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THE GLADIOLUS.

The beautiful colored plate which adorns this number will enable our readers to form a very correct impression of the perfection in form and coloring which has been attained in the cultivation of a flower which, perhaps, many of them will well remember under the name of Sword Lily. If our readers have not recently noticed the progress that has been made in the production of new forms and brilliant colors, they will thank the Directors of the Association for calling their attention to it again by giving them this colored illustration, and the opportunity of seeing it flower in their own gardens, by offering them as one of the premiums which they can choose, three bulbs of this interesting flower.

Our climate is well suited to the growth and culture of the Gladiolus, much better than that of England or France, and it is as easily grown and cared for as the potato. It is only necessary to avoid soils that are wet, and therefore cold, which means ground that is badly drained, and plant in such ground as one would select in the expectation of raising a good potato crop. In enriching the bed where it is proposed to plant them, do not use fresh or partially fermented manure, as this tends to produce disease in the bulbs. The best is that which has been thoroughly decomposed and composted with old sods and ground bone. After the weather has become settled in spring and the ground in good working condition, the bed should be dug over and the manure thoroughly mingled with the soil. Then as soon as all danger of severe frosts is passed the bulbs may be planted out about ten inches apart each way, and four to five inches deep.

A nice bed of Gladiolus is a most showy and attractive feature of the after midsummer flower garden, and is particularly desirable on account of the blooms appearing at a time when flowers are less abundant. The colors are so bright and showy, and withal so varied, the form of the flowers so elegant, and these borne so conspicuously upon their tall spikes that they never fail to produce a most beautiful effect. The cut blooms are also particularly useful for large bouquets and table decoration, for if the spikes are put into water, though only the lower flowers are open, the buds above will all expand in succession as perfectly as if they had never been severed from the plant.