

to them, as they are not inclined to rot so much as if planted in heavy soil. The bulbs sometimes are started or sprouted in a hot-bed, and then planted in the open ground to insure earlier bloom; but my experience leads me to think they are just as well if planted directly in the open ground.

I have tried several experiments in order to secure larger bloom, and the best article for that purpose, and the one that causes the least trouble, is "Bowker's Ammoniated Food for Flowers," a preparation which is diluted in water—one teaspoonful of the powder to a gallon of water. As a rule many people select the largest bulbs, but generally speaking they turn out to be the ordinary Red Gladioli, while some of the smaller bulbs produce varied colours and are by far the handsomer. Do not be misled into thinking this is the case in every variety, for several of them have extremely large bulbs and very handsome spikes of bloom. Gladioli are best suited for centres of flower beds, or for backgrounds, as they grow to a height of from two to two and a-half feet, towering above the other plants. When flowering, nothing is more satisfactory than the Gladiolus; the beautiful exact markings of the flower, streaks, and blotches, place it amongst the leading bulbs for any flower garden. A word here for the amateur who wishes to lengthen the duration of its bloom: When the Gladiolus approaches blooming, as soon as the bottom flower opens out, cut the stem off and place it in water, where it will open the balance of the buds and continue much longer in flower than it would were it allowed to remain on the plant. I have tested this, and can vouch for its being satisfactory, as I handle probably the largest quantity in Canada, and therefore require some means of extending the duration of its bloom.



THE GLADIOLUS.