

CONSIDER THE LILIES

By Nancy Mann Waddle

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

ONE reason why amateurs are not more successful in their cultivation of Lilies is that they do not regard the immense difference in the habitat of the varieties, the soil in which they grow, the time of planting and the selection of the bulbs. For instance, the Canadian Lily, one of our most beautiful native flowers, thrives in the cool air of our Northern States, and lifts its graceful orange bells among the coarse waving grasses of bogs and marshes. The Humboldt, a pretty Californian, on the other hand, only thrives in heavy, well-drained soil, preferring warmth and partial shade. It is a handsome flower, tall and stately, with numerous orange-red blossoms deeply marked with black.

The oldest Lily grown is the Candidum or white garden variety. It has been cultivated for over three hundred years in the South of Europe, and has acquired various mystical names, such as St. Joseph's Lily, Madonna Flower and Annunciation Lily, from the prominence given it by the old Italian masters in their religious pictures. It grows well in any good garden soil, and in time forms immense clumps, and objects seriously to any disturbance of its roots. Its straight, polished columns rise two or three feet in the air, the shining, narrow leaves decreasing in size as they reach the snowy buds at the summit. Early in June these buds expand, and the air is filled with a powerful, sweet fragrance. The Longiflorum varieties also flourish in garden soil. The Harrisii or Bermuda Lily is, perhaps, the most popular member of this family. It is one of the few Lilies that forces well, making its appearance about the holidays, and is also very much used for Easter decorations in the churches. The petals are not so much reflexed as those of the Candidum, the flower being longer and trumpet-shaped. The Candidum and Harrisii, with the Calla, are the most perfect floral types of absolute statuesque purity of color and form, and have become symbolical.

The so-called "Queen of Lilies" is the Auratum. It is a very tall species, and grows wild in its own country, Japan. The large white flowers are very much reflexed, exhibiting the broad golden band that runs down the centre of each petal. On these bands are raised spots like glistening rubies. The Auratum Lilies should be planted against a background of shrubbery; their daring, jewel-like beauty requires a setting of dark foliage.

The bulbs should be planted about six inches deep, in rather dry and porous soil, and should receive no stimulation. There is great complaint of a disease

combined with some of the more delicate, finely-divided varieties of Ferns, or the feathery green of the Asparagus Plumosa. The weird Spider or Ghost Lilies also require a fine tracery of green vines or Ferns.

Brownii is a very lovely variety. The outside of the trumpet-shaped flowers is brown, the inside of the petals being white. The stamens are also brown, a combination that suggests to the materialistic mind, chocolate and cream. This Lily prefers swampy soil, but it is, on the whole, rather difficult to grow.

One of the most magnificent Lilies in cultivation is the Washingtoniana Californica. Like most California products it is remarkable for its size, the stalk rising six feet or more in the air. The bulb requires very deep planting. The large white flowers, beautifully shaded with violet, expand in June.

The Speciosums, also called Lancifolium, are among the most robust of Lilies. These lovely foreigners are

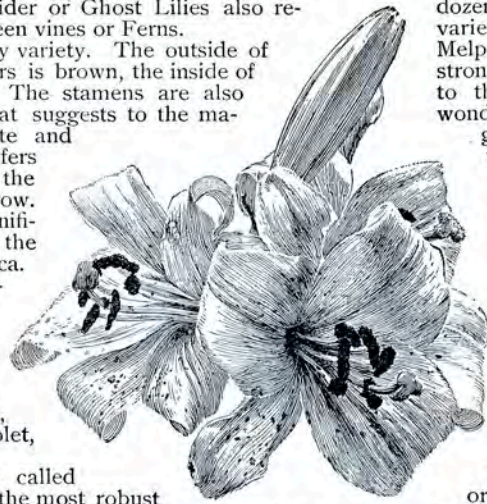
of Japan, and bloom in August. The blossoms are large, and one spike will sometimes produce a dozen or more flowers. There are a number of varieties, of which the most beautiful are S. Melpomene and S. Opal. The petals are so strongly recurved that they curl backward almost to the stems. Over their whiteness flows a wonderful pink wave, and upon the petals gleam gem-like scarlet spots, and a downy fringe which glitters like frost work.

The prettiest red Lilies are the Coral Lilies of Siberia (Tennifolium), dainty, fiery little tartars; and the Pulchellum, which looks as if it were sculptured out of scarlet wax.

One must seek the old-fashioned gardens to find the immense clumps of Day Lilies. Up from a mass of the broad, pale green, deeply-nerved leaves, spring the tall spikes, bearing the snowy, funnel-form, tubular blossoms. They are fragile and pale flowers, lasting only a day, but very sweet. Side by side with these white Lilies bloom the less lovely blue varieties. The tawny orange Lilies are often called Day Lilies, their Greek name meaning beauty of a day.

One of our handsomest wild Lilies is the Philadelphicum, an orange-red variety with purple spots. For a suggestion of daring audacity and fierce untamable grace no flower can excel these Tiger Lilies. Grouped with others of their kind they are apt to reduce their relations to a background for themselves. They combine the warmest two colors, yellow and red, and the black spots upon those glowing petals give them depth and tone.

Regarding the dust from which this "consummate flower" has sprung, the best authorities say there is nothing most Lilies dislike more than ill-drained soil. Consequently a Lily bed should be a little raised, and water should never be allowed to stand about the bulbs. In selecting the bulbs one must be careful to choose those



MADONNA



CALLAS



YELLOW LILY



BERMUDA OR EASTER LILIES



A CALIFORNIA LILY GARDEN



TRILLIUMS



EUCHARIS LILIES AND FERNS

which attacks the Auratum and California Lilies—a species of blight, which can usually be traced to shallow planting. Landscape gardeners frequently plant the Auratum among Rhododendrons and secure the handsomest possible combination of flowers. The advantage of planting this Lily among low shrubs is that the bulb should be kept very cool, the sun not being allowed to bake the earth about it, while the stalk bearing the flowers loves to lift the brilliantly-colored bells to the heat and warmth of the sun.

A Lily which is exhibited in the florists' windows very early in the year is the Eucharis or Lily of the Amazon. It is small and waxen pure, with no touch of color save the slender green lines of the stamens which adhere to the undivided cup-like calyx. Their exquisite purity and beauty of form are enhanced when they are

which are large and heavy; they should be planted at once, as they require no drying out as do other bulbs.

Lilies are an essentially decorative race of flowers, but they are not at all adaptable. Their surroundings must suit them; they do not, as do Roses, for instance, always adapt themselves to their surroundings. If they are arranged as cut flowers they should be placed in tall slender vases and never grouped with other blossoms. These latter add nothing to the Lilies, which are apt to make other flowers appear insignificant.

The reason why Lilies are so appropriately and extensively used in the decoration of churches is not only because of their symbolical meaning, the purity and aspiration they typify, but because the beauty of the white flowers is of a massive and severe character, befitting solemn and lofty surroundings. Sentiment has decreed them to be the saints among flowers, and we must not drag them from their niches.

Our daintiest and most distinctive wild Lilies are the Dog-Tooth Violets. They are numbered among the earliest spring flowers. The yellow variety, called Adder's Tongue, blooms a little later than the white. The leaves are quite as noticeable as the flowers. From between the two erect pale green leaves, blotched deeply with purple, springs the flower-scape, bearing its single, graceful blossom. When the flowers fully awaken in the sunshine the golden-yellow petals are strongly recurved, showing the brown stamens in the centre of the Lily.

Spring is a condition, a fact, not a wintry dream of summer when the snowy three-parted Trilliums gleam on the rocky hillside. The deep, vivid green of the triangular leaves, and the pure white petals mock with all Life's insolence, the dead, dry leaves that shielded their roots during the long winter.