

the soluble plant food. As soon as growth begins rake off and remove the surplus straw and rake or very lightly fork over the surface, being careful not to disturb the roots. Never use a spade in the perennial border.

A very frequent objection to the free planting of herbaceous perennials in the garden border is that it costs too much to buy the plants. There may be some truth in this if one wants to get all the novelties as they are sent out at high prices; but there are many of them that cost little more than geraniums or other bedding plants that have to be renewed each season, and with this great advantage in favor of perennials, that they increase in vigor and beauty every year, and after the third season most of them can be divided and multiplied as much as desired; while if one is willing to wait a year many of them can be grown from seed at a very small expense.

All of the following are well tested sorts, quite hardy even in this cold section of Ontario, and vary in flowering season from the first week in May till the snow falls:

ICELAND POPPY, *Papaver Nudicaule*.—This dainty little poppy, [one of our most valued perennials, opened its first flowers on May 4th last season, and was more or less in bloom till the last of October. The flowers, in white, yellow and orange-red, of which yellow is the commonest, are somewhat cup-shaped, one and one-half to two and one-half inches across, on long, wiry stems about twelve inches above the leaves, are well adapted for cutting—if cut in the morning early after opening, they last for several days. It is easily grown from seed, and will bloom the first year if sown in April or early in May. It, like all poppies, does not take kindly to transplanting and should be sown where it is to remain. They are easily wintered, even as far north as Ottawa, if covered in the fall with straw or cedar brush.

ORIENTAL POPPY, *Papaver Orientale*.—A great contrast to the dainty little Iceland is the gorgeous Oriental Poppy, one of our most striking and showy garden flowers. The great flowers, six to eight inches across, dark scarlet in color, are held well up above the leaves on long, leafy stalks. Unfortunately the flowering season is short—only two or three weeks in June—and their glory is gone, though some years they show an old bloom during the summer. They also can easily be grown from seed and are quite hardy.

TALL LEOPARD'S BANE, *Doronicum*.—A very desirable perennial, that is not as well known as it should be is the Tall Leopard's Bane, *Doronicum plantagineum excelsum*, a very early-blooming yellow composite, coming into flower early in May, and lasting two to three months. The large flowers, about four inches across, are borne on sparsely leafy branching, stems three to four feet high, rising from a large cluster of heart-shaped leaves on long petioles, decidedly the best yellow composite. Another Leopard's Bane is *D. Caucasicum*, not so large in plant or flower, but otherwise much like it. Both are usually propagated by division in spring or fall.

DOUBLE SUNFLOWER, *Helianthus Multiflorus fl.pl.*—A deservedly popular autumn flowering yellow perennial is the Double Sunflower, rather rough in leaf and stalk to make a good cutting flower, but very effective in the garden. The flowers are from three to four inches across, a good rich yellow, perfectly double, and last a long time after opening. In bloom from August till frost comes. It has not proved perfectly hardy here, and requires the protection of a good mulch of manure during the winter.

CHINESE BELL FLOWER, *Platycodon Grandiflorum*.—This is the best blue perennial we have, and grows from two to three feet high, and is covered from middle of July till October with deep blue bell-shaped flowers, from two to three inches in diameter, perfectly hardy and easily grown from seed. If planted in May will flower abundantly the following year. There is a white form that is not so desirable, as a slight tinge of blue gives it a faded look.

The genus *Spiraea* furnishes some of our very best perennials. Among the shrubby species Van Houtti, Bumalda and many others are well worth growing where space will permit. The best of the herbaceous species are the following:—

DOUBLE-WHITE MEADOWSWEET, *Spiraea Ulmaria fl.pl.*—From a dense cluster of root leaves rise leafy stalks about three feet high, covered on the top with a solid mass of creamy-white fluffy flowers, from about July 1st to August 15th. The foliage is quite

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