

Plants and Flowers.

WINTER BLOOMING BULBS.



HERE is a class of plants so satisfactory for the window garden as bulbs. They are almost sure to bloom, as the buds are already formed in the bulbs the previous season, needing only soil, water and sunlight to develop the blossoms.

Hyacinths are the only ones commonly raised by amateurs, but there are several beautiful sorts that are easily raised and prove very satisfactory. Bulbs may be planted for winter blooming at any time from Sept. to Christmas.

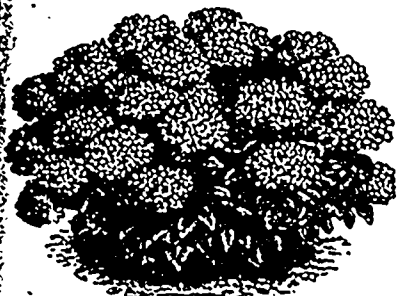
Ordinary soil with the addition of a little sand is best, the bulbs being set a little below the surface. After a thorough watering the pots should be set in a cool, dark place, being closely covered to exclude all light, as tops should not grow until after roots are well formed. Six or seven weeks will be required, and one can tell when they are sufficiently well rooted by turning the earth out of the pot. In a very dry cellar, the pots will need water two or three times during their stay, but in one of ordinary dampness, once will suffice.

When the roots reach the bottom of the pot, they can be brought out of the light a few at a time to keep up a succession of flowers; full sunlight should not be given for several days, but after that plenty of sunshine and water will cause the buds to form in a short time. These general directions apply to all bulbs, and all of them do better if kept moderately cool; they can stand any amount of sunlight, but require little artificial heat except at night.

Hyacinths sometimes cause trouble by reason of the flower stem trying to develop so low down among the foliage that it does not show. To remedy this, set the pot back away from the window, so that the flower stem will grow upward to reach the light. I often set them on the floor below the window and two or three days will usually bring it up in good shape. Bulbs once forced should never be forced again, as they are too much weakened by it, but they can be set out in the ground, and after one season's rest will bloom nicely for years.—[Marian Meade, Ill.]

VERBENAS FROM SEED.

Sow in a shallow box and keep in plenty of heat and moisture. The seed being quite small must be barely covered with fine soil. Reset in larger boxes



DWARF VERBENA, HYBRIDA COMPACTA.

In 2 1/2 in pots or 3 in apart in boxes. In transplanting to the garden give plenty of room for the plants to spread. In newly plowed sod ground, a young thriving verberna plant of the strong growing kind will easily cover a space 3 ft in diameter and furnish hundreds of flowers, the branches on the ground each taking root.

The verberna delights in an open sunny spot and is not suitable for growing in the shade of either trees or buildings. It can get along in poor soil, but does remarkably well in rich. It grows admirably in prairie soil. Popular sorts are the newer edging or border varieties, such as illustrated above. They are neat, profuse flowering sorts of all colors, fine blues, stripes, white eyes, etc.

POPLARS FOR SHADE.

For a quick-growing shade tree the South Carolina poplar takes the lead in this vicinity. There are whole streets lined on both sides and a large cem-

tery bordered on two sides with this tree, for this purpose. It is very pleasing to the eye of an observer, and goes far ahead of any kind of an evergreen. They are more desirable than the maple for the lawn, or anywhere along the public highway where a quick-growing shade tree will be required. They are the most easily propagated of any tree or bush; every twig cut from the tree will take root if stuck in the ground at any time of the year.

Three years ago a gentleman gave me some slips he had trimmed from some of his poplar trees and told me to stick them in the ground and they would make shade trees. I stuck them in ground near the well, and it was surprising the growth they made that summer. I transplanted them the next spring, cut the top off so they would grow bushy, and now they are quite large shade trees. They never sprout from the roots like the Lombardy poplar, nor tower so high, but can be headed back and made to grow more like the maple. I never knew them to be infested with any kind of insects until last year May bugs fed on the leaves at night and stripped some of the young trees, but they soon grew out again. The stock to grow a long stretch of shade trees will cost the propagator next to nothing, as it can be gathered where they trim in the spring, or can be sent by some friend, and stuck in like a willow where they are to remain.—[Mrs John Gaillard, Erie Co, Pa.]

OUR GARDENERS' CHAT.

Ten years ago there was no spraying of fruit trees and we were losing more than one-half the fruit. There are many more apples grown to-day than 10 yrs ago, and there is now from 40 to 50 per cent of the fruit saved in excellent condition that was lost 10 yrs ago. Those who spray their fruit trees intelligently year after year save from 70 to 80 per cent of the crop. There is enormous advantage from careful treatment of all crops.—[Dr James Fletcher, Ont Exp Farm.]

In seeking a good location for a market garden the first necessity is to be near some good market. The largest cities do not always offer the greatest inducement. There are hundreds of desirable towns all over the country that furnish good markets for men willing to work up a trade.—[Mary E. Cutler, Worcester Co, Mass.]

In a place I used to spend my summers, near the sea, I knew a man with a young family. He was a gardener and bought some land about four miles out of town. There were a great many loose stones and boulders on the shore. He got some help, made a good wall round his land and built a small cottage with stones and lime, laid out as much land as he could in flowers and small fruits. A great many visitors came to the town in summer. He made arrangements with some of the livery men to advertise his place on their buses, and get people out there, for it was a nice drive. At the gate each person paid 5c and children 2c, but they could have the value of their tickets in flowers, fruit, plants, cup of tea, cakes, etc. The idea was that the people were not to get something for nothing. During winters he improved the place, but up vineries, ferneries, a small museum, had swings and games, and in a few years was a prosperous man with a lovely place.—[E. H. Shaw, Fla.]

CHAT WITH THE EDITOR.

W. E. A.: The Whitman agricultural Co of St Louis, Mo. can quote you prices on small threshing machinery.—Mrs L. S.: All kinds of dairy supplies are sold by P. M. Sharples of Chicago, Ill.—P. C. M.: The U S dept of agr is at Washington, D C.—Mrs H. St J.: J. M. Wiers of 357 West Van Buren street, Chicago, Ill. is a dealer in shell goods.—Scottville (Mich) Reader: In F & H. Aug 1. I printed the names of several Chicago jewelers; they can probably advise you as to the value of garnets.—C. S. S.: The insect infesting your wheat is the Hessian fly. Burn the stubble and then fall plow. Send to the Minn exp sta at St Anthony Park for bulletin on the fly.—La Subscriber: For particulars concerning the Ia Mutual Ins Co, referred to in F & H. Oct 1, write to Capt J. H. Brown of Wakefield, Neb.

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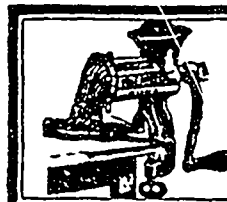
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