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RANDOM THOUGHTS

This is a rainy, dreary day as we start November — one that makes the outdoors minded person fretful and puts a temporary crimp in one's gardening activities. But it is a boon in disguise to our camellias and other trees for it is to them like a cold shower to us after a hot and dusty summer day. The plants will be washed clean and reinvigorated, the humidity and cool nights that will follow mean the end of plant growth and the beginning of bud expansion and florescence and the great scheme of things that we call Nature once again embarks upon the business of preparing all flora for a period of rest and replenishment.

You know, it wasn't too many years ago that I used to dread winter's coming — the shorter days, the bundling up against the cold, the compulsion to draw inwardly, as it were. This was the bleak time of year, when the fruits and flowers discreetly withdrew from the scene and left the stage to the winds and frosts, while the leaves shed as if a pestilence had hit them. All that has changed in the recent past, if one may speak of a score of years in such terms. Now the coming of winter means another camellia season to look forward to — the awakening of our plants from their long period of evergreen but unadorned beauty, the chance to see those promising seedlings finally bloom, the thrill and excitement attendant to our shows and the new interests and old contacts they bring with them. Instead of drawing into our shells, as would be the natural inclination, like the camellia we now get a new lease on life come winter and, refreshed like the land in response to its rains, we embark once more upon a stimulating experience — **A NEW CAMELLIA SEASON!**

No matter what the temporary disappointments, do not let this enduring, this soul-nourishing activity, slip away from you. Taken as it should be, the camellia hobby is one that will brighten up, not only the dark days of winter, but one's viewpoint of life in general and bring home a better understanding of "what it is all about."

* * *

There has been a great deal of discussion of ways and means whereby we can produce radically different camellias from those we now have — new colors, new fragrance, new growth habits, better hardiness—and this is all to the good for it means the creation of new interest. However, with the passage of time we have begun to wonder whether the greatest emphasis should not be upon the development of camellias more tolerant of weather extremes — particularly cold. We say this with greater conviction today than would have been the case two or three years ago, because of the severe damage that many of our most devoted camellia people have suffered meanwhile. It is vital that those who undertake the planned development of camellias give, if not priority, at least the most serious attention to the development of strains that will, either through earlier or later blooming or by reason of inherent resistance to weather extremes, yield more satisfactory results than most of the cultivars we have at present. If we do not do this and our abnormally cold winters continue, there is bound to result serious attrition among camellia fans.

The widespread popularity of the *sasanqua* constitutes the best evidence that camellia growers will put up with a rather unimpressive flower in order to get early bloom and color, undamaged by cold unless it be unseasonal. It would seem to follow, therefore, that if we can develop japonicas or hybrids that bloom early enough—even though they be singles or the type of flower that is of value primarily for its mass effect rather than as a single bloom—they will be in demand and constitute a worthwhile contribution to the world of camellias.

This writer has long contended that almost any kind of a bloom—provided it is early enough—will be a welcome addition. In fact, it would seem that one of our prime objectives today should be the development of camellias that bloom earlier, for it is in the late fall and early winter that color is at a great premium. One can count on the fingers the number of truly early-blooming japonicas we have today,

but if we can get the right inter-breeding combinations, we should be able to come up with a fairly broad selection of fall bloomers that will give the sasanquas some competition and provide us with

camellias suitable for cut flowers when our gardens start to get bare. Here is a very worthwhile undertaking for some of our aspiring camellia breeders.

— D. L. F.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It is with pleasure that I read your article in the May 1963 issue of *The Camellia Bulletin*, on page 7. You have supported my position regarding the computing of the Sweepstakes Winners at various Camellia Shows. It has always been my contention that there can be no real winner in any kind of competition if there are only one or two people, horses, flowers, or whatever you will, competing for a prize of any sort. There should be at least three or more entrants to make a race or a competition. The Temple City Camellia Society has withstood the pressure from outside sources for changing our position regarding the computing of the Sweepstakes Award. I believe that we are the only one of the five show sponsoring camellia societies in the Southern California Area that requires at least three or more blooms of a variety, in the single bloom classification, before the blue ribbon award can be counted toward the Sweepstakes Award.

To encourage the "early-bird," as you call the collector who has been able to secure the newer varieties, to exhibit in our show, we have added another trophy — The Collector's Trophy. We had to learn our lesson the hard way. At one of our earlier annual shows, the person who secured the most blue ribbons did so by exhibiting blooms of varieties that only he or one other exhibitor had been able to acquire. However, he did not have enough blue ribbons in the regular three-or-more entry competition to make him a contender for the Sweepstakes or Sweepstakes Runner-up Award. This collector's trophy is given to that exhibitor who has won the most blue ribbons for varieties in which there are only one or two blooms exhibited and who is not in contention for either the Sweepstakes or Sweepstakes Runner-up Award. By adding this trophy

we have encouraged these "early-bird" collectors to want to exhibit their blooms in the annual Temple City Camellia Show.

Along the lines you mentioned regarding the judging of blooms, I heartily agree that some consideration should be given to what the blooms will look like on the second day of the exhibit. I am not so much concerned with blooms that are a day old or freshly picked for the first day of the show, but with those blooms that have been picked at the peak of their bloom and then placed in refrigeration until the day of the show. My experience has been that these are the first of the blooms that will wilt and fall apart. Until we can secure some means to control or stop this practice of a three or more day refrigeration period, we will have to contend with the falling apart of the bloom on the second day.

I think that the article written by Mr. Carroll Reiners, of Sacramento, in the May 1963, issue of *The Camellia Bulletin* offers the best means of control, but it will have to be at the individual level to stop the practice. A tear copy of this article should be sent to all camellia show exhibitors, and then let his conscience be the best guide. By making a special class for blooms that have been treated to induce larger blooms, we have been able to control this procedure; perhaps the same procedure will have to be instituted to control the early refrigeration of blooms.

On the other hand, there are some very lovely camellia blooms, fresh picked for the day of the show, and this is especially true if the two day show is held out of doors, or the one that is held indoors but which has no temperature control in the room where the show is being held.

Sincerely,

— Ernest E. Pieri

THE PLACE OF THE AMATEUR IN PLANT EXPERIMENTATION

*Harold L. Paige, Lafayette, California

The first progress reports coming from the Camellia Research Advisory Committee are most exciting. To the average amateur camellia experimenter they are on such a large scale and give promise of such superbly rewarding results as to dwarf his own efforts in this field. It is to discourage any development of a "What's the use? Let the Camellia Research Committee do it!" attitude that this article is written, for there is now and always will be a place for the amateur in every field of scientific endeavor.

How Shall We Define an Amateur?

Webster defines an amateur as "One who cultivates any study or art or other activity for personal pleasure instead of professionally or for gain." To this definition, H. M. Butterfield, Agriculturist Emeritus, Univ. of California, adds, with reference to his specific field of agriculture: ". . . or one who has not been professionally trained for this research work. For example, a medical doctor might work with special plants, such as camellias, and the hobby may be in no way directly connected with his professional training . . . Even though a plant may be distributed by a professional or commercial dealer after discovery, that fact does not detract from the amateur standing of the person making the original discovery. This and similar distinctions should be kept in mind when discussing amateur scientists."

What Have Amateurs Contributed to the Field of Scientific Research?

The statement by Mr. Butterfield, just referred to, recites amateur responsibility for discovery or development of Henderson Bush Lima Bean, Golden Hubbard squash, sweet corn, Anaheim Chili pepper, hybrid melon Honey Ball, Stockton Yellow Globe onion, Lazy Wife, Dutch Case-knife, and Blue Lake string beans in the vegetable field; Muir, Lovell and Elberta peaches; Edwards plum; Bing and Lambert cherries; Logan, Mammoth and Boysen berries; Cuthbert and St. Regis raspberries; Delicious, McIntosh, Rhode Island and Rome Beauty apples; Bosc and Anjou

pears; Drake, Nonpareil, Ne Plus Ultra and IXL almonds. Amateurs have certainly added to the pleasure of the dining table!

Dr. Robert C. Miller, recently retired as Director of the California Academy of Sciences, wrote in a statement dated November 4, 1963: "During World War II there was an extreme shortage of optical instruments and optical workers in this country, because we had depended on Germany and to a lesser extent on Japan for this kind of work. Ray Ingalls of the 'Scientific American' staff thought of calling on the amateur telescope makers — the people who had ground their own lenses or mirrors and made astronomical telescopes in their basement shops. These people rendered remarkable service. One of them, Carl P. Wells, a Southern Pacific freight conductor who lives in Roseville, California was given a leave of absence by his company to work a couple of years at the Academy on a wartime optical project we were doing for the Navy. And Allyn G. Smith, a graduate in electrical engineering of the University of California, who had worked for many years for Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, is now in his retirement Associate Curator of Invertebrate Zoology at the California Academy of Sciences, and has had numerous papers published in his field." This is an outgrowth of his years of amateur experimentation in the field of Invertebrate Zoology.

Gregor Johann Mendel, an Austrian monk, spent 8 years experimenting with edible peas before submitting his famous report on inheritance factors in peas. This report, published in 1866, attracted literally no attention. "Masterworks of Science", in an introduction to a reproduction of Mendel's report, reminds the reader that he died in 1884 "still unknown to scientists" while "his local contemporaries considered him a churchman who dabbled in scientific inquiry."

From Mendel in 1866 to Sidney B. Mitchell, former Director of the Univer-

*Chairman, Committee on Plant Experimentation, Northern California Camellia Society.

sity of California Library, is a big jump in time but an article in the April, 1950, *Journal of California Horticultural Society* gives a delightful picture of the budding amateur scientist whose hobby eventually led to a commercial development of Iris hybrids, concurrent with his professional role in the University Library. His interest in plant research started "... in that very-small-boy experiment in which he buried a bar of chocolate, having been told that chocolate was a plant and would grow".

What, Then, Should Be the Amateur-Professional Relationship?

Early in 1945, before the Northern California Camellia Society or the American Camellia Society had been organized (Dec. 9, 1945 and Sept. 29, 1945 respectively) a book called "Science in the Garden" by Logan, Putnam and Cosper, fell into the hands of the writer as a result of wartime interest in a vegetable garden. At that time the only concern about camellias was to collect one of every known variety—a simple objective since there were not too many varieties known in the Bay Area in those days. Later, a foreword to this book by Dr. F. W. Went of the California Institute of Technology stimulated a slowly developing interest in experimentation and suggested an answer to the above question:

The relationship between gardener and scientist should not be one-sided, the gardener reaping all the benefits. You, as a gardener can—and should—collaborate in the collection and accumulation of knowledge . . . I would urge every inquisitive gardener to try to get in touch with us scientists so that we can correlate your experience with that of others . . . Although you yourself may not think that the experiments you have carried out in your garden are of great importance, still you should report on them . . . Do not worry about your training; sharp eyes, a good ruler, a clear mind, much patience and a lot of common sense are the stock in trade of every research worker . . . It is a fallacy that all research requires elaborate laboratory equipment . . . Intelligent gardeners can collect an unlimited amount of useful knowledge and join the scientists in building up our concept of the growing plant.

This encouraging Foreword was followed by an entire chapter, "Experiments

for Amateurs" which included the stirring exhortation: "Science in the garden is far from a finished subject . . . Often scientists are so preoccupied with opening doors into new realms of knowledge that they have not time to exhaust the material behind each door they open . . . The scientist points the way for the layman to turn theories and techniques to practical and useful account . . . Working in your own back yard your solutions and techniques of attacking old garden problems may give the missing link on some unsolved difficulty."

The war now being over, interest shifted from vegetables to a small collection of camellias already existing in our back yard and, as an amateur experimenter of sorts, the chief problem became to find an answer to the perplexing question: "Why do some varieties perform beautifully in the mild Oakland climate while other varieties, apparently as well grown, produce nothing but miserable looking flowers destined for the garbage can, although the parent plants, 15 miles away, produce spectacularly huge blooms in a radically different climate?" Dr. Gordon Richmond was appointed Chairman of our first Plant Experimentation Committee in an effort to find out and the first product of this Committee was a report which sadly advised our East Bay members that there were certain choice varieties of camellias which they had better forget, because of the adverse effect of our climate on these particular varieties.

Heeding the admonition that amateurs and professionals needed each other, although it seemed entirely a one-way benefit for the amateur at the time, advice and help were enlisted from every available source. Fortunately, Dr. Walter E. Lammers, Geneticist of international fame in the rose and camellia worlds, came to live and work in Livermore, California, a "reasonable" distance from the Bay Area. He had been a guest speaker at meetings of our Society, urging experimentation by our amateurs along lines which he has encouraged for years by articles in every camellia publication appearing in this and other countries. Although an active member of the Camellia Research Advisory Committee he also serves generously as

unofficial advisor to our Committee and attends our meetings whenever possible. When the question above was put to him, he replied:

Relative to the relationship of your own Plant Experimentation Committee and that of the Camellia Research Advisory Committee, I believe that there certainly is no conflict. Actually, with Dr. Parks actively at work and the various committee men endeavoring to help in guiding his efforts, there should result . . . a steady stream of basic information and eventually hybrid plant material, naturally, which will be invaluable to all so-called amateur enthusiasts. . . .

Reciprocally, possibly, and in fact, probably, the work of your various members may uncover leads which can be most helpful to the work being done by the Camellia Research Advisory Committee.

Mr. Butterfield, in the statement already referred to, expressed the relationship succinctly: "There should be a place for both amateurs and professionals. The work of the two should supplement each other like a synergist where two remedies give better results than either working alone."

What Specific Factors Favor the Amateur Interest in Experimentation?

Time and cost are the first two factors cited by two eminent geneticists (Raymond C. Fisher of Rochester, N. Y. and Dr. Dennison Morey of Pleasanton, California) in an article "The Rose Gene Pool," published in the 1963 *Year Book* of the American Rose Society. It seems that new ("b'lood") genes are needed to improve the rose, requiring at least three generations and 20 years of time before the program can reach a stage at which it is profitable for the commercial hybridizer to take over. As a result:

The purpose of this article is to point out that commercial hybridizing can only enter the quest for better roses at this later stage and that the only immediately feasible chance of reaching this stage is by arousing the interest of enough amateurs to produce species derivatives with essential characteristics.

Time and cost give the amateur a real advantage. Twenty years go by very rapidly for the doctor, lawyer or business man who is doing a small hybridizing program in his spare time. He is not under pressure to produce a winner next year. Time works with him, not against him. If and when he does get a breakthrough, the pro-

fessionals will gladly take over and propagate the new cultivar in quantity.

Other factors encouraging to the amateur, but not quite so obvious, are cited in a statement prepared by the Southern California Laboratories of Stanford Research Institute in September, 1957. Listing some things which private, non-profit research can do

. . . which cannot be done or cannot be done so well, by public institutions . . .

the statement goes on to mention flexibility in attacking new problems, lack of government restraints and red tape, investigation of "high risk" fields which are far removed from the short-term profit requirements of industrial concerns, and possibility of engaging in projects that may be unpopular with government or commercial centers.

What Makes the Amateur a Good Experimenter?

With all the encouragement pushing the amateur into research, it is well for him to consider the price he must pay if he is to play a part of any significance in his favorite hobby.

He must be a person with great patience and persistence. He will have many disappointments. Promising flowers will turn out to be duds. But when he does get one that merits public acceptance, his reward will come when he has the privilege to see it open for the first time and later—some years later—of naming it and presenting it to the public.

He must be a person with great discrimination, able to recognize what is bad, what is merely good and what is exceptional among his productions. Sidney B. Mitchell, in his "Memoirs" gave an idea of the agonizing judgments that must be made in evaluating one's work when he wrote:

I have probably raised 10,000 irises for which I have been able to select parents and grandparents and yet, from all these, hardly 50 have ever been outstanding enough to go into commerce and of them I was today only proud of perhaps a dozen.

It is not easy to be objective in deciding which flowers are worth while. We are constantly asked not to clutter up the nomenclature book with names of new varieties which are only "as good as" but

not better than hundreds which have gone before. It is even more necessary in the case of hybrids that restraint be used, for here we have a new plant, as well as a new flower. This plant will have a new and different type of foliage, a new shape, perhaps azalea-like in form and could even be deciduous.

He must keep accurate records. Exactly what was done? When and where was it done? How was it done and under what conditions? What was the result of each piece of the experiment, whether success or failure?

The progress reports from the Camellia Research Advisory Committee are vivid evidence of the need for careful record keeping. No such reports could have been compiled without first having set up a carefully thought out system of record keeping that would make not only progress reports but a final report possible and meaningful. The introduction to Mendel's report in "Masterworks of Science," speaking of his 8 years of planting, cross-fertilizing, reaping and replanting, added: "Above all he undertook the wearisome, endless labor of constantly recording results." Without Mendel's records there would have been no report and no Mendelian Theory.

He should avoid duplication and know what others are doing.

The person engaged in hybridizing should make every effort to study and observe what others in the same field are doing. He should grow the best of the new hybrids along with his own for the sake of comparison. Furthermore, when working with camellias, he should seek to evaluate all hybrids on the system which we have today—namely the American Camellia Society Rating System initiated by our own Dave Feathers. This requires close observation and careful discrimination but can anyone suggest a better way to weed out the undesirable qualities that years later may cause a cultivar to disappear into oblivion? Incidentally, can anyone suggest to the novice a better way to get a good collection of Japonicas than to take the top ranking ones as a means of getting started?

Factors Stimulating Current Experimentation with Camellias

The numerous societies, local, national

and international, which have been organized during the past 20 years to promote the camellia, together with the wealth of information covered by their accompanying publications, sometimes lead the uninformed to ask, "What under the sun is there left to do that hasn't already been done?" But the camellia hobbyist knows what he wants and doesn't have. He goes to a rose, dahlia or chrysanthemum show and sees the gorgeous range of color impossible to the camellia as long as it is tied to only one of the three basic colors of the "wheel"—red. He watches a distant visitor who has never before seen a camellia, gaze unbelievably at the exquisite variety of forms, sniff with anticipation and say, with obvious disappointment: "But it has no fragrance!" He has seen, North, South, East and West, plants and blooms wrecked by unseasonal freezes, while others cannot take even average seasonal winter temperatures. And now he knows that something can be done about it, through the discovery and availability of hybrids produced through the foresight of pioneer amateur hybridizers such as Dr. Walker M. Wells, who introduced his "Sylvia May" hybrid, named for his daughter, over 15 years ago, when most camellia growers hardly knew what a hybrid was.

The introduction of the Williamsii hybrids in England aided materially in promoting the current interest in hybrids. The cultivar "Donation" did much to spark enthusiasm and further acceleration of the movement came with the arrival of the Reticulatas from China. Now we have over 80 species in the camellia genus alone, not to mention allied genera in the Theaceae family. The opportunities for experimentation are limitless. This is very much to the advantage of the camellia world since no flower remains popular long unless new and exciting cultivars appear each year.

Meanwhile, the accumulated knowledge with which camellia publications are loaded give the beginner, only recently introduced to the excitement of hybridizing, a tremendous advantage over earlier hobbyists. An enormous amount of time, labor and money can be saved for him through the building on the successes

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LET'S TAKE A LONGER LOOK AT THE "LOOK ALIKES"

Helen Dobson Brown, Sacramento, California

Each year new introductions of camellias are eagerly awaited by camellia enthusiasts. Even the announcement of a new name often is enough to send an avid hobbyist scurrying to acquire it—sight unseen. And it is not so unusual after all, for most of us feel a special thrill about discovering or creating something not seen before. Supporting this almost universal tendency, a camellia to be registered is supposed to be significantly different from others on the market; and seedling awards at camellia shows are distributed to those blooms which are different—not necessarily the best flowers on the seedling table from the standpoint of perfection of bloom.

All this is good, in my opinion. It keeps the market and hobbyist from getting in a rut. No one is forced to rush out and buy every new offering, so everyone benefits at least indirectly by this healthy activity. As in the world of high fashion, for instance, certain trends catch on and become the vogue for a time. And inevitably, there are new arrivals so good they are bound to set new standards, be copied, and even remain as irreplaceable classics.

We often hear the comment about some new introduction: "Just another *Elegans*"—or "Just another *Finlandia*"—or "just another" anything. And in some cases the remark closes the door on a potentially fine variety—perhaps in some respects better than its look-alike predecessor. I wonder how many have been cut off (literally and figuratively) on this basis before having a chance to prove themselves.

I am not talking about sports or the hundreds of inferior seedlings which bloom and never should or do reach the market. And neither do I mean the mediocre varieties which reach the buying market via the grower's rose colored glasses and good press-agentry. Some of these cultivars, if at all, should remain a garden shrub fondly appreciated by the propagator and his friends.

But I would like to see less rejection of really good new varieties merely because they resemble some old or even

new favorite. The American Camellia Society's rating system, while yet a comparatively new venture, has confirmed the fact that even widely popular varieties may leave much to be desired.

Like many camellia hobbyists we have arrived at the point where we do not have room to keep a plant whose blooms shatter. This includes the old favorite *Alba Plena*, sometimes called the perfect camellia form. Isn't there room for another *Alba Plena*, one which does not drop into what seems a thousand petals—each one a possible carrier of petal blight if not swept up? And wouldn't it be wonderful if the beautiful *Nagasaki* would hold on the plant longer—or the ever popular *Pink Perfection* produce more consistently? While we eagerly scan our seedlings for those which really are different, wouldn't it be worthwhile also to watch for better *Alba Plenas*, *Pink Perfections*, and *Nagasakis*?

There are, of course, many wonderful varieties on the market whose blooms do resemble each other—even to the point of being difficult to identify without the leaves. When outgrowing space and trying to reduce the number of plants in our garden, we often have made practical use of what I call "look alike." The following list gives our choice between two such varieties when circumstances require it. Always the final selection came down to the matter of performance for us. The preferred variety is starred (*).

Rosemary Kinser.

**Thelma Dale*—Superior in all respects.

Debutante—Inclined to second growth and leggy in too much shade. Color light when exposed to too much sun.

**Yvonne Tyson*—Darker pink than *Debutante*, but better growth habits.

Eugene Bolen—Falls off too soon.

**Flame*—Blooms hold on well, maintains good color.

Earl Warren—Leggy, color breaks occasionally.

**Mrs. Freeman Weiss*—Better performer, both flower and growth habits.

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CAMELIAS FOR EVERYONE

Douglas G. Thompson, Los Angeles, California

A century ago the camellia reached a sensational peak of favor and popularity in Europe and America. Then, seemingly almost overnight, interest waned and two generations of oblivion followed. The present resurgence of camellia interest belongs essentially to the last twenty-five years, sparked by leaders in the Gulf States and the West Coast, hardly at all reflected in Europe, but more recently extended to Australia, New Zealand and post-war Japan. It is curious that the return of the camellia to favor in America was largely a by-product of World War II, influenced by gas rationing, reduction of other recreational opportunities, and a general public effort to compensate near home for the dreariness, deprivations and frustrations of the war years. National and local societies emerged, shows were staged and great strides were made in producing literature on history and nomenclature. Everything about camellias was new and exciting. So there arose a new generation of collectors, improvers and patrons. The real patrons of camellias are the men, with encouragement, of course, from the ladies. Men like to dig into history and nomenclature as well as in gardens.

Now, the histories have been rounded up, the literature is extensive, and the nomenclature has been untangled. Much of the charm of the very mystery of the camellia has been dispelled. I remember how fascinated I was by the oriental names of the varieties and the aura of antiquity. The leaders in collecting and propagating are leaving us, one by one. Society membership is not increasing. A second generation of collectors is slow in emerging. Nurseries specializing in camellias are disappearing. By and large, the same men, a few years older now, are dominating the meetings and exhibitions. The aggregate effect is a tapering off of general public interest from the peak of a few years ago.

The problem is, how do we forestall the same thing that happened a century ago? There are no hampering war time restrictions on other leisure interests. We

are becoming more densely urbanized and mechanized. We are in grim competition for our share of public attention. The elders grow weary and the young have little time. Somehow we must emphasize the camellia to the great majority of the casually interested, rather than be contented to concentrate on the pleasures of the avid few.

Of course, we deeply appreciate the wonderful work being done by the hybridizers and introducers of fine new varieties. Opportunities for such endeavors are absorbing to those so engaged but are not available to most of us. The mechanics of camellia research appeals only to the deepest devotees. Each year we are deluged with bewildering new lists of enticing names and alluring descriptions. We tend to believe all we read and hear and rush to embrace the newcomers—with a cooling of ardor toward the old. I note that the introduction of new roses each year is restricted to a select few. By contrast, it seems that anyone who develops a new camellia is quick to sing its praise and push it into prominence, whether proven or not. Worthy as this may be, one result by inference is devaluation of perfectly good comparable varieties. We may be shot-gunning a subject which should be carefully planned, for its most beneficial effect upon the average camellia lover. These introductions create interest among collectors. But perhaps such wholesale enthusiasm over the new ones from near and far also breeds dissatisfaction and confusion among the many folk who are not all-out collectors, who have established older varieties and are our patrons.

I wonder if it would be better to encourage our friends to seek satisfaction in culturing the established varieties to perfection? Upgrading a variety to its peak seems worthier than advocating "off with the old—on with the new," with a decidedly Alice-in-Wonderland lack of stability. It takes a long time to perfect a landscape or make a garden. By now there are well documented formulas for successful culture—soil mixes,

fertilizer, summer care and performance data in specific areas. Even if one learns and faithfully performs these tasks, maybe his heart will not be in it because his varieties are snubbed and he has been influenced to believe that around the corner are the new, the rare, the unsurpassed; and these he must obtain to be in on the doings. His cultural efforts tend to go unrecognized at meetings and in shows. Ask any nurseryman which varieties are the bread-and-butter sellers. Ask any show chairman whether these are ever featured or acknowledged. The well cultured standards, even when perfect in themselves, are neglected for the untempered novelties. Ask yourself how many of these highly touted new ones of the moment have come and gone—mere passing fancies. Most collectors in our area resort to container culture. This provides a degree of flexibility. New introductions may be evaluated, lived with, and all too often soon discarded. This procedure is not reasonable for the many fanciers who have established camellias in the ground—in landscapes and gardens. Their object is to culture well and obtain enjoyment from what they have . . . discreetly adding new proven varieties from time to time.

The "Madison Avenue" approach of devaluing the old and making a status symbol of the new is meant to create dissatisfaction with what we have—to promote and sell the new. But gardening is an ancient art. A gardener's satisfactions do not depend on novelty. He should not be asked to uproot and replace continually. He deserves to be recognized for the fruit of his planning and patience. Somehow, even while we strive in all ways to better the camellia, we must acknowledge the efforts and goals of the average camellia owner or lose his patronage.

So much for the problem. Its solution is not simple. But I think some things need to be considered. At a society meeting, how many present are large collectors? Certainly a large number of attendees are not. We would like to entice these casually interested camellia fanciers to become collectors and to participate in all our activities. This means we must

meet each one at his level. Let's not continually out-gun and out-class him till he fancies himself a hanger-on and loses interest. If his experience at a meeting is not rewarding, he will not return. This would be unfortunate because we need him. The collectors will come anyway. Patience is required. In our meetings we must reiterate fundamentals often enough to educate visitors and newcomers. We must reopen the same old subjects again and again and provide well grounded recommendations on varieties especially suited to the locality. It might be worthwhile to search through the literature and reprint in our publications properly acknowledged past contributions of value.

More than new varieties, we need a formula for including in each of our meetings something of value for everyone present; so that he can get more satisfaction from the camellias he has; so that he will desire to obtain others. If the meeting features exhibits of flowers, provide him the opportunity to display whatever he can bring whilst protecting him from the dismay of running head on into the new, splendid, talk-o'-the-moment show stoppers.

Then there are the annual camellia shows. I have been impressed with the number of blooms of some of the older varieties which appear year after year. Show tables are filled with Audussons, the Elegans family, Tomorrows, R. L. Wheelers and many others. They would almost never be expected to appear on the head table or to compete successfully for a major award. What would happen if we featured some of these popular varieties? Suppose we were to insert a competition class for each variety having more than 30 or 40 or 50 blooms entered, giving a spoon or small tray for each best of variety? How many would there be, perhaps ten or twenty such varieties? How many people could contribute these varieties and perhaps obtain a bit of recognition a cut above a blue ribbon . . . people who do not have the sure-fire head-table winners of the moment?

Well, I've sounded a note of alarm. We collectors may be excluding less motivated or sparser stocked camellia friends

from our inner circle activities because of our very enthusiasm for novelty and change and our aggressive closed loop competition. We may be unwittingly alienating the fledgling.

I hope many of you are moved to add to these random thoughts. Meeting and show planner may profitably re-evaluate their goals. I urge you to contribute your

own ideas to the editor. Remember that at meetings and shows we have an audience captured by their own interest. Let us not turn them away bemused, saddened or discouraged. Let us purpose to advance and spread interest in our beloved camellias by appealing to everyone who will listen—not just to a few aging camellia nuts like myself.

CAMELIAS, WE LOVE YOU!

By A. Nonnie Muss

We live on a wooded hillside and it was my misfortune to have a friend who may only charitably be described as a camellia enthusiast—"nut" is really the word. This fellow is really very likeable—and persuasive. Actually, he comes by it naturally for he makes his living as an automobile salesman and is as high-powered as the cars he sells. Up to the time I met him I had only a casual interest in gardening, for golf was my game. I use the past tense because all that has passed—he finally talked me into trading my fine set of clubs for a small collection of camellias! From digging divots I have enlarged my earth excavation projects to 24" x 24" holes to accommodate my newly acquired camellias. Of course, this is progress of a sort and I don't have to replace the turf. Whereas I used to get hooks on my drives, now I am hooked on a hobby that is worse than golf.

You know, golf and camellias have a lot in common, odd as it may seem. They both keep you out in the fresh air—and broke. You have to acquire some skill with the tools of the trade and you get plenty calluses on your hands and much exercise of the back muscles. You also get bawled out by your "better half" (who in the world ever thought up that expression?) when you overreach yourself, financially or physically. The 19th hole with me is now only the wearisome end of a very long day of camellia planting, and my collection is still miserably small by hobbyists' standards—only a hundred or two! I am progressing, but in an unfamiliar direction. Whereas in golf I started with 120 and gradually got down to 87 (on one of my good days) now I find I started with 20 and have

gone up to 120. And am really just getting started! This is where golf and camellias separate—with one, as you get better you work less—with the other, you labor longer because you have more holes to contend with.

I do like the rules a little better, though, because I always like to feel that I am on a par with my fellow man. In golf, if you are a dub ("duffer," I believe, is technically correct) they give you a handicap of so many strokes in a tournament if you are really sub-par. I mean sub-par in relation to ability—not strokes. That tends to promote an inferiority complex in one's approach. No such problem in camellia competition! The veriest neophyte competes on the same plane with the experienced slicker. It gives one a pulsating glow to be so honored. Think of all those years saved working off the stigma of a handicap!

I had a little trouble at first, getting used to the hazards. In golf, we have the sand traps, water, trees, dog-leg fairways, thick grass and undulating greens to keep us on our toes. In growing camellias, we have sandy soil, alkaline water, dogs and deer (which do not operate in "fair ways"), thick weeds and undulating hillsides to contend with.

There is a punch line to this story. You know the fellow I told you about in the beginning, who got me into this (I was about to add "mess"). Well, I got even with him. Before he converted me, he used to win all the ribbons at the shows. I have been such an apt disciple that he finally gave up camellias and went back to golf. Serves him right, I say. Anyone who would do a trick like that to a good friend!

HYBRIDS POSE A PROBLEM

David L. Feathers, Lafayette, California

No one believes more than we do that hybrids are the camellias of the future. That is not to say that they will eventually supplant the japonica nor any species—it is merely an opinion, formed after considerable observation and interchange of views, that they offer the only hope for a broadening of camellia culture, geographically and with respect to the interest of those who presently grow camellias. The possible combinations in camellia hybridization are infinite but the precise manner in which to proceed is obscure. The outcome is bound to be experimentation on a mass production basis, the result of which can only be a tremendous number of duds and disappointments. If we think that japonica seedlings are too many and too inadequate, the greater unpredictability of interspecific crosses must inevitably result in a much higher percentage of duds, although the numerical output will be much less due to the fewer growers of hybrid seedlings.

In the beginning, of course, the public will accept (as it has already) lower specifications simply because of the newness and (in some cases) the relatively greater tolerance of weather extremes of the hybrids. It will also come to recognize, eventually, the superiority of the hybrid over most sasanquas, where early bloomers are concerned. But, as time goes on and the novelty wears off, subject to greater competition at the shows and the discipline of the rules and regulations governing Hybrid Awards, the latitude which the early hybrids enjoyed has become more prescribed and henceforth it will be increasingly difficult to "make the grade."

Thus, the mere fact of hybridity is not, itself, any more a recommendation. To the contrary, as we gain experience, it becomes evident that some hybrids in some environments and culture have serious faults. To cite an example—the tendency for dieback in some of the saluenensis x japonica hybrids, especially in the Deep South and in parts of Australia. Under some conditions, this has

been so serious as to deter the discriminating nurseryman from propagating them until proven to be free from such fault. This is not to be construed as a blanket indictment of any particular type of hybrid. Some hybrids seem to be completely immune from dieback, while others are particularly susceptible to it. It is perhaps no more prevalent among hybrids than among japonicas on an overall basis. But it is there with some and certainly a factor to be taken into account.

Other and rather serious disadvantages in the Williamsii type hybrids, particularly, is the tendency of many of them to have brown or dead-looking pollen and the apparently inherent lack of substance (*Donation* is a prime example.) This latter fault seems to be fairly common and it has moved some close observers to place a high premium upon lasting qualities in evaluating hybrids (for example, the scale of points in the Metcalf Hybrids Award gives the largest single score for keeping qualities). It is the writer's view that both these objectionable features can be easily overcome by the simple procedure of avoiding use of those *C. japonica* parents which, in conjunction with *C. saluenensis*, seem to produce this unhappy result. Certainly the contrast which rich yellow or golden pollen imparts to camellias of any color is a highly important factor in the overall beauty of the flower. This fact is repeatedly emphasized in the judging of exhibition blooms, where the freshness of the flower is usually determined by the condition of the pollen. Such a flower usually will be smaller than an older bloom but nevertheless more beautiful. Those hybrids which have mahogany-colored pollen are not nearly so objectionable; in fact, so long as they do not have a "dried-up" look, they actually are more of a novelty and this tends to earmark them as hybrids.

Lack of substance is, of course, a very serious fault. It means short life of the flower, both on the bush and when cut. In the case of hybrids which bloom with profusion and thus are valued more for

their mass effect than anything else, this is not quite so important. The sasanquas provide proof of this for, even with their fleeting life, the output of bloom is in such quantity that there is always a good display, except immediately following a heavy rain. The great advantage which the mass-flowering hybrid has over the sasanqua is that the blooms almost never disintegrate. The flower is firmly held together at the base and even the simplest singles withstand rain and wind well and then fall intact. Furthermore, the individual flower lasts longer on the plant and this tends to allow a greater accumulation of blooms needed for a good mass effect. Most of the saluenensis or Sylvia May type hybrids have significant substance, even to the point where fallen singles can often be retrieved and floated in a bowl for several days thereafter. The shape of the bloom is such that they usually hit the ground base-first and are thus undamaged.

To the extent that limited experience to date will permit an opinion, the japonica x reticulata hybrids seem to lean in the opposite direction. We speak largely from experience with *Crimson Robe* and *Buddha* in combination with various japonicas and *C. fraterna*. Almost without exception the pollen of these hybrids is not only fresh-looking but in a greater mass and of deeper color than the average japonica, while the keeping qualities of the flower are also superior. In many cases, the heavier composition of the reticulata bloom has carried through into the hybrid, thus insur-

ing greater flower life. Furthermore, these hybrids have blooms with their petals united at the base, which tends to hold them intact. There would seem to be good possibility that a full double japonica x reticulata hybrid can be developed which will not shatter—a much sought-after development.

One of the greatest, and perhaps an insuperable problem, at least until after the significant lapse of time required for biological study, will be the determination of actual hybridity. This has already become quite an enigma for those who make and enforce the rules relating to seedling competition. So many hybrids look, at least to the casual observer, to be simply varieties of some single species as to cast considerable doubt upon their hybrid origin, notwithstanding that they may bear closer resemblance to some species other than that from which the seed was obtained. This is particularly true with respect to japonica x reticulata hybrids, undoubtedly because the genes governing flower type appear to be stronger in the japonica (dominant over) those of the reticulata. The same is often true of the foliage of such hybrids and really the only factor in which reticulata appears to dominate is that of growth, which will usually be strong, tall and often leggy or willowy. A great disappointment has been in the tendency of the japonica x reticulata hybrid to have a flower that is distinctly retrograde. There is, however, considerable likelihood that this will be largely overcome in the second and succeeding generations.

"LOOK ALIKES" (from Page 9)

Lady K—Beautiful when normal, but not constant. Inclined to have no center petals in our warm climate.

**Dr. Hubbs*—Larger, richer in color, full petaled and fimbriated like *Lady K* when it is true to form. Just being released, so its performance is yet to be judged in this area.

Coral Pink Lotus—Color breaks sometimes, especially later in the season.

**Lucy Hester*—Like *Coral Pink Lotus*, inclined to be leggy, needing pruning, but color and substance is superior.

Imura—Inclined to shatter.

**Yobeki-Dori (Magnoliaeflora Alba)*—Leggy, must be pruned, but worth it.

Blood of China—Beautiful when normal, but generally blooms too late to open properly.

**Cruselle*—Should bloom midseason. Outstanding substance and color.

The point is, if you particularly like one camellia for its flower form and color, but it does not perform well in your area or garden, generally you can find another with qualities which are very

(Continued on Next Page)

GROWING CAMELLIAS IN BOTTOMLESS CONTAINERS

J. Carroll Reiners, Sacramento, California

Most of us who have grown camellias in containers, sometimes to the exclusion of any other manner of camellia culture, have been aware that there are some serious considerations in the care of our specimens. When they are in small containers and are under lath and perhaps crowded while we wait for them to grow, the problems of water and feeding and protecting are least burdensome. As our plants grow and we make the determination of which ones to retain in our gardens, the container sizes have necessarily been enlarged, but our chores have not really increased to the stage of being a harrassment. Watering may yet be done in a "quantity" state, but that and other care is what we might term pampering, for we dare not neglect it.

After several years of camellia culture in all stages of the growth of the plant, I was fortunate in resolving my problems to a simpler one of tending to large camellia plants, at least half of the number being in containers. My favorites were now in boxes placed on the ground, containers without bottoms. This was first of all a landscape problem in which I wanted the formality of a row of regularly spaced planter boxes. It was not in the plan that the camellias would ever be moved, but it was always possible, and further, the care I could give the boxed camellias proved to be exceptionally practical.

The watering plan became simplified because watering meant filling the container and thoroughly soaking the soil around the box, as well. The plant could then draw on two sources of water, and actually did so. Furthermore, the camellia sent its roots below the container and brought another advantage, that of stability. I had no more worries about plants

being tipped in the heavy winds; this always ends in broken branches and damaged blooms. If, in a hasty watering, only the ground surrounding the boxed plants is soaked, water traveled upward in the containers to the camellias.

This type of culture had another effect fully as important as the easing of the watering chores: that was the facility with which I could control any tendency of the plant toward being pot-bound. Since the roots extended into the ground below the container, the task of root pruning became as simple a thing as shoving a sharp spade into the ground at the perimeter of the container where it met the soil level below. This light root pruning, plus a heavy top vegetative pruning was necessary each year to keep the plants in good scale with the chosen container size. I like to keep camellias within my extended reach, seven to eight feet high. Vigor, bud set, and bloom size are very rewarding with this culture.

Shifting the boxes is not as simple a task as it would be if the bottoms were in place, but if the roots are cut as for root pruning directions given above, one edge of the container can be raised and a board pushed beneath the box; this acts as a sled or base for the moving operation. My plants were frequently moved and some, where the light came from one direction, were periodically turned to keep the growth in balance.

It can be deduced from the foregoing that camellias of only certain sizes and containers are being considered in this article. One and two gallon size containers are still treated by the crowded quantity method in which many can be cared for at one time, and for this period of a camellia's growth, there is very little we can do to diminish the amount of regular care involved.

"LOOK ALIKES" (from Preceding Page)

similar. Perhaps some on the above list would be reversed for some of you—based either on preference or performance. Also, if you have room you may enjoy having two or more very similar varieties, blooming early to midseason to

late, thus extending your enjoyment of a type you find appealing.

No doubt many of you already operate just this way, and like the poet I merely have stated the "over-obvious." Anyway, just thought I'd mention it!

AMATEUR IN PLANT EXPERIMENTATION (from Page 8)

and failures of the past quarter century and by taking advantage of the new techniques which have been developed during the same years of scientific progress.

"Gazing into the Crystal Ball"

In the March, 1963, issue of "*The Camellian*", in an article using this title, Dr. Lammerts saw clearly on the horizon, however distant, fragrant camellias of every possible color and hue, blooming with a cold resistance that would see the camellia grown widely and successfully where it is now more or less unknown. Our Committee on Plant Experimentation has looked into its own Crystal Ball and on the basis of what we imagine we see there, here is a list of worth while experiments which we believe lend themselves well to amateurs with lots of time, patience and curiosity. From this list members of our group are selecting the particular projects to work on which appeal most to them at this time.

Suggestions for Studies and Projects — Interspecific Hybrids

1. Determination of most desirable plant material for the purpose of:

- (a) plant and flower improvement,
- (b) improved weather hardiness,
- (c) developing early or late blooms.

2. Discovery of new mother plants with ability to cross with many other species over a long blooming season. (e.g. *Sylvia May*, blooms Oct.-May; *Robbie*, etc.)

3. Development of information relative to results to be expected from certain interspecific crosses for the purpose of:

- (a) producing new flower colors and forms,
- (b) eliminating futile crosses.

4. Early blooming plants (possible result of crossing *Sylvia May* x *Granthamiana*, etc.)

5. Late blooming plants — to extend season.

6. Flowers with added fragrance.

7. Increased floescence on a bushy plant (e.g. *Brigadoon*).

8. Dwarf, bushy plant with a satisfactory flower (e.g. with form of an *azalea*).

9. Upgrade existing hybrids which are outstanding but lack substance.

10. Cross *Gordonia* with other species if possible.

11. Investigate possibility of obtaining a deciduous camellia.

But our amateur Crystal Ball gives us glimpses of more than these specific projects to work on. With the new and burgeoning world of hybrids arriving on the scene, we see the need for new formulas for judging because of new uses for the camellia plant as well as the bloom, from outside landscaping to indoor flower arranging. By whose standards are we to judge? The proverbial group of masculine judges with its recognized preference for the big, red, showy bloom lying on a show table? The commercial grower who knows what will sell and who can find a purchaser for any plant that happens to be in full bloom at the moment he appears looking for a spectacular gift for a friend? The flower arranger with her ways that are beyond the comprehension of the average male grower, who usually prefers them small and pink and single? The "ARTIST" (with capital letters) who thinks the sheen and wild irregularity of the *Granthamiana* so beautiful "as is" that she thinks a camellia hybridizer "crazy" for trying to improve upon it?

It is to be hoped that our future hybrid judges will come from the ranks of those who are growing and observing them. This is important even more than in the case of the japonica. The new hybrid is much more than a flower to be laid on a table and judged from that standpoint alone. It is a plant — different, more exciting, more useful in landscaping. Some will have an axillary floescence that will make the cutting of whole branches desirable. This will please the arrangers.

Also gazing into the amateur's Crystal Ball, we see in the future some form of direction for the amateur, whether working alone or as a member of a camellia society, that will do for him what Dr. Lammerts is attempting, at some cost to him in time, to do for our Committee. This kind of direction will be invaluable in encouraging amateurs to start; in helping them to select projects wisely; in preparing instructions for the amateur

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NEWS AND VIEWS

Roy T. Thompson, Glendale, California

Disbudding camellias reveals some unexpected characteristics about these interesting plants, for each different variety seems to have its own way of producing buds. Some varieties almost never have buds together in pairs and some of these varieties have a habit of producing their buds so sparingly that they need no disbudding at all. Other varieties go mad and produce 8 or 10 buds together in clusters like grapes. Still other varieties change their patterns of bud production from season to season: Some show buds at the end of May; others wait until October or later.

All this complicates the task of disbudding, especially in the matter of when to start. If one starts in September for example of certain varieties heavily loaded with buds, new buds will immediately begin to form where old ones have been removed and by November will be almost full size. Since different varieties bloom at different times, one can wait until the variety begins to show color but it would be better to disbud a couple of weeks before this, if possible.

There can be no question, however, as to the advisability of disbudding. If a heavy-blooming camellia is allowed to bloom all, or most of, its buds in a season, it may so exhaust itself that it will look sick for a year or so and, surprisingly, have very few blooms the following season. Not to mention, of course, that the blooms will all be undersize, some puny.

* * *

Note on yard planning: Anyone fond of the native California sycamore or of the European Plane tree, should think twice before planting camellias under, or even near, these beautiful trees. Sycamore and Plane tree leaves are too large to fall through camellia branches, hence they lodge in the tops of camellias, sometimes forming thick clusters which are not only unsightly, but which deprive the camellia leaves of light. This is especially true when the camellias get so tall that their tops cannot be reached by hand.

* * *

One of the most fascinating and fruitful branches of the camellia hobby is that of making slides. The late Frank Williams was one of the most faithful devotees of this activity, and during his many years of camellia growing accumulated what is undoubtedly the largest, finest and most extensive private collection of slides in America. With him, making slides was much more than a hobby, it was an art. He had, of course many advantages: by profession he was a cameraman thoroughly familiar with the technical side of his work, and during the years when he made camellia slides had both the means and the leisure to pursue the hobby, not to mention the largest collection of camellia varieties on the Pacific Coast. It became a fixed habit with him to get new varieties before they were generally available to the public; hence his slides soon became a chief source of acquainting camellia enthusiasts with new varieties.

He spent much time experimenting with various lighting effects, and tried out many different backgrounds. It was his common practice to make fifteen or twenty slides of a flower using different backgrounds and arrangements of lights. Anyone familiar with his slides over the years could almost date them by their backgrounds.

It was the fixed custom for many years for the Pacific Camellia Society to devote its first meeting of the season to Williams' slides, presented by him in person. Hence it was particularly pleasing to the older members to find the opening meeting of the present season (Nov. 7) given over to his slides, and it was especially pleasing to learn that the entire Williams' collection had recently been given to the Society by the Williams' estate.

* * *

The smaller leaves and more compact growth of sasanquas (if properly pruned) make them especially suitable for hedges. Sasanquas, like japonicas, have a wide range of growth habits; some grow tall, others spread out; some, like *Totenko*, are extremely rangy and should be avoid-

ed as hedge plants. *Nodami Hishiro* grows tall and is compact, hence amenable to pruning. The smaller leaves of sasanquas make them less susceptible to the sun-burning hazard which sometimes occurs in September in Southern Cali-

fornia. Sasanquas in hedges should be planted somewhat closer together than japonicas and should be allowed to grow at least three years before given any pruning. This allows them to develop a good root system.

AMATEUR IN PLANT EXPERIMENTATION (from Page 16)

without scientific background; in correlating the work of amateurs and professionals; in collecting and disseminating specific information as developed. Try to imagine how far ahead the camellia world would be today if there were available now complete information on the exact parentage of all the highly undesirable as well as the highly desirable varieties which are now merely listed as "chance seedling—parentage unknown." Perhaps this image in the Crystal Ball was helped by an announcement by the new administration of the American Camellia Society that Mr. Maynard Munger of Fresno, California, has been appointed Chairman of a special committee to list the sources of the various species introduced in the United States. This will be a much appreciated service to the hybridizer and may be a hint of more direction to come.

But perhaps the most significant hint of things to come lies in a suggestion made in an article called "The Long Day of Camellia Breeding," by Dr. C. R. Parks and Dr. A. E. Longley, geneticists doing the laboratory work for the Camellia Research Advisory Committee, published in the October, 1963, issue of "Camellia Review," by the Southern California Camellia Society. After reporting on the tens of thousands of pollinations made during 1962 and 1963, the report reads:

It is time to consider the 1963-64 pollination program. We are planning to make more pollinations than ever this year but we have a problem—we need more hands. This request is for hands, attached to camellia lovers, of course.

In the Crystal Ball we see many pairs of hands, "attached to camellia lovers, of

course," waiting to be put to work throughout the camellia growing areas, on worthwhile projects and with proper supervision and direction. The current report of a national health research project indicates it can be done, since it covers 68,000 volunteer researchers, involving more than one million people in 1,121 counties in 29 states—by far the largest ever undertaken, being carried out by previously untrained volunteers with a degree of success never known before.

In conclusion, one important point remains to be made and remembered. There are a great many fringe benefits for the amateur researcher that to him will be more important than all the practical results achieved—and will make his efforts worthwhile even if he achieves no practical results at all. His work will be for him a source of personal development, maintaining and increasing his interest in his hobby, well into his retirement years. It will promote friendly contacts with other hobbyists and bring him the rich reward of permanent friendships. It will be a source of much joyful anticipation—and it seems that to the human family anticipation can mean as much in pleasure as does the realization of its dreams.

If you have any trace of the spirit of adventure, camellia experimentation is for you. "Masterworks of Science" states with great conviction:

So long as the human mind endures, so long the scientific world will expand its boundaries. However daring and adventurous and successful this our century may be, it will in turn be outdone by the next.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Do we have your name and address listed correctly? If not, or should you change your residence, please be sure to notify the Secretary of your Society, whose address appears on Page 2. The Post Office will not forward periodicals and the cost of mailing quadruples if your copy is returned, besides the delay involved.

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REPORTS ON CALIFORNIA CAMELLIA SHOWS, by The Editor: May Issue each year.

CULTURAL NOTES

Mrs. John D. (Nora) Lawson, Antioch, California

The fortunate gardener who has given a home to one or more Sasanqua camellia plants has probably been enjoying blooms for the past month as varieties of this versatile evergreen garden shrub bloom from September through January. October is an excellent month to see many different kinds of Sasanqua in flower. The gardener who is not already acquainted with this plant should certainly make the effort to see them now, *but* should not carry with him a mental image of camellias he already knows. Sasanquas are an entirely different species from the more frequently seen Japonicas. They are beautiful and useful members of the camellia family, and merit a welcome as an endearing "relative".

Although there are several hundred varieties of Sasanqua in this country, about

twenty-five are generally available. These have a considerable range of growth habit — low, compact plants; gracefully open and spreading; upright or weeping. These variations of growth pattern allow for many valuable uses such as ground covers, trellises, wall and fence planting, hanging baskets, as well as garden accent specimens. The foliage of Sasanquas is as diversified as the growth, the leaves generally being small, glossy and very handsome, varying from pointed to round, very dark to bright green, and even including variegated leaves.

The extra "bonus" in this fine garden shrub is the wealth of bloom during fall and winter months as Sasanqua camellias flower profusely in colors of white, pink, purplish-red and delicately shaded pink and white.