

Some perhaps may be disposed to argue that the usefulness of the society would be very much lessened by having its efforts partially withdrawn from fruits, which are used as food, and devoted to plants and flowers, which serve no useful purpose, and the cultivation of which some might say is only a waste of time. I remember some years ago an acquaintance of mine making use of this sort of argument in regard to my partiality for ornamental gardening. "What is the use," he asked, "in spending your time cultivating those things? They are neither meat, drink, or clothing, and are of no use whatever; remember that utility is the true criterion of value, therefore to spend your time on that which is of no use is to waste it." The reply I made him was one that he did not find it easy to answer at that time, and I question if he has found a presentable solution even yet. It was, "Whatever tends to make any part of the human race happier is useful." I might have completed the syllogism, by adding, The cultivation of flowers has that tendency, therefore such cultivation is useful; but I think my meaning was sufficiently plain.

This reminds me of an Irishman that I once had in my employ, who took it into his head that some of the products of my flower garden were eatable. I was putting out my bulb roots, tulips, hyacinths, &c., when he picked up a large hyacinth bulb, and with a curious wondering smile on his face, asked, "What do you do with these?" I explained to him that I was going to plant them in the ground, and they would flower in the spring. "But what I mane is, what use do you have for them? How do they be cooked? Do you boil 'em, or bake 'em like onions, or do they be made into pies?" I made no reply to this for about ten minutes, and during that time,—well, when I came to look at them I didn't have so many bulbs to plant.

But this is digressing. I commenced to write about Zinnias. I wished to let the readers of the HORTICULTURIST know that I have this year succeeded in growing splendid Zinnias, and to tell them how it was done. A good Zinnia is a beautiful flower, as double as a Dahlia, flowering much earlier, and continues till cut down by frost. But—and the "but" in this case is a very serious one—it is so difficult to get good ones. I have tried them a good many years, and found the majority of them little better than ox daisies, so I concluded to try them no more, and purposely omitted them when ordering seeds, but Mr. Vick thought I ought to have them, and so sent me a paper gratis.