



Bulb Culture for the Amateur.

The following article has been condensed from a most excellent bulletin on "Bulb Culture for the Amateur," recently issued by the Horticultural Society of Ottawa:

"The soil (for bulb-culture in pots) should first of all be porous, so that air is freely admitted to the roots. It should also retain water fairly well, and for this reason it is well to have some humus, which is supplied by rotted leaves, rotted manure or sod. Good loamy garden soil is quite satisfactory without the addition of any fertilizer, but if it is a soil that becomes compact, it is advisable to add a little coarse sand to make it porous. The bulbs should be planted as soon as received, as they lose vitality when out of the ground. Hyacinths succeed best in five-inch pots. Three tulips in a five- or six-inch pot are satisfactory. Most of the narcissuses also succeed well with three bulbs in a six-inch pot. Seven or eight freesia bulbs may be planted in a six-inch pot with good success, and other small bulbs (snowdrops, crocuses, scillas, etc.) in the same way.

"To plant the bulbs, put pieces of broken pot or charcoal in the bottom of the pot for drainage, fill the pot with soil and shake it down, but avoid pressing down the soil in the pot before planting the bulb, as if the soil in the lower part is firm the bulb will be forced out of place when it begins to root. Now place the bulb on the surface of the soil, making certain to have the right side up, and press down until the upper side of it is on a level with the surface of the soil; then firm the soil about each bulb and level the surface. When the bulbs are planted the soil should only come to within about half an inch of the top, so that when watering there will be room for a good supply.

"The proper rooting of the bulbs is, perhaps, the most important feature in the successful culture of them. When they are potted, water well and set them away in a cool, dark place. One watering is sufficient, unless the cellar be dry, when they should be watered once a week or oftener. The soil should be kept moist, not wet, and the temperature of the place in which the bulbs are kept, if possible, should be between 35 and 40 degrees F. If kept in a high temperature growth begins before there is a good root development, and this is something that should be avoided.

"The pots should be nearly full of roots before the bulbs are brought upstairs, and it will take from six to eight weeks to bring this about. To find out whether bulbs are sufficiently rooted, turn the pot upside down and strike the edge against something, at the same time holding the hand over the bulbs to receive them with the soil attached to them, for if the soil is of the right texture and fairly moist, it and the bulbs will turn out without any difficulty. If roots show well all round the outside of the soil, the bulbs are sufficiently rooted. The number of pots that it is desirable to force first may now be brought up. At first put them in a cool room, then, when they begin to grow well, bring them into the living room. Sunshine is very essential to successful bulb culture. As soon as the bulbs begin to grow well they should be kept well watered; in fact, the soil should be kept soaked most of the time, while at first, when they are making little growth, it is not necessary nor advisable to give them so much water.

"Flowers will last about twice as long in a cool room as in a warm one. The order of forcing the bulbs recommended for the house is: Freesia, Chinese sacred lily, paper white narcissus, Roman hyacinth, narcissus, Dutch hyacinth, tulip.

"Hyacinths may also be forced in water in hyacinth-glasses. The bulbs should be kept in a cool dark place until they have thrown out roots. It is not necessary to change the water, but

it is important to keep the glass well filled with it. A piece of charcoal is useful in keeping the water pure."

Among many other varieties the following are recommended in the bulletin:

"Hyacinths—Single pink, Charles Dickens; deep crimson, General Pelissier; single blue, Blondin; single white, La Grandesse.

"Narcissus—Chinese Sacred Lily, white with yellow cup; Paper White, pure white; Trumpet Major, yellow perianth and trumpet; Bicolor Grandis, white perianth and yellow trumpet.

"Tulips—Yellow, Chrysolora; bright red, Vermilion Brilliant; white and pink, Cottage Maid; orange, sweet-scented, Thomas Moore; white feathered with crimson, Standard Silver.

"The Freesia, which has a delightful perfume, unlike the other bulbs, does not require to be well rooted before forcing. Leave in the cellar for a few days only, then bring into a warm room. The soil should not be very wet until they are growing thriftily, for fear of rotting the bulbs."

Freesias, it may be remarked, take their time about blooming, and should no flowers appear for a long time, one should not be discouraged. Even if started in August, "no flowers need be expected before the last week of December."

It is to be hoped that the above suggestions, coming from so reliable a source, will be found invaluable to the many farmers' wives and daughters who will during this winter make a trial of growing a few of these beautiful flowers in the house. Procure your bulbs immediately, and plant them at once. No time is to be lost now, if you would have your flowers in bloom to brighten up the house during the coldest, dreariest part of the winter.

FLORA FERNLEAF.

"Farmer's Advocate" office, London, Ont.

Domestic Economy.

CARROTS AS COMPLEXION-BEAUTIFIERS.

Two ladies were slowly strolling up the street one day in late summer, when suddenly one of them stopped in front of a grocery store to survey with evident interest a basketful of handsome orange carrots.

"Just a minute, please," she said, apologetically, and stepping into the store, she ordered a bushel of the carrots to be sent at once to her residence.

"Are you fond of them?" she inquired, laughingly; and without waiting for any response, she continued, "I have brought my family up to love them. They are served regularly at my table two or three times a week. You know, they really are better than medicine or any number of the much-vaunted complexion-beautifiers."

"Really," was the surprised rejoinder. "I have never heard them extolled for such virtue."

"Nevertheless, they are deserving of it. Surely you have read of the woman who took her delicate, anemic daughter to a physician for treatment, and of her amusing mistake about carrots! No? Here is the story, then. The doctor prescribed claret three times a day, but the mother, being rather deaf, understood him to say carrots, and the daughter, poor girl, was compelled through the maternal anxiety to eat carrots three times a day for several weeks! The change was marvelous! From a languid, tired, spiritless creature she bloomed into a rosy, animated, energetic maiden, and her complexion, which before had not been good, soon rivaled the roses and lilies in its brilliant, delicate coloring. Naturally the mother was much delighted, and took her again to the doctor to assure him how excellently his advice had worked. He was a wise man, and when he learned how his prescription had been interpreted, he forbore to reveal the blunder. No doubt, indeed, he made a mental note of it, and cured many another such case in the same way."

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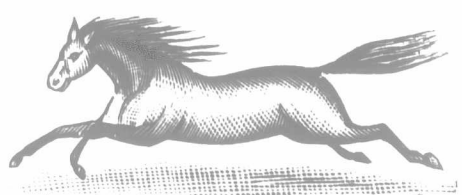
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