Ornamentals

ORNAMENTAL VINES FOR FLORIDA.

John Schnabel.

Among the various classes of ornamental plants, I have chosen vines. This subject has often been touched upon in previous meetings of the Society, but merits much more extended consideration.

We have spent altogether too much time and money in attempting to acclimate vines that do well in the North and in Europe. If we had given the same attention to African and Asiatic introductions we would have had greater success. There is also a wealth of native vines far surpassing those from the North and Europe. These have been almost entirely ignored.

We have a wide field for choice of suitable vines for different localities and under different conditions. Different surroundings require quite different treatment. Thus, in selecting a vine for a piazza screening, the mistake is often made of choosing one with a too thick growth, which shuts off the air and sunlight to too great an extent, with the result that the piazza is damp and gloomy instead of dry and pleasant.

Climbing vines, either as rooted cuttings or seedlings, should be set in good soil, well cultivated, sufficiently watered, and well fertilized the first year, in order to give them a good start. The soil should be spaded up well and mixed with well rotted manure.

VINES FOR EASTERN AND NORTHERN EXPOSURES.

Bearing this point in mind, I would select vines, especially on the east or north exposures, with a light, airy growth just sufficient to cast an agreeable green shade. The character of the soil must influence the selection somewhat. Among the varieties that would fill the conditions mentioned, the following can be recommended from my own experience, for the central and northern sections of the State:

Solanum jasminoides, with light blue flowers in clusters, and green glossy leaves. This can be propagated by seeds and by cuttings. The blooming is continuous throughout the summer.

Bignonia speciosa, one of the trumpet vines, with clusters of purplish flowers and glossy leaves, blooming through April and May, and easily propagated by cuttings.

Thunbergia fragrans, a perennial vine with white flowers. It does not make a
very dense growth, and can be propagated by seed.

The English ivy, *Hedera helix*, which requires training. I have never seen one in bloom in this State, but it is easily propagated from cuttings made in the winter. This well known vine is noted for the beauty of its foliage.

The wild “yellow jessamine,” *Gelsemium sempervirens*, can be found growing abundantly in many localities in the woods and is easily transplanted, especially in its dormant condition in the fall. This well known vine blooms early in the spring, and is very fragrant.

The Japanese honeysuckle, *Lonicera japonica*, var. Halliana, with fragrant white flowers. This is a perennial vine, that will grow under very unfavorable conditions. Propagated by division or cuttings.

*Ipomoea fuchsiaoides*, a fine climbing vine with reddish fuchsia-like flowers, easily propagated by cuttings made in the late fall. This plant was introduced by the United States Department of Agriculture. (Needs further description.)

*Manettia bicolor*, a vine of moderate growth, and short lived, especially to be recommended, requiring a rather moist soil. The flowers are scarlet tipped, golden yellow. Propagated by cuttings.

**VINES FOR SOUTHERN AND WESTERN EXPOSURES.**

For south and west exposures, vines with a little heavier growth may be selected, to protect the porch from the direct sunlight in the summer. For this purpose I will mention as desirable:

*Solanum wendlandii*, with very large, deep green leaves. This vine bears light purple flowers during the summer. Propagated by cuttings made in the fall.

*Bignonia venusta*, a vigorous grower that is especially to be recommended for a southern exposure, as it will not stand much cold. If killed down by the frost it comes up from the roots in the spring. It bears clusters of orange-colored flowers. We have had good success with this vine at the Experiment Station grounds at Gainesville, especially during mild winters. I have had no trouble in propagating it by cuttings taken in the fall.

*Rosa de Montana*, or mountain rose, *Antigonon leptopus*, a vine with rosy to dark colored flowers. This is a well known vine, and one of the best for these locations. Propagated best by seeds, sown late in the fall or in early spring.

“Star jasmine,” *Rhynchospermum (Trachelosporium) jasminoides* with leathery leaves which remain on the vine the year round. It blooms in March and April, with frequent white, star shaped flowers. This vine I can recommend most highly. It is best propagated by cuttings, but is one of the slowest to take root. For a heavy, quick growth I would recommend the “Kudzu vine,” *Pueraria thumbergiana*, a rank and heavy grower, which sheds its foliage during the winter. It may be propagated by layers or from seed. Any of the *Stizolobiums* or velvet bean family may be used for a quick shade.

**VINES FOR ARBORS AND PERGOLAS.**

In making a selection for arbors or pergolas, the style of architecture, size, location and surroundings should be con-
I would recommend some of the ever-blooming climbing roses. These will require much patience, and one must be prepared for frequent disappointment. Our climate and soil are not well adapted to the best success with roses. There are many varieties of these, and in selecting suitable ones I would advise consulting some of the reliable nurseries in the State.

There are many varieties of *Wisteria* suitable for this purpose. A few of the Japanese varieties do well here, and can be gotten from almost any nursery. There are both white and blue varieties. The hardwood cuttings root fairly easily.

A few of the *Aristolochias*, or "Dutchman's pipe" do well here. I think the *A. grandiflora* and *A. elegans* would grow well here, although I have never had personal experience with them. The flowers are very large and curious. The *A. sipho* is the common variety in this State. They are mostly propagated by seeds.

The *Clematis* is a fine vine, especially the large flowering varieties, but I doubt if they will do well here. They are rather difficult to handle. The *C. paniculata* does well under half shade. It blooms in September. It is usually propagated by seeds.

There are a few *Ipomoeas* which do fairly well here. The *I. digitata*, or Mexican morning glory, has dark green, glossy leaves, differing in shape from the ordinary morning glory. It produces a tuber like the sweet potato. The large scarlet flowers are produced all through the season. It has done very well on the Experiment Station grounds. It is propagated by cuttings made late in the fall. It does not do well on all soils. Other varieties of morning glory, especially some of the Japanese and annual varieties, are very subject to fungous diseases, and are liable to spread to the extent of becoming a nuisance.

Some of the *Passifloras*, or "Passion-flowers," especially *P. edulis* and *P. quadrangularis*, do fairly well here. *Bougainvillea glabra*, *Allamandas* of different varieties, and *Clerodendron* varieties are too tender for Central and Northern Florida, but in mild seasons they do very well. *Dolichos* and *Clitorias* are not to be highly recommended. Some of the vines mentioned for use on porches might also be used on arbors.

**VINES FOR WALLS.**

For vines designed to cover wooden walls, I would not recommend the clinging varieties, as they will eventually rot out the wood. This is also more or less true of any vine that retains its foliage the year round.

For stone walls, or brick or stone buildings, the clinging vines, or those that naturally fasten themselves to the wall should be selected. They may be grown also on trees or stumps. Especially desirable for this purpose is the Trumpet vine, a deciduous wild plant for Florida, propagated from hardwood cuttings. Among the plants for walls and brick and stone buildings I may mention the following:

The creeping fig, *Ficus pumila* Linn. (*F. repens* Hort.) Where this vine does well and gets a good start, it is one of the best creepers that can be selected. It also grows well over living or dead trees. On the station grounds we have found it very satisfactory. It does best in an eastern or northern exposure. It requires
considerable attention and cultivation to get it started. It holds its fine-leaved foliage the year round. After it is well started to a height of three or four feet, the young shoots that are not clinging should be pruned off, when clinging laterals will grow. As it gets older, the leaves get larger and it branches abundantly at the tips. It can be propagated easily by cuttings made from fairly well ripened wood, from four to six inches long.

The Japanese or Boston ivy, *Ampelopsis veitchii*, is a very handsome, well-known creeper. It sheds its foliage in the winter. It is a fast grower, clinging close to the wall. It is best propagated by seeds.

“Virginia creeper,” *A. quinquefolia*, grows wild through the central part of the State. It has rather large leaves, which are shed in the fall. It is easily propagated by seeds or young runners.

*Bignonia Chamberlaynii* with terminal flowers, and *B. Tweediana*, with fine canary-yellow axillary flowers, make a splendid showing. The “trumpet vine,” (*B. radicans*) is a fast growing plant, with trumpet shaped flowers borne early in the spring. The Bignonias are easily propagated from cuttings made in the fall.

“Cross vine,” *Bignonia capreolata*, is a native plant blooming early in the spring, with deep orange-colored flowers. It can be propagated from cuttings made in the fall or from the seed.

**PROPAGATION FROM HARDWOOD CUTTINGS**

Most of the vines, especially the woody ones, are propagated by cuttings. These should be taken late in the fall, from the current year’s growth, from well ripened wood, with not less than two buds to a cutting. The bottom end should be cut close to the bud, the top about two inches from the upper bud, which prevents the latter from drying out too quickly. The cuts should be slightly slanting, with a smooth surface. As soon as the cuttings are made, they should be set with one bud above the surface in ordinary garden soil. This must be well cultivated until the cuttings are well rooted, when they may be transplanted. They require no fertilizer, but should be kept moist.

**PROPAGATING FROM SOFT-WOOD CUTTINGS**

Cuttings from the softer wooded varieties, such as the Solanums and the Ipomoeas, should be made late in the fall, before severe cold sets in. They should not exceed three buds to the cutting. They should be inserted in a box of clean, well-drained sand, not over three inches deep, and kept in a half shaded, warm place. The cuttings should remain here until rooted; when they should be potted into two or three inch pots. When a good root system has been established in these and danger from frost is past, they may be set out permanently.

**PROPAGATING FROM SEED.**

When the plants are propagated by seeds, these should be sown early in the spring. Select one part of decomposed leaf mold and mix it well with one part of good garden soil, with a little well rotted manure. Sow in boxes or pots which are not over three inches deep and well drained. The seeds should not be covered much deeper than the diameter of the
seed itself. On top, a thin coat of fine, clean sand may be put, to keep the seedlings from damping off. When the seeds have germinated, and have two or more leaves above ground, pot them in two or three-inch pots in the same mixture of soil as mentioned above. When they are well rooted here and danger from frost is over, they may be set out in their permanent location.

The selections I have mentioned for various purposes might be considerably extended, but I have endeavored to confine my list to a few of the best only, and those that I have had personal experience with.

TROPICAL POSSIBILITIES OF FLORIDA, AND HOW TO ACHIEVE THEM.

Mrs. Marian A. McAdow.

The only part of the United States that dips down close to the tropical zone is Florida, with a comparatively small area of a little over 54,000 square miles. California has made a reputation for herself for many tropical characteristics, but it is because she can raise certain types of plants belonging to the tropics that will stand a low degree of cold, the past winter having proved most conclusively that many of them can stand 20 degrees below the freezing point.

Florida can grow not only these, but she can grow nearly every tree and plant that makes Ceylon and India dreams of tropical verdure. There may be some that cannot be suited with our soil and climate, but enough there are of a striking character to make a paradise of the spot that can produce them.

Over in California they have made the most of such tropical trees, shrubs and vines as will grow there and they have been planted so profusely that a visitor to that State comes away with the impression that he has been sojourning in the tropics. If the people of our State were as much alive to their possibilities as those of California have been to theirs, we could have a wonderland here right now that would attract the attention of the whole world. Nor would it be the work of more than five to ten years to accomplish this transformation if we could all be imbued with the same idea, and every man, woman and child could be made to feel his individual responsibility in the matter. The club women all over our land are extending their interests yearly, and they have, without a doubt, accomplished some splendid reforms, but if the time that has been spent on courses in “The Music of Shakespeare,” “The Poetry of the Brownings,” and “The Art of the Renaissance,” were expended on the practical every-day necessities of the community in which they live, we wouldn’t have range cattle and razor-back hogs roaming our streets, creating disease by their filth; we’d stamp out typhoid fever and malaria; we’d eradicate