies of these scarce issues are needed for our files. Please communicate with Col. Gale, our Secretary, if you can furnish either one.

THE CAMELLIA*

BY G. B. TIROCCO

Translated from the Italian by

CLAUDE CHIDAMIAN

PART III

THE MULTIPLICATION OF CAMELLIAS

(Continued)

A very interesting process of artificial multiplication, and one bringing many satisfactions, is certainly that of grafting.

Various types of grafts are in use for the camellia. Among them are: approach, bud, cleft or lateral graft, saddle graft, under bark, inlay, etc. I shall indicate the best known, those which have given the best results. First among these are that by approach, that by eye, and the English method.

The "subject" is in each case the *Camellia japonica*, with single flower, obtained from seed, slip or layer.

The most ancient system of grafting a plant—the one taught by Mother Nature—is certainly that by approach, which has as its purpose the joining together of two plants by their trunks or by their branches. This, as we have seen, is used in the propagation of the camellia, especially if cultivated in pots.

It is a very simple method of grafting. It suffices to remove the bark from the "subject" (graft-bearer) and from the graft in two longitudinal strips of the same size and shape and so located that when the two units are pressed together there may be a perfect joining of the two barks. This done, the two "operated" parts are bound together with raffia, or the like, and, if necessary, tarred. Best for binding is woolen yarn. This is often used when grafting the Mimosa by approach.

One can join thus a branch with a trunk, or two branches to each other or even two trunks to each other.

When complete union has taken place, which sometimes requires a full year, the graft is cut off below the junction and the "subject" above it.

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ALL LARGE CAMELLIA PLANTS

and very rare grafts growing in 5-gallon containers—many to five feet tall— for the one price **$12.75 each,** regardless of variety or size. These are plants from our parent stock and personal collection in excess of the number required to maintain our large production of Tormey's Top Quality Plants for the discriminating wholesale trade.

Daily hours of sale from 2 to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. None sold on Saturday or Sunday. This is a wholesale establishment and we will have no one available to wait on you except at the days and time shown. Plan to buy at once while the selection is complete. In some instances only one or two of a variety is being released and the stock will move out fast to growers who appreciate well-grown plants of top-flight varieties. No phone reservations or information. Sold only on a first-come first-served basis.

The varieties offered include:—Donckelari (English), Donckelari (Tea Garden), Louise Weick, Reticulata, Mrs. Chas. Simons, Margherita Coleoni, Adolph Audusson Var., Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, Woodville Red, Haku-Tsuru, Shiro Botan, Blush Hibiscus, Pax, Elizabeth Boardman, Fimbriata Superba, Emperor of Russia, Smiling Beauty, H. A. Downing, Admiration, Aurora Rosea, Haku-Rakuten, Lotus, Dr. W. G. Lee, Pink Dawn, Queen Bessie, Snow Tulip, Eugene Bolen (Red Donckelari), Leona Bolen, Dante, Meredith Lake, Kumasaka Var., General Patton, Blood of China, White Elegans, Finlandia F. N., Mrs. Josephine Hearn, Mrs. Marie Keating, Mallot Var., Laurel Leaf, St. Andre, Madame Hovey, Ecstacy, Yours Truly, Catherine Cathcart, Paul Howard, Mary Charlotte, Jessica Var., Rose Glory, Lady Humes Blush, Rev. John Bennett Var., Salmon Queen, Cleopatra, Col. Firey Var., Louise McClay, Goddess of Fire, C. N. Hastie, Gypsy, Il Cygno, Marian Mitchell, Eleanor Hagood Var., La Reine Var., Magnoliaeflora, Margaret Higdon, Col. Firey, Somegawa White, Fringed Tricolor Sieboldi, Kenny Glen, Ville de Nantes, J. J. Pringle Smith, Frizzle White, Duchess de Cases, Miss Pasadena, Rev. John G. Drayton (Pink), Bill Lee, General Eisenhower, Ochreleuca, Daisy Banks, Coral Sea, Prima Donna, Iwane Shibori, Mrs. K. Sawada, Lady Mary Cromartie, Paulette Goddard, Bessie McArthur, Big Beauty, Glen 40, Mrs. Freeman Weiss, Campbell Ashley, Tinky Lee, Edwin W. Folk, Celestine, Gov. Richard Leche, James Allan, Dearie Mealing, Judge Barrett, Hishi-Karaito, Florence Stratton, Bessie Morse Bellingrath, Jim Goldman, Liberty Bell, Souvenir de Mme. Colette Van Wassenhove, Roosevelt Blues, Betty Boardman Var., Julia Dial, Priscilla Brooks, Galilee, Razen Zome, Lady of the Lake, Margaret Walker, Pearl Harbor, General Lee, Heningham Smith, Miss Sacramento, Sacramento Snow Queen, White Cloud, Queen of Fruitlands, Trade Wind, Ballerina, Grady McCord, Robert Norton, Rosea Mundi, Tiara Var., Eleanor McCrady, Mme. de Maintenon, Te Deum, Casablanca, and some of the old-time favorites like Purity, Francine, etc.

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CAMELLIAS OF MERIT

The best period for such grafting, obviously, is when the plants are in full growth, from March to September. The leaves are left on the juxtaposed parts.

Lee Graft.—This method of grafting is much used abroad, especially in the Luxembourg establishments, for the quick propagation of novelties in roses. It is used generally in hothouses in winter.

It consists in making a triangular cleft in one side of the trunk to be grafted, which has already been cut expressly to receive the graft. Into this cleft is introduced the scion or graft which must be cut in the exact shape of the triangular cleft in the graft-bearer. Not only must it completely fill it, but the parts of the cleft and of the scion should join perfectly at every point. The tying must be done firmly. The bark must remain intact on the other side of the scion. With this type of grafting, too, it is not a bad idea to coat the wound, if possible, with mastic.

The method of grafting most used, however, is budding. This is performed in summer, and plants so grafted are put in the large boxes with windows. By the end of a month the graft has set.

Some gardeners, however, prefer grafting by approach, or by splice grafting, or, in the case of old or stock plants, by cleft grafting.

Grafting by eye or bud.—It is customary to disinguish grafting "with dormant bud" from that made with buds in the process of development. The distinction is as follows: if one grafts rather early (from May to August) the buds succeed in developing in the same year. In case the operation is performed toward the end of August or in September the buds still grow, before winter, but do not become really active before the succeeding year.

It is worth while, if one wants to be sure of results, to graft two or three buds in different places and variously oriented.

Seedling plants are ready to receive grafts as soon as they have accumulated enough sap for the bark to be easily loosened from the central woody part.

Then, with a special knife (grafting knife), very sharp, one makes two T-shaped incisions, which must reach into the alburnum. This done, the bark is spread open with the back of the grafting knife or with the claw forming part of it, and the bud is inserted.

Buds for grafting should be taken from a branch which is well developed and mature. The best, according to the most careful experiments, are those which are located about half way along the branch. The lowest buds are too "lean" to develop vigorously. Those near the tip are too immature, thus too incompletely formed to insure their "taking." As is well known, the subject may be either a branch from an adult plant or itself a young plant. As a general rule, though, it must never exceed a finger in thickness, and it must have a smooth bark free from branches or buds so that the graft may be easily applied. The operation may be performed at different times of the year, as

stated before, according to the nature of the plant's growth. If it is done in the spring, it is termed "with growing bud." If, instead, in the summer or autumn, "with dormant or dead bud."

At the base of each separate leaf is found a bud which, under the proper conditions, develops later into a branch. You will therefore cut off the leaf together with a part of the petiole and then, with the grafting knife, remove a little disk of bark containing the bud at its center, being careful, however, to remove from the branch also the underlying wood.

Once the bud has been cut out, the lips of the incision made in the understock are spread with the claw of the knife and the bud is thrust in. This done, a strip of raffia is used to bind tightly the place of grafting, taking care that the bud is not involved in the ligature but remains free.

To allow the buds thus inserted to get the sap they need, a part of the branches of the subject are at once cut off. The others will be removed later, that is, when the bud begins to develop vigorously. After the understock has been pruned, the bandages or ligatures holding the buds are also removed.

To be able to receive the graft, the "subject" must be in sap. The Tuscans say that it must "give the rind."

It is in good condition when the bark or rind detaches itself from the wood without any laceration and presents inside a slight moistness which facilitates the healing of the shield.

It is very important that the "subject" and the graft be at the same stage of their phase of growth. To make sure of this, it is a good idea to enclose the plants which are to serve as "subjects" in a warm, moist atmosphere to stimulate them suitably. The plants which are to furnish the scions, that is, those of the chosen variety, since they need not be so lively to get good results, may stay in such an atmosphere for only a few days. This atmosphere and these conditions, moreover, must be continued for another fortnight after the grafting has taken place if one wishes to attain perfect results from it.

Obviously, not all plants placed under the same conditions of climate and warmth develop contemporaneously. The same is true for those in greenhouses or in boxes. In a commercial botanical establishment, where there are many plants to graft, one will of course begin with the furthest-developed and come to the others as they succeed one another in their development.

It is the general, though not unanimous, opinion that to obtain really excellent results, the prospective "subject" for the graft which is to be transformed into a different plant of superior or different variety must be further developed than the plant which is to furnish the scions.

Since the removal of the shields or buds is a rather delicate operation, the practical and expert gardener must take every care to execute it with a single sweep of the grafting knife, starting the incision up on the branch one or two centimeters above the bud and finishing it the same distance below.

In whatever manner one proceeds, it is essential, as I have said, to preserve that little fragment of wood which, as the bud is detached, remains on the back of the bud itself, and which is called the "root" or "germ." Without it the healing of the shield may still take place, but the bud will not develop.

In any case, a very thin woody layer adheres to the shields also. This can not prevent the graft from taking. If this layer is too thick the grafter can easily remove it entirely or partially—leaving, however, the woody spot behind the bud.

If there are more buds than are needed, it is needless to say, one uses the maturest and most perfect. These will be the ones that will succeed best when detached from the branch.

Another one of the most highly recommended types of grafting is that known, somewhat barbarously, as grafting by complete splicing, superposition or simple English style. For this method, it is necessary that the scion or graft be of the same diameter as the "subject."

Seedling camellias which, at a height of seven or eight centimeters from the ground, are about half a centimeter in diameter of trunk are excellent for receiving the simple English-style graft, that is, for receiving young branches of selected varieties of the same diameter, with two or three buds or even with only one. To perform this graft, both scion and "subject" must be cut across obliquely, in the shape of a clarinet mouthpiece, at the same angle, so that when the two parts are superposed one on the other the two sections will fit together perfectly. The cut must be about four centimeters long and must begin at the height of a bud located on the opposite side.

Both being cut obliquely so as to make an angle of twenty or twenty-five degrees with the axis of the branch, that is, so that the length of the surface of the cut is at most three times the diameter, they are superposed so as to make them fit together as perfectly as possible. It is well to make the cut with a single stroke so it will be smooth. If it turns out to be slightly concave that is still better. In such a case the section of the scion will fit that of the "subject" more perfectly.

The instrument lending itself best both to the execution of this type of grafting and to the preparation of scions for cleft grafting is the Kunde grafting knife. It has a strong handle and an almost straight blade, with one face somewhat convex while the other is flat. This shape is very useful

for obtaining cuts with perfectly plane surfaces. For left-handed operators there are grafting knives with the two faces of the blade reversed.

I repeat that the cuts must not be too long, because if so their ends would not adhere well. If too short the solidity of the grafting would suffer. In short, the two joined pieces—scion and subject—must show no discontinuity. They must cohere so that the graft remains strong and solid of itself and the ligature serves more as a precaution than as a bond for poorly made cuts. Otherwise, the ligature itself loosens or rots before the graft has set, the sections come apart and dry up, and the graft is a failure.

The best ligature for grafts is raffia, a tough, very flexible fiber easily found commercially at a moderate price.

I must note that when a perfect contact exists, there is produced from the various generating zones a soft cellular tissue known as "callus," which cicatrizes the cuts and welds the scions to the subject, thus making the graft take.

But for this "callus" to form most easily, it is necessary that the graft be kept in a temperature of from twenty to thirty degrees centigrade. At a lower temperature the welding "callus" forms more slowly. A certain degree of humidity is also needed for its formation. This keeps the scion fresh and alive until, once it is set, it receives its nutrition from the subject to which it is united. Air is also indispensable here, as for any vegetable tissue in process of formation. That explains why excessive humidity, preventing free access of air, is harmful to grafting. It explains also the failure to join in grafts when they are covered with barely permeable clayey soil and the success of those covered with loose damp sand.

The period for grafting varies with the variation of a thousand conditions. Therefore no fixed date can be established a priori for this very important operation.

Other systems of grafting may be used for the camellia, which for brevity's sake I omit.

THE PRUNING OF CAMELLIAS

Regarding the proper pruning of camellias, I wish to quote the words spoken many years ago, but still of great importance, by Hericard de Thury, then president of the Horticultural Society of Paris.

Pruning, he said, in a general meeting of that association, is one of the most delicate and important operations in gardening. As it has usually been entrusted to poorly trained workmen unskilled in their operations, results have been obtained which are so contrary as to make even famous physiologists opposed to its practice. Results would certainly have been different had these workmen been better trained and had they studied in those few gardens where at present operations are obviously founded wisely on the laws of plant life. These must guide us not only to regulate the production of flowers and fruits to produce more abundantly and richly, but to improve the growth and prolong the existence of the plants.

This advice from an illustrious agronomist must be more strictly practiced, now that vegetable physiology has become much better understood. Therefore beginners in gardening are urged, in performing this important operation, to profit by all that agrarian science, in perfect accord with physiology, recommends and exacts.

According to some, pruning is not at all necessary in the case of camellias; a simple cleaning to rid them of useless branches, especially of dry leaves, is more than sufficient. Others consider pruning the basis, the pivot on which its cultivation turns.

From practice learned from the above-mentioned Father Martini and even more from advice given me by him, I will say that this operation, while extremely useful in young plants for giving them the most advantageous and suitable forms, in adult plants is always limited to cleaning off the dry matter and branches which threaten to wither or become entangled with the others, thus deforming the plants.

Naturally, camellias grown from seed to be used as understock for grafting with the new and unusual varieties, as well as those produced from slips for multiplication of the separate plants, have no absolute need of being pruned at first. They require only a superficial hoeing to air the soil and free them from weeds, and an occasional sprinkling when they show need of it. They can live quietly thus until time to put them out in the greenhouse.

When camellias, owing to the excellent soil quality and the gardener's diligence, have put forth a sufficient tuft or nucleus of roots, they must be cut back. This operation consists in cutting their trunk obliquely, clarinet-style, opposite to the last bud, so as to leave on the young plants three or four buds above the ground level, and covering the wound with a suitable mastic for grafts.

The form to be given the plants, according to most authorities, is that of a cone or pyramid. Those who recommend the conical form, and they are the more numerous, say that this system of pruning is closest to the natural habit of these plants. To obtain this form they are cut in such a manner that the terminal bud is destined to continue the prolongation of the central stem and the others are destined to form the first branches or base of the cone itself.

As in all other plants with persistent leaves, so in the camellia the sap is in continual motion. It must be noted, however, that at certain periods this is less active. This explains why the prolongation of the principal stem and of the branches takes place only at two periods of the year: in March and in August. In the other periods the nutritive sap is flowing only for the purpose of consolidating, maturing and perfecting these parts. In the case of adult plants, the sap is employed principally in the formation of the buds, flowers and seeds.

It is natural that the above-mentioned two vital movements can, in various circumstances, change their period through their greater vitality. They may change because of artificial agents capable of modifying their natural tendencies.

It frequently happens that, because of the greater influx of the vital sap for prolonging the stem, this develops enormously. It is necessary then to lop it off, amputate it, shorten it as much as required, so that the nutritive sap may move to the basal buds. This fortifies the constitution of the first branches, without which it is almost impossible to obtain a splendid, luxuriant plant. I must stress that young camellia plants, once they have been diligently pruned, require a relatively warm temperature, from eight to ten degrees centigrade, since when thus treated and aided by the necessary warmth they will grow rapidly in trunk, branches and leaves. But when their annual growth is completed, as indicated by the formation of terminal buds, they like a less warm temperature. This must aim at seconding or, more exactly, governing this state of apparent inertia in the plants. Afterward, with the aid of this valuable moment of a new atmosphere and open air, they will perfect themselves better and start their new growth. Since it is not improbable that in August, because of this second activity, camellias will acquire an unkempt appearance, a second but less radical pruning is necessary. This tends to thicken the foliage and keep the plants in the desired shape.

If necessary, the sprouts must be furnished with props. Lacking these, they should be tied to the branches or central stem so they may be kept regularly vertical, or however the type of pruning requires.

If this system is followed, in the second or third year the plants will put out abundant and robust buds. Some will even force the buds and begin to bloom.

To these plants, as already observed for adults ones, must be assigned a less shady location, whether in the open or in greenhouse, to contribute to the better formation of their florescence.

All, without distinction—gardeners, floriculturists and especially the camellia cultivators—anxiously await the flowering, and, if they could, would try to achieve it from the very first year. This is assuredly a mistaken practice. It is much better, in fact advisable, that the plant establish itself in its first three years and begin to flower only in the fourth year.

When they have started flowering, that is, from the fourth year on, the pruning becomes less important and more easily done, as the plant's vitality is much less—the nutritive sap being consumed for the most part by the buds and flowers.

As to the latter, if they should come out too abundantly, it would be useful and suitable to cut off some of them, the most poorly developed and the most single, so the plants may not have to suffer and exhaust themselves in a short period of time. If there is a branch or other part of a plant which threatens to die, all its buds or flowers must be removed. Thus the vital sap may help reinvigorate the woody part for the purpose of obtaining a greater share of vital growth, which, limiting oneself to the flower-bearing and fruit-bearing parts, must very carefully preserve and in other plants diminish the suppression of the branches and leaves, insofar as it may contribute to the physical betterment of the plant.

When an adult plant shows a deterioration in some part, it is an excellent idea to examine it in the corresponding roots to see if it is defective there also. The cause having been determined, the unhealthy roots should be destroyed.

Since a large proportion of the plants which the commercial botanical establishments put on the market come from seed or grafted slips and not from "own root," as is commonly said in gardening jargon, it is evident that in making the first cuts, in starting to prune, they must be cut back so that at least four or five eyed buds are left above the point of insertion of the graft itself. As already observed, this is to obtain a cone-shaped plant. Needless to say, all sprouts that appear below the graft must be removed as being wild and functioning merely as suckers; these tend to drain, exhaust and disfigure the plant.

However they may be propagated, camellias have, especially in their first years, definite need of pruning, for the purpose principally, as already stated, of giving the plant the appropriate and desired shape.

The least possible use should be made of protectors or props. These would surely contribute to making them weaker and less vigorous. They are to be used only when absolutely indispensable.

There are some, it is true, who oppose pruning camellias, and would have only a very simple cleaning. Others would rule out both, on the ground that unpruned plants flower earlier and so may be marketed a year or so sooner. The amateur, collector, anyone, in short, who wishes fine specimens, well formed and capable of regular and sustained flowering, must convince himself that for the camellia, besides the attentions indicated previously and those noted later, regular pruning must be done. Its purpose should be the maintenance of equilibrium between the branches and the roots and between the mass of wood and that of the flowers. Better, it should be the preservation of the most intimate relation and the strictest correspondence between the aerial growth and the subterranean growth, between the woody growth and the flower growth. If the plant were never pruned it would be seen always covered with lanky, emaciated sticks. It would bear but few flowers, and small and unattractive ones at that.

It is well known that Nature, left to herself, obeys the exigencies of her own preservation, favoring the development of wood and leaves, not that of flowers and fruit.

It is the concern of Art to thwart this tendency by pruning, so that the sap may be distributed equally, thus procuring robust wood and copious blooming, proportionate of course to their flower-bearing capacity.

(To be continued)

A NATURAL ARRANGEMENT

The photograph on the opposite page by Mrs. Paul J. Howard shows the charm of fine old china enhanced by sprays of colorful camellias. The art of arranging camellias simply and beautifully is well illustrated by the study. No other flower, it seems, has suffered so much at the hands of flower "arrangers." It is refreshing to find an approach so direct, so natural, so "unarranged."