

only to all amateurs for home use, but to commercial gardeners near all large towns. Some of the largest profits the writer has ever made in gardening were by growing mushrooms under greenhouse benches in winter, and selling them in the Buffalo market, at from 50 cents to \$1 a pound at wholesale.

The conditions necessary to success consist in growing them in very rich soil, the indispensable ingredient of which is horse manure, and in a steady temperature. Any place, such as a cellar, shed, greenhouse pit, space under the benches, etc., where, either naturally or by the use of artificial means, a temperature of from 50° to 60° may be had, will answer. Good drainage must also be provided, hence, a shelf as in the lower figure, or a series of shelves, may readily be employed to hold beds.

The manure should be dry and freed as much as possible of straw or other litter by shaking out. Manure alone can be used in which to grow them, by repeatedly treading it down and throwing over to get rid of its greatest heat, but usually it is preferred to mix from one-fourth its bulk to equal its bulk with good garden soil. It is best to allow something of an accumulation before putting down into beds.

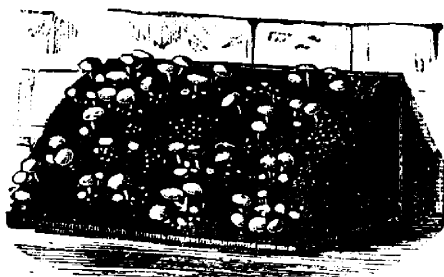


FIG. 722 —MUSHROOM BED ON SHELF NEAR THE FLOOR.

The manure ready, and it may at once be made into beds. The beds may be of most any shape or size desired, but experience proves that to have them from two to four feet wide, and about 20 inches deep answers about the best. Where there is a good deal of room it is well to make the beds more or less sloping at the sides. Beds may also be made in old tubs, in casks sawed in two, or in boxes. In this way they could, after the making and for cropping, be carried into cellars or other parts of dwelling houses where one would not like to bring in the manure in its rough form. We see no reason indeed why the preparing and selling of mushroom boxes, to be grown in houses, should not in some places become a profitable branch of the gardener's business.

In putting down the manure and soil, it should be firmly packed, layer by layer, with a brick or other weight. A thermometer should at some central point be imbedded into the soil, with its bulb some three inches below the surface. The probability is that the temperature in the bed will rise for a few days and then begin to lower. When it reaches about 80° the bed is ready to spawn.