

Spring Blooming Bulbs as Clubhouse Decorations

By WM. J. COLLINS

EDITOR'S NOTE.— *To our many readers who have a love for flowers the following article may at this time prove very interesting and instructive.*

TO grow bulbs to produce flowers in abundance and perfection is a branch of gardening peculiar in its simplicity. Many beginners have an idea or impression that there are numerous grave difficulties to be met in the growing of bulbs which must be overcome in order to produce perfect flowers—while in reality, no other plants are so easily managed, none are more showy, and none succeed so well under all circumstances as those grown from the different classes of bulbs.

The growing of these subjects, other than the charm their flowers possess, has many advantages over that of any other class of growing plants. One of them, and an excellent one, is that many bulbs produce their flowers in very early Spring—a season when few other plants are in bloom and when flowers are doubly valuable for their rarity.

For example—a sheltered sunny spot containing a few clumps of Snowdrops, Crocuses, and Scilla will present a mass of pleasing color in most graceful forms, while snow may linger in the colder and shadier places. Before these, "The Heralds of Spring," are gone, the Hyacinths will arrive with their graceful fragrance and beautiful mellow colors. These are soon followed by the much loved and modest Narcissus in their many pleasing forms—and then the Tulips in such a pleasing myriad of shades and colors that we at once acclaim them as "The Queen" of all Spring-flowering bulbs.

All this Nature reveals to us before other vegetation gets fairly started. Interspersed with those mentioned above are many other forms equally valuable for their flowers and coloring, but not so widely known and for this reason rarely mentioned.

Another advantage Spring-flowering bulbs possess is their long period of rest, which leaves the ground free for more than half the year. For instance—when the flowers of Hyacinths, Narcissi, and Tulips have gone, the bulbs may be lifted and heeled into the reserve garden or border to ripen—thereby leaving their places free for the introduction of the hardy annual and Summer-bedding plants.

For the assistance and benefit of those who may this Fall decide to plant bulbs, either for Spring gardening or naturalizing purposes, a few cultural hints and instructions are in order.

Any good, well drained soil is satisfactory for Spring-blooming bulbs. When planting in beds or borders, it is advisable to incorporate, if possible, a dressing of thoroughly decomposed manure, free from straw. This must be dug deep into the beds, so that it will not come in direct contact with the bulbs when planted.

Crocuses, Snowdrops, and Scilla should be planted as soon as possible after the bulbs are received from the importer, which should be about October 1st and not later than October 15th. These bulbs usually commence to make a growth by October 1st, and if planting is long deferred, the germ is destroyed, and consequently, poor results are obtained. They should be planted about three or four inches deep and in clumps of five or six, to get the best effect. They can be left in the ground for years until their flowers begin to show deterioration, when a change is necessary—and the bulbs should then be dug up and re-set in a good location as soon as possible after lifting. When choosing your location, always select an exposed and sunny position, as it

is very necessary if good results are to be obtained.

Hyacinths are included in the list of the most prominent and popular Spring flowers—they being valuable both for indoor and outdoor cultivation. When planting these, one should remember to avoid all heavy, stiff or binding soils—and no stimulating fertilizers or chemical manures are necessary for their proper development. All they require is a well prepared light or sandy soil, free from stones and gravel and for planting, select a day that is dry and warm. Plant the bulbs six inches deep and about eight inches apart—after which add a good covering of leaves or litter on the surface of the bed. This will protect the bulbs against early freezing and also the mechanical action of alternate freezing and thawing during the Winter. In Spring, as the days become warmer, this covering can be gradually removed. Outdoor planting of Hyacinths should be completed by November 1st.

Narcissus or Daffodils (all the hardy varieties of this class) should be planted from five to six inches deep and about four to six inches apart according to the size of the bulb. They grow and give satisfactory results in almost any ordinary garden soil, but prefer a medium well drained soil and a situation affording slight shade. For naturalizing along the edge of shubbery borders or on grassy slopes or banks of woods, they are unequalled, and when planted for this purpose, they should not be disturbed for three or four years, or until they show signs of deterioration. They can then be dug up and re-set. September or October is the most satisfactory time of the year to accomplish this work. When planted in the flower garden or borders, they require a covering of leaves or litter to protect them against early frosts and the mechanical action of freezing and thawing during the Winter, and in the Spring, when the days get warm, this covering can be gradually removed.

Tulips like Narcissi are hardy, of easy culture, and not too particular in

the matter of soil. All they require is a good medium soil that will not become too wet or heavy. Best results are obtained from Tulips by planting them in masses or groups—and the varieties can be arranged, so that when in bloom, the colors will blend and harmonize, making a grand and brilliant display surpassing almost every other group of flowers both in color and effectiveness. In preparing beds for Tulips, care should be taken to grade them so they will be high in the center with a gradual slope toward the edge. This is very necessary in order to prevent water from lodging on the surface of the beds, which is almost sure to destroy the bulbs if allowed to remain there during the Winter or early Spring months. Tulip bulbs should be planted four or five inches deep and about five or six inches apart—and when planting is completed a covering of leaves or litter to a depth of six or eight inches should be spread over the surface to protect the bulbs against early freezing and the mechanical action of freezing and thawing during the Winter. As Spring advances and the days become warmer, this covering can be gradually removed.

Grass Diseases and Parasites

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cases, however, when turf is growing strongly under good treatment and favorable weather, it will resist the attacks of disease, and comes up again healthy and smiling, so there is seldom any need to break one's heart or one's back in preventing it from becoming permanently destroyed or injured.

Newly sown grass more often suffers from attacks of disease than established turf, and the unfortunate seedsman often receives letters from purchasers of grass seeds containing some sarcastic remark about the seeds not coming up, when in fact the only fault is that the young grass plant has not formed sufficient root or strength to enable it to withstand an attack of autumn mildew caused by a spell of damp or foggy weather. Nearly all