

## BRIGHT SPOTS OF THE CHRYSANTHEMUM HISTORY OF CALIFORNIA

**T**he Flower Industry knows no flowers as elegantly beautiful and proud in appearance as the Chrysanthemums.

In Old Japan, the country of their origin, the Chrysanthemums are cherished, and because of the years of tradition behind them, they are looked upon as the flowers most symbolic of the proud little Island Kingdom. The seal of His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, is a Golden Chrysanthemum of sixteen petals, signifying the sacred esteem in which the Chrysanthemums are held in Japan.

A notable feature of Chrysanthemum cultivation in Japan, is that the Chrysanthemums are not commercialized. The cultivation of these flowers in that country is a traditional delight of the people, who, though stoic by nature, can be swayed by their love for all that is beautiful. The inborn ability of the Japanese to toil with soil, and the luxuriance with which Chrysanthemums grow under the climatic conditions of Japan, no doubt encourages this hobby more than anything else.

Every year in the month of October, all Japan participates in the "Kiku Matsuri," or Chrysanthemum Festival. People from all parts of the country make pilgrimages of miles and miles to attend the Fetes, at which beautiful images of mythical figures are made of Chrysanthemums, and before them, all Japan makes merry. Business is set aside, sorrows are forgotten and hatreds are forgiven; for at the "Kiku Matsuri" it is blasphemous to be unhappy or worried.

Such are some of the beautiful traditions and customs which the Chrysanthemums left behind in the land of the Cherry Blossoms, to seek for themselves a place in a strange and new Flowerland.

In 1884, the Chrysanthemums were first introduced to America, through the tireless efforts of Kan Yoshiike, an ardent Japanese student of Floriculture. In those trying days, the types of these flowers best suited for commercial purposes were yet unknown and Yoshiike, in his humble little greenhouse in Oakland, California, hopefully experimented and nursed along different varieties, unaware that many of them were destined to later become revelations to the Flower Industry.

It may truthfully be said that the contributions of Yoshiike's wisdom and superhuman efforts are apparent in the many improved varieties of the present day. A contemporary of Yoshiike, Kanetaro Domoto, was the first to follow him in growing Chrysanthemums under glass. A pioneer among Japanese Nurserymen in America, Domoto contributed greatly toward the success of the Chrysanthemum Growing Industry in California.

(Two)

In the Hall of Fame of Chrysanthemum Growers, we would add to the names of Yoshiike and Domoto, those of many of their well-known American contemporaries who have introduced some of the most popular varieties of today, among whom we find such noteworthies as SMITH, POLLWORTH, POOK, WAITE, and WM. TURNER.

In 1904, cheesecloth cultivation of Chrysanthemums was originated and introduced by H. L. Goertzhain in Redwood City, California. This method was at once recognized as superior to that theretofore employed by Yoshiike and Domoto. The flowers by this method of growing were given the benefit of Nature's most invigorating gestures and became hardier, more durable and richer in their coloring. Growing under cheesecloth has proven to be an ingenious method of utilizing to the fullest extent the powers of Nature.

In 1907 the Enomoto Brothers began an extensive cultivation of Chrysanthemums under cheesecloth in Redwood City, for the sole purpose of starting a shipping business. At that time, shipments of these flowers were confined to local points only. Lack of transportation facilities and the Growers' sense of caution had kept the Chrysanthemum Shipping Business from developing, until the year 1913, when Sadakusu Enomoto astounded the Flower World by making a successful shipment of carloads of Turner Mums to New Orleans for their historic All Saints' Day observance. The fact that this shipment was made without refrigeration makes the success more remarkable and stamps it as an unforgettably kind act of Providence. By 1915, regular markets for Chrysanthemums were found in the Middle West, and several years later the Eastern cities were proving themselves consistent consumers of these beautiful California flowers.

(Three)

It is a fact, as stated by Charles H. Totty, well-known American Chrysanthemum Grower, in a recent issue of the "Literary Digest," that American Chrysanthemums "beat those of Japan."

The amazing progress that the Chrysanthemums have made as commercial products has spurred on the Floricultural experts of this country to greater efforts, and consequently has raised the standard of American Chrysanthemums to an unsurpassable point. Japan, the Mother Country of the Chrysanthemum, has graciously acknowledged the superiority of many of the varieties introduced here and has unhesitatingly imported them for research purposes.

We must not overlook the humble Floriculturists from the little Island Kingdom, who are growing these lovely flowers around the San Francisco Bay, and give them justly due credit for their perseverance and energy, which enables them to bring Chrysanthemums of superior quality into the market, three and four weeks earlier than in other parts of the world.

The Chrysanthemum Growing Industry has grown by leaps and bounds, and today along the Peninsula, on the outskirts of San Francisco, there are approximately eighty acres of Chrysanthemums growing under cheesecloth. In 1929, Six Hundred and Seventy carloads of Mums left Sunny California for points north, south, and east.

"East is East, and West is West,  
And never the twain shall meet."

So said Rudyard Kipling, but the twain have met, and shall continue to meet, for though East may be East, and West may be West, each is dependent upon the other, and always shall it be so.

(Four)