

HOW TO MAKE MUSHROOM BEDS.

Mr. Meehan, editor of the *Gardener's Monthly*, who has had much experience in the cultivation of mushrooms, gives the following rather discouraging directions for preparing a bed :

"It is the easiest thing in the world for one who knows how to raise them, and yet simple as it is, it is one of the hardest things to teach to another. The main principle is that the temperature of the air and that of the earth must be nearly the same or they cannot be grown. There must also be a correspondence between the moisture in the atmosphere and that in the soil. Temperature required is between 55 and 65 deg., and the atmospheric moisture just such that a piece of paper would never get dry, or yet so wet that one could not write on it with ink without its running too much. This is the best idea we can give of the conditions necessary. It requires intellect to comprehend the conditions, simple as they are ; for we have never seen any one who never saw a mushroom bed, who could grow them from reading alone.

"The best material for forming the bed, is the droppings of out-fed horses. These should be collected every day and placed in a convenient shed close by the stable, kept dry and turned over every few days to keep from heating too strongly. When as much as is required to make a bed has been collected, lay it about eighteen inches thick in any place where the above condition can be secured. The 'spawn' can be bought in the large seed stores. Break it in pieces the size of walnuts, place on the bed a foot apart, and then on this about an inch of any good garden earth, beaten firm. Water with water at the temperature above given, and nothing more is necessary, in order to have plenty of mushrooms, but to beware of any change in the conditions.

"There are many plans by which each can carry out these principles. When a boy, our 'pocket money' came from the privilege of raising what mushrooms we could in an old cellar under a too-house. It succeeded admirably ; and big fat fellows often sent us on our way to market rejoicing in our success. In France they roof over old stone quarries, and make them into caves, where they are grown by the acre and almost all Europe and America supplied in canned mushrooms therefrom. We are often astonished that more is not done with it than is. 'No bugs, worms, beetles, aphides, birds, heats, colds, rains, mildews or moulds, to contend with—nothing required but strong common sense on one hand and a pocket full of money returns on the other.'

ENGLISH 'WATER-CRESS GROWN IN A HOT BED.

A correspondent in the *Gardener's Monthly* gives the following novel method of growing water-cress, which will certainly be new to most readers, as it is to us. It is, at any rate, worth the trial, as the flavor of this plant is pleasing to most palates. That there is a great difference in flavor between that grown in a fine running stream, and where it is all but dry, everybody who knows anything about the plant will readily admit. It is possible

that the exciting atmosphere of a hot bed may, in a measure, have the same effect on this plant that running water does—that is, render the plant more crisp, and less peppery in flavor :

"Permit me to recommend through your valuable *Monthly* the most wholesome and most productive of all salads grown in winter and in spring, and yet the cultivation of it is little known, and almost entirely neglected by those who do know. This water-cress is a native of Great Britain, and is found wild in the small streams more, or less through the whole country, and is cultivated on a large scale around London. Although this cress is considered amphibious it thrives better in an ordinary hot bed, from October until April, than it will at any season growing in its natural element, exposed to the climate. I find three sash ample for a moderate family from October until April, and requires no re-planting. I whitewash the glass, and give very little air except when raining, which saves watering, which it requires at least once a week. A full crop can be cut every three weeks. I generally cut one-third of a sash each time, so always get a succession. About the first of April a quantity of plants should be transferred to some cool, wet place, where they will live during summer, and be ready for the hot bed in the fall.

WINTER WINDOW GARDENING.

Use, for this purpose, only such plants as have been prepared for winter blossoming by giving them two or three months' previous rest. It is altogether too much to expect that plants which have been blooming all summer should be covered with flowers in winter also. Give them plenty of room, so that the air and light may have free access. It is a great mistake to crowd them close together. There is more pleasure in a half-dozen well-grown plants than in any number of poor, weakly, drawn-up things. Keep the temperature as uniform as may be, letting it fall as daylight fades, so that the night temperature shall be from fifteen to twenty degrees cooler than during the day. It is very commonly the case that, for a part of the night at least, this is reversed, and by drawing the curtains and stirring the fire the temperature is increased. Plants should rest at night, which they cannot do unless the temperature be decreased. When the weather will admit of it, give the plants fresh air, but never let it blow in directly upon them. To sit in a draught is as bad for plants as for human beings. Dropping the top sash a little way: less or more, according to the warmth of the weather without, is the most convenient method. Keep them clean, removing the dust from the leaves by a gentle shower-bath of tepid water from a fine-rosed watering-pot, and by gathering all the dead leaves and all the insects that appear.—*Exchange*.

A writer in the *Massachusetts Ploughman* says that trees bent toward the east, and that in transplanting them, care should be taken to set them in the same position relative to the points of the compass that they had before transplanting. He thinks a neglect to do so may account for the great number of stunted or dead trees that are found among those transplanted. It may be right to say that the most experienced nurserymen and orchardists reject this theory.