

The farmers will have lots to sell if it goes on like this. The cattle get quite a lot of feed out now, and so require less than usual.

I must conclude, with best wishes, &c.

VERITAS.

April 2, '77.

Canada Thistles.

SIR,—It has been said by some one that "he who caused two blades of grass to grow where only one grew before is a public benefactor." Now I notice that a good many farmers, who no doubt would lay claim to having performed this public service, do another act which will overbalance the benefit a hundred-fold, namely, allow a hundred Canada thistles to grow where only one, or perhaps none, grew before, and I am sorry to say that few in this part of the country are entirely innocent of this charge. The increase of thistles is really alarming, and the question, "What is to be done with them?" very important. Some townships are appointing inspectors to try and enforce the law. But really there is no law that can be framed that will do much to mitigate the evil, because of the difficulty in working it. They are growing and going to seed in very rough places, in the woods, in brush heaps, among logs and out of the way places, where few ever see them; and the time it would take to effectually attend to them in the very busiest season of the year is another great difficulty. Still, good farmers do not appear to be very much discouraged; there is still great faith in the future prosperity of Western Canada. The price of land is an evidence of this. If the thistles drive out one class of men, another will take their place, that will drive the thistles. What is wanted is better farming, and the time is coming when the thistles will compel it.

I have recently bought a farm of 100 acres for my son, that has been on the *rent* for a good many years, and is proverbial for its stock of thistles. There are about 80 acres cleared; 45 were under crop last year, and yielded more thistles, I suppose, than anything else. A good deal of draining has been done, mostly with lumber, and done so badly that we will require to take the most of it up and put in tile. As I will have a voice in the management for one year at least, I purpose (if I can spare the time) in future papers to let your readers know how we succeed in tile draining and killing the thistles on this rough farm. We plowed 15 acres last fall, which we intend to put in corn, turnips and potatoes, and so thoroughly work as to kill the thistles. The other 30 acres we shall summer fallow, growing no grain except corn. As yet very little has been done except

BLASTING SOME BIG STONES

that were sticking fast in the fields. This is not so difficult a matter as many think. A hole six inches deep, with one cent's worth of blasting powder, will generally be sufficient to break in several pieces quite a large rock, and render it possible of removal, and when so broken, become useful for building purposes. Some are of such a quality that it pays better to bury them, especially if the ground is not very hard to dig. We had one so large that two shots of powder blew out (although well packed in a hole 10 inches deep) without breaking the stone. I went to town and got some dynamite, put in a charge, filled the hole with sand, and packed it *very lightly* (I am told there is danger in striking it hard). This did tremendous execution, shattering the rock in all directions. I therefore think dynamite preferable for very large stones, but if they can be managed if broken in two or three pieces, powder is much the cheapest. But by some means farmers should remove those unsightly boulders from their fields, instead of going over them year after year with their implements.

We intend to plant the corn 4 ft. each way, and cultivate both ways; our object is more to kill the thistles than to raise a crop. The summer fallow will be plowed about the end of May or first of June.

Inverkip, May 8th, 1877.

Muskoka and its Free Grant Lands.

SIR,—Through the insertion of my letters on this subject in the *Advocate* I have received very many enquiries from persons seeking further information about this district. Several writing from the County of Grey, particularly, ask if we are troubled with summer frosts here? from which I infer that farmers in that section of the country suffer from this drawback; others too, ask if we

have any rock and stone in Muskoka. In reply, I would say that we are not troubled with summer frosts, but we have also in addition to much good land, both rock and stone in certain localities. I would further state for the information of lumbermen and speculators that although there is still a considerable quantity of pine on the Free Grant Lands there is little more than will eventually be required for local purposes. We therefore wish as far as possible to discourage the wholesale shipment of the pine from the district, and prefer to welcome amongst us such men as wish to make a home for themselves here, who will be engaged either in farming or in the prosecution of other local enterprise in our midst, in preference to the alien lumberman who strips the land of its choicest timber and then seeks "fresh fields and pastures new" in which to ply his nomadic avocation. I shall at all times be pleased to answer the enquiries of persons who may address me, providing they enclose a stamp for reply.

JAS. ASPDIN, Aspdin, Muskoka.

SIR,—Would you be kind enough to inform me through the *Advocate* which is the best written work on Canadian fruit and Canadian fruit culture, &c.; and also if buckwheat sown about the middle of July would be fit and would do to plow in as green manure after harvest.

W. W. Bensfort, Ont.

[There is no such work published that we are aware of. E. P. Roe, of Cornwall, on the Hudson, Orange county, N. Y., publishes a useful manual on the culture of small fruits. It is well adapted for our information. A. M. Purdy, of Rochester, publishes the *Fruit Recorder*, which is also very useful.

Buckwheat will make a growth if sown by the middle of July and there is moisture enough in the land to enable it to grow. Many prefer sowing at that season; it will do for feed or to plow under. I should prefer the rape to buckwheat. —ED.]

I have just shipped to Mr. Geo. Henry, of Halifax, N. S., the Shorthorn heifer "Princess Josephine 4th."

I have received from Wishaw, Scotland, a trio of Scotch Grey fowls. I think they are the first that have been imported into Canada. They are very much like the Plymouth Rocks, except that the head and neck are smaller and finer, and the legs are not yellow as are those of the Plymouth Rocks.

JOHN S. ARMSTRONG, Guelph.

Garden, Orchard and Forest.

Flowers—Perennials.

Bright as are the varied hues, and sweet the perfumes of many of the annuals of our flower garden, they can never displace some perennials from their place among our favourites. Of those choice flowers that do not bloom and die in one season, we would say a few words. And first from the *Field*, England, we reproduce the Carnation and Pink:—

Since herbaceous plants began to be popular again, these fine old favorites have received a good deal more attention. The wonder is that they should ever have been neglected as a garden flower, for they have been, and always will be, favourites. We can remember having to propagate them by the thousand annually for the beds and borders of a large flower garden; but when the bedding mania supervened, the fine stock was utterly neglected and lost for the time being, along with many other old and popular subjects. Though the fact is hardly credible now, the same thing occurred in many a garden at the time we speak of.

The carnation and pink are supposed to be derived from the same species, and both are natives of Great Britain. The species has at least been found growing wild in this country, and the carnation has been cultivated as a garden flower from very early times, being popularly known as the clove gilly flower. Though grown and treated in a special manner by florists and also by gardeners, who bestow much care upon their plants, the carnation is, of course, perfectly hardy, and will thrive and flower for years without much attention. In rich or wet soil, both the carnation and pink are short-lived; but in dry situations—as for example, on a rockery—they will grow and flower profusely for a length of time.

PROPAGATION.—Layering is the plan usually

adopted, and operations for the purpose begin about the beginning of August, or a couple of weeks earlier in cold localities. About that season the plants have done flowering and made their growth, and the layers are made of young shoots. The first and preliminary step is to prepare a compost, which should consist of clear river sand mixed with leaf-mould and loam together. This should be spread round and under the branches of the plants to be layered about four inches thick, and the layers must be pegged down into it, and covered over about an inch deep. In layering the shoots the leaves are removed up to about the third or fourth joint, and the knife is inserted about the fifth joint, and run up to the next one, cutting the shoot about half through. This forms a tongue on the cut side, and which must be severed a little below the joint to which the incision has been carried, and the shoot should then be bent so as to make the cut gape, and in that position pegged securely into the compost. A layered carnation shoot may be described as a cutting half removed from the parent plant; the slitting up to a joint is made with a view to facilitate the rooting process without depriving the cutting of the support of the parent stem in the meantime. In this way the shoots of the old plant are layered all around, and the hillock formed by the compost is afterwards packed between the shoots with smooth, round stones, each about three or four pounds weight, in order to keep the birds from scraping the compost away, which they are sure to do if they can reach it, in hunting for worms, &c.; water-worn stones from the bed of a river are best for the purpose. In a month or five weeks after layering, if the plants have been watered regularly during dry weather, they will be rooted, and they should then be lifted and potted, or planted out in the borders where they are to remain. In most gardens where the stock is propagated annually in this way, the plants are potted in 6-in. pots, and wintered in cold frames, the pots being plunged in ashes to protect them from frost; and in spring they are planted out, the old plants being done away with. Whether potted or planted out in beds after rooting, the best staple for the carnation and pink is a good loam, free from wireworms, and it may be mixed with leaf mould and sand; but they will thrive in common garden soil well enough. When wintered in frames, it is necessary to give the plants plenty of air on all favourable occasions, as the carnation does not thrive in a close atmosphere. Anything like fire heat must of course be avoided; and if frost should come severe, mats or straw should be used for protection.

GENERAL CULTURE.—During the summer the plants should be watered in droughty weather, and they must be guarded against rabbits and field mice, which are fond of them; but these vermin are most destructive during winter. When the flower stems grow, they should be supported singly with small neat stakes, or two or three "stakes" may be put round each clump, and the matting run round the whole at once, to keep them from falling upon the ground. Some cultivators go to great trouble in disbudding, trimming, and otherwise manipulating the flowers; but here it is only discussed to give the reader an idea of how to grow the carnation as a border flower, and it is not needful to refer to such practices.

J. S.

Of other perennials, E. E. R., in the *Western Farm Journal*, writes as follows:—

One of the best perennials is phlox. It is perfectly hardy, increases in size every year, if good soil is given it; it forms a round, compact bunch of bloom, and can be had in all shades of red, in the most brilliant tints, and these, when grown with the white varieties, can be made into as showy a bed as any one can possibly desire. A good way to produce a fine effect with this plant is to make a large oval bed, not in front of the house, for it is too showy, but somewhere at one side. Raise the bed a foot or more in the centre, and there set the taller, rowing dark varieties. The catalogues will indicate the height of each variety. Then shade off the bed with the lighter colors, edging it with white. Set the plants about eighteen inches apart, and in August it will become a mass of bloom. I know of no other plant that does so well for massing, or which grows so compactly.

The herbaceous spiraea should be grown in clumps, and I prefer to keep them by themselves. I grow two kinds, the white and pink varieties, and there is nothing in the garden so fine for bouquets as these flowers. They have just the airy, feathery grace which makes a vase of flowers for the parlor so charming, and they have the merit of