

early and free bloomers and as hardy as rocks. You must watch their aptitude to grow out all round and into everything; in fact they tend to make rings by exhausting themselves in the middle and flourishing at their outside edges. This is avoided by cutting out the free edges and returning them to the centre if necessary, and by keeping the centre enriched with well-rotted horse manure.

Sweet Williams are beautiful spring perennials, but require a front place when associated with say Oriental poppies, scarlet lychnis and larkspurs. In fact, you can make a beautiful border by growing larkspurs further back, the dark blues behind and the light blues a little forward; then tiger-lilies and scarlet lychnis occupy a middle place; in front of these, place Oriental poppies and columbines; while in the front row Sweet Williams and Iceland poppies will intermingle with dianthus, pinks and pansies.

SHOULD PLANTS BE CROWDED?

One word about overcrowding your plants. An old-timer walked round my garden last summer when I happened to be out, and while appreciative of Nature's generous show of bloom there, he offered the legitimate criticism that I had overcrowded many of the plants. He did not know, however, that the overcrowding was partly deliberate. Unless a prairie garden is completely protected on the north and west sides—as, by the way, nearly every farm garden should and can be—that arch-fiend, a strong wind, will break down all unsupported plants. My garden is much afflicted by west winds, which swirl round the house and do more damage than any frost. I find it better, therefore, to be a little on the crowded side as a rule rather than to be horticulturally correct. Also last year I was experimenting with new plants, with whose habits I was unfamiliar, and so the crowding was partly involuntary. It is correct, however, to thin out your perennials so as to give them plenty of room unless they are very dwarf, or unless their habit is to grow in masses. Thus arabis and Iceland poppy grow in close masses, but larkspurs and peonies need lots of room.

PLANT ACCORDING TO NATURE

Another point to make is this: Plant your perennials according to the nature of their natural habitat. The foxglove, for instance, grows in the wild state amongst thick shrubs and bushes, or tall plants. Plant the cultivated foxglove amongst your ornamental shrubs. You will then be surprised how well it will do and how fine it will look. The tall flower spike blooms from below upwards and looks scraggy if grown in an open spot, as the lower flowers fade and die away. But if grown singly or in clumps amongst bushes and other perennials

it will be particularly fine and effective.

One final word must be said about those tall background perennials, the larkspur, the monkshood and the golden glow. Of the various blues sported by the larkspur, I commend the light blue for earliness and delicacy, but the dark, deep blue with a white eye is the handsomest of the dark blues. Have them well back in your border. The monkshood is not so tall, but it consorts well with tiger-lilies, the French-grey of the one contrasting pleasingly with the

orange-red of the other. As a late free-bloomer the golden glow is invaluable, and being very hardy is a good perennial, but needs to be kept in bounds both as to roots and stems. Tie the growing stems to a stake six feet high in the early summer or the winds will break it down. If it is placed amid ornamental shrubs, these latter will hide the rather scraggy withered lower half of the stems in the late summer. Moreover, a background of green trees or bushes will give an extra charm to the yellow of its golden glow.

The Gladiolus and Its Development

TO appreciate the advancement that has been made in the development and cultivation of the gladiolus within recent years, one should visit the trial ground of Mr. H. H. Groff, Simcoe, Ontario. Varieties, unknown

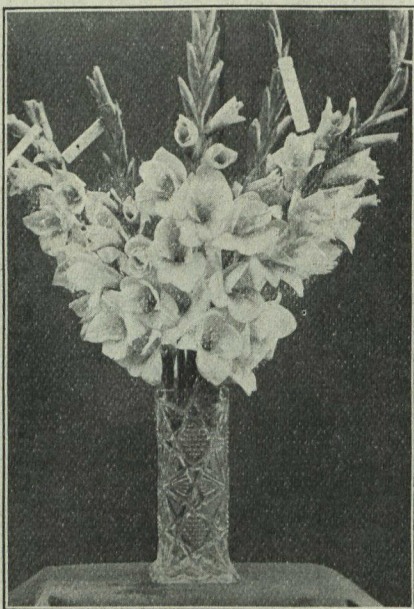
by a representative of the THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST. Their appearance would indicate that they will win popularity. Their size, rich color and sturdy growth will make them favorites. Another variety, La Luna, as its name implies, reminds one of the moon when rising, as the creamy petals gradually deepen into a rich yellow, and a red blotch in the centre completes the illusion. Blue Jay also gets its name from its appearance, as at first glance it resembles the bird of that name. Evolution is a beautiful shade of pink; its stems have a graceful drooping habit which, when placed in a vase, produce a pleasing effect.

There are hundreds of kinds of gladiolus at Groff's that are unnamed. New kinds are not given names unless they possess exceptional merit. Several years of repeated trials often pass before a new variety is pronounced worthy of a name and a place among the higher grades.

THE WORK IS INSPIRING

The work of improving the gladiolus was undertaken by Mr. Groff merely as a hobby. So enthusiastic has he become since the start, that now, during the season, he works from daylight until dark. Much work is necessary during the blooming season. Every morning at daybreak, clothed in rubber boots and apron, Mr. Groff can be found at work, determining the results of hybridizations of years before. The fascination of witnessing the birth of a new variety is so interesting that it is not surprising to find Mr. Groff so enthusiastic and earnest in his work.

In the work of originating a new variety, system prevails as thoroughly as it does in the after operations of cultivation and selection. When Mr. Groff enters the field for this work, he straps around his waist a leather belt, to which are fastened pouches containing labels of different kinds, books for registering new numbers as they are conferred on new kinds that are worthy, and for recording descriptions, knives, pencils, tweezers, and so on.



One of Mr. Groff's New Gladioli, No. 218

to the outside world, are there in innumerable quantities and striking magnificence. From the natural wild type to the world-famed Groff creations is a long step, but it has been bridged and crowned with success by years of hard work and many disappointments. Those who desire size can see corms that measure six inches in diameter, and bloom spikes that are six feet in height, with flowers that measure five and a half inches in diameter. Colors are there in endless variety. Almost any shade, tint, or marking that one could imagine is to be found. It would seem that existing gladiolus color charts are of little use, as they do not embody all the colors in Mr. Groff's collection.

SOME NEW VARIETIES

Two new varieties in scarlet, named Dominion and Empire, were observed