

IV. How long will the best imported bulbs remain up to the standard of the variety in our conditions? and from whence do we obtain our finest strain of bulbs?

I am very glad you are giving some attention to this truly beautiful and justly popular flower. I firmly believe that it will amply repay any amount of attention given to it, and be likely to improve both itself and its devoted cultivator. It is easily managed and well suited to popular use. Success to the kindly efforts of the CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST.

B. GOTT, *Strathroy, Ont.*

*Reply by H. H. Groff, Simcoe, Ont.*

In replying to yours of the 4th inst., let me ask your readers not to lose sight of the fact, that we are speaking of hybrid Gladioli, and that the results of later work, containing as it does, such a complex mixture of blood from several species, produces a most variable flower; and when raised from choice seed, it is likely to break into endless combinations of form and beauty.

The amateur of to-day fails to realize the value of his heritage, in the results of many past years of experiment and labor, now offered at his very door; and those of long experience have yet to learn how far beyond their expectations this work has been carried, to its present successful issue.

Below find my replies to the questions from you:—

Ans. 1.—Varieties are increased by the small root offsets, or bulblets, which invariably reproduce the parent, excepting in special cases of reversion to one of the species from which the variety originally descended. Botanically speaking, no two seedlings are alike, and they are as likely to resemble any other variety of their section as either the seed or pollen parent, excepting in cases of special selection, and even then no definite results can be foretold, the chief advance being in the line of quality.

Ans. 2.—Reply to No 1 covers this query.

Ans. 3.—This depends entirely upon the stock used and methods practised in seed raising. In my own work, varieties originate that are superior to those they resemble in the choicest importations; seventy-five per cent. are often worth retaining, while, from ordinary commercial seed, over five per cent. is the exception.

Ans. 4.—Imported bulbs often fail entirely, before becoming acclimatized, and in the Gandavensis section I have long claimed that high-priced varieties should be furnished in strong, unbloomed bulblet grown bulbs, which are invariably refused, the grower knowing their greater value, and the average buyer preferring something big. Many of these big bulbs fail to produce a characteristic flower for two successive seasons, and often not until grown again from bulblets. These are all questions of the vitality of each individual variety. Europe has always produced the most advanced work on general lines; but we, thanks to the laborers of the past, can easily place ourselves on an equal footing, without the loss of time necessary in building up from the species.