

Horticultural Department.

Edited by Alex. Pontey.

Pruning Fruit Trees.

Pruning fruit trees, but principally apples, is generally done towards the end of this month, or in April, and in no other horticultural operation is there so much ignorance generally shown as in this. Before he begins, the operator ought to ask himself what he wants to prune for? If to check the growth, put it off until midsummer; if merely to thin out the top, prune either in the end of February or very early in March, or, perhaps better still, do it about the end of October or beginning of November, when the leaves commence to fall. On no account cut out a branch unless it is actually in the way, or unless the top is too crowded. Often we have seen orchards of large trees with their branches stretching out perfectly bare; stripped of every smaller or intervening branch until the extremity is about reached, where a branch would be left resembling somewhat a mammoth broom; standing mute though eloquent monuments of the incapacity of the man that committed the outrage upon them.

It has been said that thumb and finger pruning, is the best of all pruning; and truly too if it could always be done; it does not rudely disturb nature, it is generally judiciously done, it regulates the growth and form of the tree, a bud can be rubbed off where a branch is not matured; a branch when soft can be nipped off or pinched in to allow the rest of the tree to come forward and so on, but its chief recommendation lies in the fact, that it must be done when the tree is young; and if properly followed up from that stage nothing more than a sharp knife would ever be required about a tree, and in point of fact, nothing else ever should be.

Reckless pruning, which is most generally done in the spring, when the buds are swelling and the sap in full flow, engenders diseases of which perhaps more trees die than from any other cause. Peach trees are, however, by those who grow them largely, generally left unpruned until towards spring, in order to cut any wood injured by the frost; but it also should meet with as little pruning as possible then as it tends only to a more luxuriant growth and the making of too much wood, is the principle reason peaches do not succeed here.

But so little can be said this month that it will not be out of season to say in April, that we will reserve a list of seeds, etc., with some description of them, until that time.

Maintaining Fertility in Orchards.

At the annual meeting of the W. N. Y. Horticultural Society the question How can the fertility of large orchards be most economically maintained, was discussed at length. Oliver Chapin field plows each year four inches deep without cropping. Trees grow well but bear poorly. Soil, a good gravelly loam; principal variety; Baldwin. H. E. Hooper said the fertility of small orchards is easily kept up, but sufficient manure cannot readily be secured for 50 to 100 acres of trees. The only profitable old orchards are those that are in some way frequently manured. Top-dressing and mulching with manure is profitable to plowing for old orchards. While trees are young cultivation does good. After bearing begin to seed and top-dress.

P. C. Reynolds mentioned that Mr. Yeomans of Walworth has plowed under green crops with good

result. Mr. Green said we must keep the surface loose. E. Moody maintained that vegetable manures, including stable dung, are injurious. They increase the fungus and prey on an apple. He would apply mineral manure; it needs experiment to decide what. Ashes and lime are undoubtedly valuable. The leaves of trees will take carbonic acid from the atmosphere to supply the tree with carbon. Hence carbonaceous manures are not needed. Salt is an excellent fertilizer for apple trees, applied in small quantities. If an orchard is plowed yearly without cropping he believes its fertility is increased.

Mr. Hooper stated that isolated apple trees, standing near the barn where their roots get plenty of yard manure and their tops plenty of air, never fail to thrive. Mr. Moody mentioned that one trouble in growing apples is not lack of fertility, but the fruit does not grow fair. It is attacked by insects and fungus, and these need other remedies than manuring. V. Bogue, Albion, always has good crops of apples after plowing under green clover, also plows under buckwheat. This frequent cultivation destroys insects. Uses barn-yard manure once in six or seven years. Hens run in the orchard, and their droppings fertilize the soil. C. P. Avery of Grand Traverse, Mich., reported methods, in vogue there. The land is plowed without cropping, except buckwheat, which is turned under twice a year, the last time being late

ingly in Fall or early Winter, and never plow under. In contact with the roots stable manure may cause blight. Used as a top-dressing there is no danger.

Dr. Sylvester planted an apple orchard 33 years ago. Sold last year 3,000 barrels from less than 10 acres. Don't believe in large quantities of stable manure. Applies mixture of muck and gas-lime or muck and stable manure lightly as top-dressing every year. Does not wish to make a very vigorous growth of wood. We cannot afford to grow apple wood or pear wood, even at \$100 a cord. He is content if he gets three inches growth of wood a year. That gives enough fruit, and the trees remain healthy. Changes his manure prescription each year. This year it is six parts muck to one stable manure. Has 50 acres of muck on his farm—an inexhaustible store of fertility. W. B. Smith maintained that orchards on naturally good soil do not need much manure. Knows one which has produced well without manure 30 years. F. W. Lay made a hog yard in his orchard, and it increased in productiveness. Major H. T. Brooks, 20 years ago, planted an orchard on new land. It is still bearing finely. Ten years since he fenced off an acre as a long-yard, and trees where the hog droppings fell are twice the size of the others. —N. Y. Tribune.

Culture of Gladioli.

Deep digging and liberal manuring, are the chief elements of success. If the gladioli are employed to succeed lilies, as they sometimes are, and the proper preparation of the ground cannot be made for fear of disturbing the other bulbs, a vigorous growth and long spikes of bloom may still be obtained, by a liberal use of liquid manures or sewerage during their growth. Under any circumstances a weekly application of either of these are useful in dry weather. To have gladioli throwing fine spikes, it is important at planting time to rub off every small offset at the base of the bulb, and to see that the bulbs are properly divided planted singly. For effect in lines of color they should also be carefully selected, and only those of uniform size and vigor employed. Care should likewise be taken to insert the bulbs at the same depth. If these points are attended to, the spikes will be ranged with the regularity of the rank of an army, in new and gorgeous uniforms, and few plants can equal them in effect either at a distance or close at hand. All inferior bulbs, and the offsets, ought to be grown by themselves, and under high culture they soon become large enough to occupy the more important position assigned to the picked bulbs. Many of the similar bulbs will also bloom well, and will furnish flowers and foliage enough for cutting for vases, &c. As to time, I have never tried its direct application to these bulbs, and would not recommend the experiment. But they grow well on the great chalk formation, with only a depth of from 18 inches to two feet of soil. The dryer the bottom the more water they require when growing. They seem to suffer much from the two opposite extremes, an excess or scarcity of water. On well drained land, of a depth of from two to three feet, enriched with annual dressings of well rotted dung, and helped with frequent waterings of liquid manure during dry weather in summer, these splendid bulbs will flourish well, and add a new charm and a special enrichment to most of our gardens. —Gardener, Chron., Eng.

Oats.

The above engraving represents a head of White Tartary Oats, raised by Mr. Thos. Mason, of London Township, who has already disposed of a large portion of his crop to his neighbors, who have seen them growing. In Yorkshire they are claimed to be the best oat known. These oats were imported two years ago, and are clean and pure. They are offered at \$1.25 per bush. Address, Thos. Mason, Hyde Park, Ont.

Pure Black Tartary Oats, raised from seed imported two years ago, clean, pure and true to name. Price, \$1.00 per bush. To be shipped at London station. Address, Jno. Routledge, Hyde Park, Ont. Samples of these two varieties may be seen at our warehouses, where orders will be taken.



WHITE TARTARY OATS.