

## *BULB GROWING: SELECTION OF VARIETIES, ETC.*

There are other valuable ones, but a collection of one or more varieties of the above will give a maximum effect, and this is only secured by a mass of individuals of one species, or, frequently still better, one variety in the same clump. Hence I venture the assertion that it is far better to have 100 bulbs of a single sort than ten sorts of ten bulbs each.

The spring flowering bulbs, and most of the lilies, may be planted any time from the middle of September to the first of December, better about October 15th. Methods of arrangement must be governed largely by the various tastes and different surroundings. Isolated formal beds or rows may have their places against walks or buildings; massive clumps scattered here and there, especially as foreground for shrubbery, are very becoming; smaller groups may add grace and beauty when properly placed among other plants in the border; and lastly, certain bulbs, such as crocus, snowdrop and glory of the snow, do quite well planted in sod, without further care or cultivation.

In preparing a place for bulbs, the first and perhaps most important consideration is drainage. Other things in their favor, bulbs will succeed quite well in rather poor soil, but the worst treatment that can be given them is a wet, undrained situation. If the location is naturally well drained, spade up the area to be planted twelve or fifteen inches deep, working in a good quantity of well-rotted cow manure or other non-stimulating fertilizer. Bulbs will do well in almost any soil, but a light, rich, sandy loam is the best; and if naturally heavy, add leaf mold or an extra amount of manure, and in any event, when planting, it is always best to apply a large handful of sand to each bulb, to prevent rot. Low, wet, undrained

places should be renovated by excavating eight or ten inches deep and covering the bottom with three or four inches of broken brick or stone, and above this about a foot of soil, thus raising the bed six or eight inches above the surrounding level.

All bulbs of the same variety in a single clump should be planted the same depth, otherwise they will mature at different periods and the best effect lost. To do this accurately it will be necessary either to remove the surface of the bed as deeply as required for planting bulbs, setting them the proper distances apart and replacing the covering, or by the aid of a dibble or any round-pointed stick with a cross-bar fastened as far from the point as the depth to plant, and it will be comparatively easy to make holes, into which bulbs are to be planted, all the same depth.

When desirable to mix fast and slow growing varieties, plant the more rapid growers deeper, or the two may be separated into central and side portions of the clump, usually better with earlier ones in the center and late varieties next the border, when the difference in flowering will be less conspicuous. It is thus an easy matter to prolong the flowering season of a particular sort by planting one clump shallow and another deep, or the center of one clump more shallow than the side, or one clump located in a more shady place than the other. Again, it is well to mulch the beds with leaves or coarse manure for hardy as well as tender sorts, so that an even growth may be secured and the bulbs be prevented from heaving out by winter freezing. Mulching is especially valuable for preventing freezing and the consequent lack of root growth of late-planted bulbs. As a rule the mulch should be removed some time in March,