

THE IRIS.

OF stately growth, rich perfume and an endless variety of color, this kingly flower, half orchid, half lily, has won for itself favoritism wherever grown. In England it is extensively cultivated, and is perhaps one of the most popular of hardy plants, while in our own country every lover of flowers has at least some varieties of this charming plant among his collection.

As a garden plant, it is especially desirable, and years ago we began with the low old-fashioned Iris, or Flowering Flag, with which we bordered our beds, and have it still, its low fragrant blossoms always at hand in the early spring. An older species of Iris, and much more rare at this day, is a peculiar variety called by the older people "Quaker Lady," of silvery hue, richly dappled and veined with bright yellow and deep maroon, its foliage delicate, of a bulbous nature, and blooming exceedingly early in March and April. But it is to the large-flowering and free-blooming varieties we would call attention. Most of them are quite hardy and very easily grown, and can be planted in spring or fall. Planted singly they soon form clumps of their own, with flowers, whose quaint form, richness of color and delicate perfume, defy description.

A pure white variety is equal to the rarest lily, and much more easy of cultivation. Each clump of the Iris will send up many flower stems, and each stem bear several large beautiful flowers, whose delicate texture will be a marvel to the beholder. Dappled, striped, bordered and mottled, with crimped edges and plain; with the richest violets, gray and rose; with some of the newer varieties more veined still, until almost every color shown in flower is to be found among this family.

The German Irises are very fine. Among them Bacchus, a tall-growing variety, white, with the margin veined with purple, and Cherau, of smaller growth, color bronze yellow, with maroon on white ground. Iris Susiana is another variety of great beauty, flowers very large, mottled chocolate and black, veined with the silvery gray.

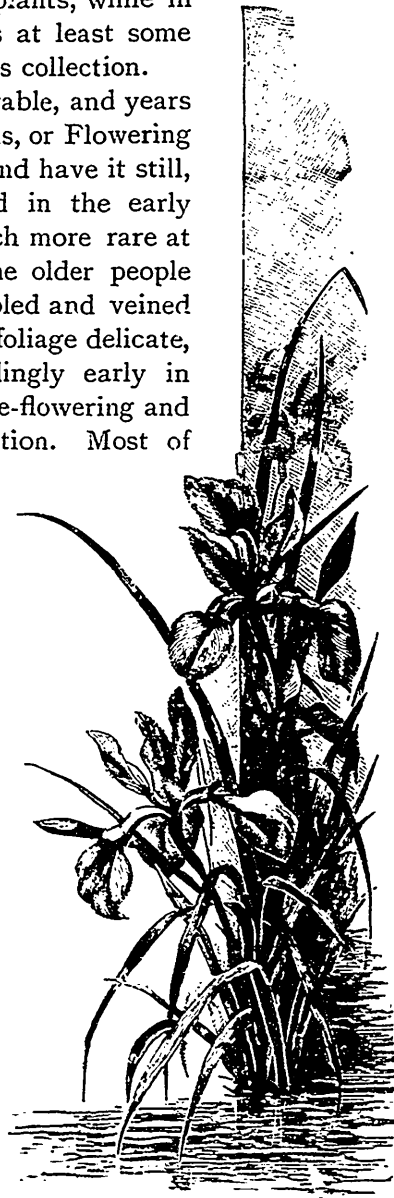


FIG 66.—THE IRIS.