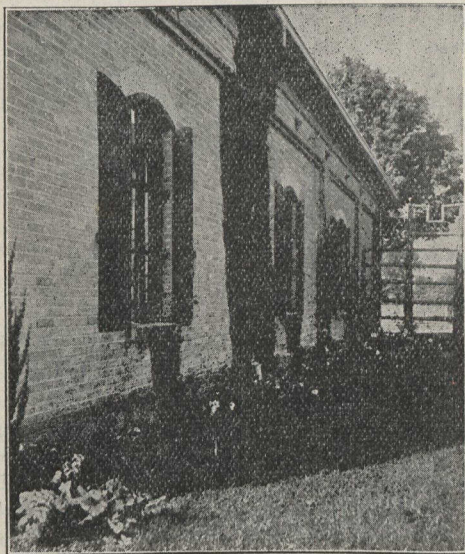


## Tuberous-rooted Begonias

By "Amateur"

OF late years the use of tuberous-rooted begonias as decorative plants for the outdoor garden has very largely increased and no doubt their popularity for this purpose is due to their



A Border of Tuberous Begonias

variety and brilliancy of color, their freedom and continuity of bloom, as well as to the fact that they succeed best where most other plants would fail and that their cultivation involves neither trouble nor expense. They range in color from purest white through delicate creamy shades to yellow and from yellow to brilliant orange, from pale pinks and delicate salmon shades to the deepest rose; and from the brightest of scarlet to blackest crimsons. They are a mass of bloom from June to November, and do best in shady spots where few others would bloom at all.

To grow begonias successfully requires just three things—and by the way these are the identical three things that any other plant requires—viz., the right kind of soil, a suitable situation, and proper care. The right kind of soil is one composed of equal parts of well-rotted sods, good garden loam and sand. The most suitable situation is one on the north side of a building where they will be shaded from the sun all day except a short time morning and evening, and where they will be sheltered from strong winds. After they are once planted out all the care required is to mulch them with thoroughly rotted farm yard manure and water them so often that the soil is always moist but never wet.

The preparation of the plants previous to their transfer to the garden requires some care and attention. In starting the tubers they should be planted in shallow boxes during March or April using a mixture of rotted sods and sands and planting them about one inch or less deep.

They should be watered somewhat sparingly until growth begins, when they will require more moisture.

In planting the tubers, be sure that you plant them right side up and it is not always easy to tell which is the right side; usually, however, there is a depression where the last season's stem was which will show you, and quite frequently they have begun to grow by planting time and then, of course, there is no difficulty in telling the right side.

When all danger from frost is past, say at the end of May or beginning of June, transfer them to the garden, placing them from one to two feet apart, and in a very short time they will be in full bloom.

It is advisable to buy mixed varieties because in the first place, you are almost certain to get mixed varieties even if you pay the extra price for separate colors; and in the second place, they can be moved so easily that if you find that you have a color where some other would look better, you can move it after giving it a good soaking and the next day it will show no sign of its removal.

Do not water them when the sun is shining on them or the leaves will likely be scorched. At any other time even the heaviest rains do them no harm; the flowers are not broken and though they droop and bend they will rise again uninjured as soon as the rain is over.

After the first heavy frost in fall, they should be carefully dug and the greater part of the top cut off and then carefully dried in the shade and stored where frost will not reach them; but not near a furnace or hot water pipes.

Begonias may be grown from seed but as the seed is as fine as dust, there is great danger of covering them too deeply, so that the ordinary amateur will no doubt

prefer to buy the tubers, especially as they can be had for about three cents each when bought in quantities.

Have you the right soil and the right position for them? If so, try a hundred and you will have every satisfaction; if not, don't plant one or you will be disappointed.

## The Old-Fashioned Cockscomb

The cockscomb (*Celosia* sp.) is almost too stiff and formal for effective planting but is worth having for the sake of curiosity alone. Many of the flowers will measure nearly a foot long and two inches or more across the top if given good cultivation. Seed may be sown in the open ground any time after the weather becomes fine and warm. It may also be sown in the cold frame in the early spring.

When transplanting select the most stocky plants as they are most likely to give the finest and largest heads of bloom. Set the plants one foot apart each way in rich soil that has been thoroughly pulverized. They may be used for the outside row of taller growing mixed plants and are sure to attract attention wherever grown.

Give plenty of water during dry weather and keep the surface soil loose and fine at all stages of its growth. If the flower heads are cut before the seeds ripen and hung up to dry in a cool place, they will retain much of their brilliant coloring and make fine inside decorations. They are grown in many shades and colors.

All hardy currants, black, red and white, may be planted in any soil in Saskatchewan where wheat does well. Currants need no special protection or shelter in that province. They respond quickly to good treatment, but stand more neglect than almost any other fruit.



A Tulip Bed Furnishes Almost the First Burst of Bloom in the Springtime