

THE NARCISSUS.

IN this genus we have a long list of established favorites, remarkable alike for the elegance, fragrance, and earliness of their flowers. In one respect the species are all alike; they delight in rich soil made porous with plenty of sand and well-rotted manure. All of them are also quite hardy, and from the early period at which their flowers are produced, they are of the utmost consequence to the flower gardener.

Several of the species are bound to bear forcing well, and for this purpose have become a staple article in the Dutch florists' trade, and several varieties have been originated by them, suited by the selection of their parentage, to bear this trying course of treatment. The following are commonly grown for forcing: Bazelman Major, Soleil d'Or, Grande Primo, and Grande Monarque. These, with the double Roman and others, should be potted in September in a mixture of equal parts of fresh loam, rotted manure, and leaf mould, with half of either quantity of sand. In potting, the neck of the bulb should be kept above the surface of the soil, that the roots may have that much more space in the pot; and when the rooting is completed they should be placed together, either in a cold frame or in some convenient place, so that they may be covered a foot thick with fresh leaves. These exclude light and prevent frost from getting to the roots, both an essential to a speedy excitement of root growth.

In about five or six weeks it will be found that many of them have filled the pots with roots, and these may be taken to a temperature of 55 degrees to bring on their flowers; and if repotted when the first two leaves have grown a few inches, the flowers will be considerably larger; but before any plant is taken from the bed of leaves, be sure that it

has made a good stock of healthy roots, or it will be spoiled in the forcing process. Narcissi do not require a powerful heat to bring out their flowers (55 degrees will do it better than any other), and the supply of water should be sufficient but by no means excessive.

The Paper narcissus (*N. papyraceus*) is now, perhaps, more extensively forced than either of the above mentioned. It is grown in immense quantities by the florists of New York and other large cities, and next to the Roman hyacinth is the bulb most extensively grown for this purpose. When grown on a large scale it is planted in boxes of soil about five inches deep, at a distance of three to four inches apart, and treated as recommended above. This, like nearly all other bulbs, is of no value after being forced, and the roots may be thrown away.

When grown in the open borders the bulbs should be planted in October, in newly dug and well manured ground, at a depth of three inches, reckoning from the top of the bulb to the surface of the soil. This will not be too much for any, except the jonquils, which, from having smaller bulbs, may be placed an inch nearer the top. At this depth, and with plenty of manure about them water will not be required, but they will grow strong and flower finely. When planted in beds, and it becomes necessary to remove them to make room for other plants, it should be done as soon as their beauty is past. As the bulbs are by no means mature at this time, they should be "laid in" in some slightly shaded place until the foliage is quite withered, when they may be taken up, dried, and stored away until wanted for the next planting season.

Most of the species are from the south of Europe, and are propagated by offsets. They were among the earliest cultivated garden flowers. *Garden and Farm Topics.*