

ANNUALS FOR THE AMATEUR'S GARDEN.

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In the preface to his delightful little work on the "Beautiful Flower Garden," Mr. F. Schuyler Mathews says, "I am sure of one thing regarding the extent of our flower gardens to-day, they do not contain half enough flowers—the crops are entirely too small. Let us have all the flowers we can possibly afford; they are the veritable smiles of nature." And he might also have said we have not half enough flower gardens. When we consider how little it costs in time or money to grow even a large collection of flowers, and how much they tend to civilize and refine those who live among them, it is much to be regretted that well-stocked flower gardens are so few and far between. Now and then in our towns and villages we come across a well kept garden, but how rarely in the country where land is so cheap and all the conditions so favorable. If our farming friends only realized how much more attractive they could make their homes for their sons and daughters with the expenditure of a dollar or two, we would not see so many bare, bleak, dreary looking homes when driving along our country roads.

It is not necessary in addressing a Horticultural Society to dwell upon the advantages of growing flowers freely. The question for our consideration is how can we plant our gardens so as to get the greatest return from the space at our disposal, in beauty of form, of color, and of perfume. Some of our garden flowers, as the Rose and Sweet Pea possess all these forms of beauty, but as a rule flowers that have great beauty of form and color, as Asters, Scabiosa, Poppies, etc., lack perfume, or even have a disagreeable odor, as in the African Marigolds, while many flowers with fine perfume are devoid of beauty of form or color, as Mignonette, *Mathiola Bicornis* (Nightscented Stock), etc. Why some flowers have brilliant coloring and others agreeable perfume, you will find fully explained in "Flowers—their Origin, Shape, Perfume, and Colors," by S. G. Taylor.

Flowering plants may be divided into: Perennials, including shrubs, herbaceous perennials, and bulbs, which remain in the ground indefinitely and flower every year. Biennials, which blossom the second year after planting the seed, such as Canterbury Bells, Foxglove, Sweet William, etc. And annuals, which flower and ripen their seed in one season. As very few annuals bloom before July 1st, to have flowers in May or June we have to depend upon the perennial class, the earliest flowering and most brilliant of which belong to the section known as Holland Bulbs.

The snow is hardly gone before the dainty Snowdrop opens its bells, closely followed by the many-hued *Crocus* and the charming *Scilla Sibirica*, the finest blue in nature. And how bare our gardens would be in May without the gorgeous Tulip and the exquisitely scented *Narcissus* in its many forms. The best varieties of these are now so cheap that they can be planted freely.

In early June many of the early herbaceous perennials are in bloom, as the *Aquilegia*, Iceland Poppy, Bleeding Heart, Forget-Me-Not, etc., followed by the *Pæonies*, roses, the first of the lillies, and the earliest annuals. For the best display from July to November we cannot do without some of the summer bulbs, such as *Tigridias*, *Gladioli*, Cannas, Dahlias, etc., and a selection of the herbaceous perennials, but our main dependence for the gorgeous show of color that is possible during these months is upon the annuals. There are no half-dozen perennials that could be named that will give us one-quarter the show of bloom that we can get from the *Dianthus*, Poppies, Sweet Peas, Pinks, *Phlox Drummondii*, Asters, and Scabiosa.

In making our selection from the immense variety of annuals at our command, in addition to beauty of form, brilliant coloring and agreeable perfume, we want convenient habit of growth, for cutting our flower beds would lose half their charm if they did not supply an abundance of flowers for house decoration. We also want profusion of bloom, so that we can cut freely without robbing the garden of its beauty. A long season of