

## THE SPRING TRADE OF THE FLORIST \*

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**O**NCE the Christmas holidays are over preparations for the next great event in the florist's year, that is Easter, must be attended to. The varying dates on which Easter falls must always be borne in mind so that you may govern your crop accordingly. For the Easter holiday a number of different varieties of plants, than those forced for the Christmas holidays, will be used. First and foremost are Easter lilies, either the *Longiflorum* or *Harrisii*.

For pot plants I consider the seven to nine-inch bulbs the best size. There is a difference of opinion how these should be grown: some contending that they should first be potted in a four or four and a half inch pot and then shifted up into six or seven inch pots, as the plants come along. Others again that they should be potted in the pot in which they are to bloom. The only difference that I can see is a slight economy of space in their early stages. From my several years of experience in growing and handling these I see but little difference in the result when handled by a careful grower.

There is one essential point to always bear in mind; from the time the lily starts growing it should never receive a check, for if it does any germs of disease that are lying dormant are sure to develop. Nor can you gauge its date of flowering with the same degree of success as if it had not received a check. There are a number of brands of *Lilium Longiflorum* on the market, but I do not think that there is any material difference between any of them.

### GOOD RULES REQUIRED.

The main object is to have good, sound, well ripened bulbs. Under the same conditions *Longiflorum* will come in if started from four to five weeks later than *Harrisii*. While the lily is the Easter flower *par ex-*

*cellance*, it is also the most expensive to grow and hardest for the store man to handle.

Other plants that will need immediate attention are hydrangeas, crimson rambler and hybrid perpetual roses; these should be brought in and started into growth in a moderate temperature, gradually increasing it, governed by the time at your disposal. Azaleas that are to be held for Easter should be kept in a cool house with an even temperature, free from drip or excessive moisture. Other varieties of plants, such as *metrosideros*, lilacs, rhododendrons, *dentzias*, etc., will not need to be brought in before the last week in February or the first in March.

Amongst the soft wooded plants the improved varieties of *pelargoniums* are going to take a prominent place as an Easter plant. These, if propagated during September and October and kept growing, will make fine bushy plants in five or six-inch pots, with six to ten large trusses of flower, by April. They are easily handled, very floriferous, and find a ready sale, giving customers as good satisfaction as an azalea or a crimson rambler, and will yield a better profit to the grower. *Spiraea*, or *Asi-bula*, are also a prominent Easter plant and are sold in large quantities. Dutch bulbs should not be lost sight of. Pans of *lancinths*, tulips and *narcissus*, in their various varieties, are sold in large quantities and are easily brought in at the right time, three weeks in a moderate temperature is all that is required to bring them to perfection.

Lilies of the valley and forget-me-not in pots and pans are also desirable. It will be necessary to prepare a few foliage plants, such as Boston and Pierson ferns, palms and rubbers, but let your main effort be to

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