

enthusiastic love of flowers entitle one to speak, I may claim to be heard.

Most of the suggestions which have been published on the subject come from those engaged as florists and seedsmen in the selling of bulbs, and it therefore seems to me possible that the words of one who is a grower and amateur may be of some value, as coming from one, who has gained his knowledge by actual experience. In a country like our own, where winter reigns for so large a portion of the year, it seems very desirable that attention should be called especially to the cultivation of such plants as can by their flowering during the winter and early spring supply our houses with bright blooms and sweet perfumes, and these at a low cost and light labour.

It is easy to procure geraniums in abundance for window culture, but how sparse and unsatisfactory the blooms are in proportion to the trouble they require! Hyacinths, Polyanthus Narcissus, and other spring bulbs, furnish us with a never failing supply of fragrant blooms from Christmas to the end of March. These are the staple of our cultivation, and to these the cultivator turns first; but there are many others equally beautiful yet not so well known.

Our first business is to select our bulbs; in many cases we have to leave this to the Florist from whom we purchase; but as our friends would often prefer to make their own selections, I would offer a few suggestions. In selecting Hyacinths, we should look first to two things. First the crown of the bulb: this in a good flowering bulb, should be full and round like a dome, where there is any depression on pressing with the finger, it is a sign that the bulb has been exhausted by flowering, and, it should be rejected.

2nd. The lower part, whence the root springs, should be carefully examined to see that there is no sign of mildew, and that the roots are not advanced, so as to be injured in potting.

Next, regard must be had to our requirements, whether for pots or glasses. If for the former, large bulbs may be selected, if for the latter, we must carefully examine that the root circle be not larger than the opening in the glasses to receive them. I have often seen roots struggling in vain to reach the water, and filling the cup of the Hyacinth glass.

My own preference is to grow in pots, as the blooms are stronger and finer than in glasses. The bulbs, too, are not exhausted, but do well in the open border next season.

My potting soil I make of well rotted cow manure and leaf mould about one half, and sand one half, with about 2½ in. charcoal dust at the bottom of the pot. This will serve for drainage, and also supply nutriment. I fill the pot a little more than half, shaking down but not pressing the soil. I then put in my bulb easily but with no pressure, then I put in a handful of soil and work it down and continue until the soil is level with the top of the bulb. I then press the soil all round the bulb, being careful not to touch it again; the pot is filled to the crown of the bulb, then shaken very thoroughly so as to settle the bulb in the soil. I then water carefully, and place an inverted flower pot filled with moss over my bulb, and then put it away in a dark and cool place for at least three weeks, when I find some are beginning to make shoots. One must be careful to remove all offsets as these take a great deal of strength from the plant.

Those in glasses.—I place in glasses filled with pure rain water and sink a piece of charcoal at the bottom of the glass. I have found a little guano added to the water of great use to the bulbs, but as it discolours the water, it is undesirable on that account, as the beauty of the roots in the water is quite an attraction. I have found a few crystals of ammonia also of great utility. Care must be taken that the water only just touches the root. The glasses must then be put away in a cool and dark place till the glasses are filled with roots.

When the leaves begin to grow, the plants may be removed into the light, and from time to time sprinkled lightly with a hard broom.

The Polyanthus Narcissus must be grown in pots the same as Hyacinths. The covering with an inverted pot with moss is very advantageous, as it prevents the strong roots from lifting the bulbs out of the ground, in which case it is very difficult to grow successfully. I have sometimes in such cases pulverised carefully some soil, and then filling it around the bulb, washed it under the bulb. I have also tried repotting, but this is so difficult and hazardous that I hardly recommend it.

For other bulbs I would recommend Tulips; Crocus, Iris Susiana, Narcissus, Van Sion, Jonquils; Scilla Peruviana, and Siberia and Cyclamen. These are all of the easiest culture. A few Lilies of the Japan order will complete a most lovely collection for house culture.

But, some will say, I have gas in my house, therefore I cannot grow anything. Now as a remedy against gas, I would advise to take every morning a tea-spoonful of Spirits of Camphor to half a gallon of water, and with a broom-whisk sprinkle the leaves of your plants. Do not be afraid of cold for your plants, if only you keep them from freezing. I found last winter that Hyacinths kept in our drawing room, where there was neither stove nor fire, and which only had heat from the hall stove, lasted longer and bloomed better than those in a warmer temperature; and observation has convinced me that the main reason why some persons do not succeed well with their Hyacinths &c is, because they attempt to force them with heat.

I wish very much that lovers of flowers would do more in the way of spring gardening. This true winter holds its own until it is time to prepare our beds for summer, but by filling beds which we intend for annuals, as Zinnias, Phlox Drummondii, Verbenas, and Petunias, with Tulips, Hyacinths, Narcissus, and Polyanthus Narcissus, we can easily insert our seedlings as soon as requisite between the other roots.

In closing this I would strongly recommend to your readers a novelty which flowered with me this summer, the Hyacinthus Candicans.

It is a lovely thing, grows about 3 feet high and is perfectly hardy.

If these few remarks are of any use to those who, like myself, are dear lovers of flowers, I shall be glad.

EDMOND HENRY SPRING RICE.

Côte St. Antoine.

In 1843, the Royal Agricultural Society of England held their annual meeting at Derby. There, my old friend and farm-tutor, William Rigden, exhibited a Southdown ram, which was so far from meriting a prize that Jonas Webb and his brother Tom advised the owner to tie it round his neck and to throw himself and the ram into the nearest mill-pond. This year, however, the tables are turned, as I see that, at the R. A. S. meeting, at Derby again, Rigden takes first and second prizes for Shearling Southdown rams; and second, reserved number, and highly commended, for old rams! The exhibition of dairy produce seems to have been very poor.

A. R. J. F.

THE WORKING DAIRY.

At the Royal Agricultural Society Show, Derby

The working dairy at Derby is arranged in two compartments. In the first compartment is shown, at one end, the American and Danish systems of setting milk. The Cooley creamer, which was brought out in America, and first introduced in this country at Kilburn, is now pretty well known.