

Preparations for Winter and Spring Flowers

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Quite naturally September is looked upon as the end of the gardening season. But to those who would have those early blooms next spring, it is just the beginning.

The peony, which has very truthfully been described as the "Queen of spring flowers," should be planted this month. It is of easy culture, and enjoys that immunity from insect pests and disease that few other plants possess. An open border is the most suitable place to plant peonies, though they will thrive almost equally well in partial shade.

Spade the ground to the depth of two feet and incorporate a good dressing of thoroughly decayed barnyard manure. If the ground can be prepared some time previous to planting it would be a decided advantage, as there would be less likelihood of the manure coming in contact with the roots, which undoubtedly is the cause of many failures.

SETTING THE PLANTS

Set the roots just deep enough to allow four inches of soil over the crowns, and place them four feet apart in the rows. Quite frequently it is found that too deep planting is a cause of failures that were attributed to uncongenial soil and weather conditions. The roots exhaust their food supply before the young growths reach the surface of the soil.

As the peony season lasts a month at the most it is well to give some attention to the selection of varieties, so as to have a fair range of colors. Don't be misled by the extravagant claims made for some of the novelties, which are high in price, and very often unsatisfactory. Many of the old varieties are still unsurpassed by any of the recent introductions, and for the amateur are likely to prove the most satisfactory. The following is a list of varieties that have proved all that is claimed for them:

White—Festiva Maxima, Couronne d'Or, Duchess de Nemours, Marie Lemoine, Octavie Demay and Marie Jacquin.

Pink and white—Umbellata Rosea, Golden Harvest, Madame Coste, Madame de Vetry, Princess Beatrice and Beaute Francaise.

Red—Augustin de Howe, Louis van Houte, Henry Demay, Dr. Caillot, Felix Crouste and De Cardolle.

Red, various shades—Meissonier, Monsieur Marchel de McMahan, Madame Burquet, Rubia Superba and Emperor Nicholas.

Deep pink—Madame Ducal, Livingstone, General Bertrand, Modeste Guerin, Alexander Dumas, and Modele de Perfection.

PURCHASE BULBS NOW

Now is the time to purchase your stock of bulbs which are to furnish you with flowers during the winter indoors,

and out in the beds and borders in the early spring. Don't buy cheap bulbs; they are dear at any price. You will feel amply repaid for any extra outlay by the increased quality and substance of your flowers compared with the poor, weak specimens produced from cheap bulbs.

One of the greatest mistakes the amateur makes in purchasing bulbs is that he wants too many varieties. If you only want a few dozen bulbs don't get as many varieties as you would if you were getting a few hundred.

Of all spring flowering bulbs, tulips are perhaps the most popular. Their brilliancy of colour, beauty of form, and gorgeous shades render them the most effective of all bulbous plants for bedding and planting in groups or borders. For pot culture and forcing for winter bloom in the window garden there are many desirable varieties.

Tulips should not be planted too soon out of doors as they are liable to get caught by late spring frosts. Wait until the early fall frosts have cut down your bedding plants, and then set them out. Plant the bulbs five or six inches apart, each way, and six inches deep. In the meantime if you have received your bulbs, spread them out on a dry, cool, cellar floor, where there is a free circulation of air. They will then keep in first class condition until you can plant them.

DWARF VARIETIES FOR POT CULTURE

Duc Van Thol tulips are of dwarf habit, growing only about six inches high, and are the best for pot culture.

Five or six bulbs to a six inch pot will be enough. Plant them deep enough so as to allow the top of the bulb to come on a level with the soil, which when firmly pressed down should be at least half an inch below the rim of the pot. Give them a good watering and set them away in a cool place, covering them with about five inches of sand or ashes.

Dutch hyacinths are indispensable where a variety of bloom is required. They are not only suitable for pot culture and planting in the open ground, but they are admirably adapted for growing in glasses. For pot culture select heavy bulbs, and plant as early as possible, using a four inch pot for a single bulb, or three of one variety may be put into a six inch pot. Plant and set away as directed for tulips.

For planting in the open ground these subjects like a deeply cultivated soil. The bulbs should be planted as evenly as possible, about six inches deep and from five to six inches apart, setting each bulb in a handful of sand to ensure drainage.

BULB CULTURE IN GLASSES

Bulb culture in glasses is not practiced nearly so much as it should be. It is one of the most fascinating phases of indoor gardening. A glass with a wide top is required so that the bulb can be rested on it without falling into the water. Glasses made for this purpose can be purchased from almost any florist for a nominal sum. Single hyacinths



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