In the flower garden mulching is not admissible, but we generally practice it with Calceolarias, and the disease is unknown with us, though we have to contend with a dry, cakey soil. The iresine, too, should be mulched; it is a moisture loving plant, and will thrive if mulched where it will sometimes not do any good otherwise. In vine and peach borders, whether inside or outside, mulching is almost indispensable. In some places where they are raked painfully smooth and neat, sometimes they get so rent with the drought during summer that a man has to go over them every week to fill up the cracks. Good grapes are seldom to be found under such circumstances. A mulching 4 or 5 inches thick, of rotten litter and leaves, is best for vines, and a border so dressed need never offend any eye not painfully sensitive on the score of neatness. Large plants in pots, such as figs, pot vines, pines, orchard-house trees, &c., should also be mulched when practicable, as roots are often near the surface, and are apt to suffer from irregular attention in watering. Apart from the advantages of mulching in a labor saving respect, and as a conservator of moisture, it keeps the soil about the roots at an equable temperature, by preventing radiation in cold weather, and the bare soil from the roasting effects of the sun in warm weather—a condition of things very unfavorable to vegetable life generally.—*Gardener.*

Rapid Growth of Timber Trees in Massachusetts.

Mr. J. W. Manning says, in *Boston Cultivator*:—I will here record my own experience: In 1858, 3-feet trees of Norway spruce and Scotch larch were planted. In nine years the spruce reached fifteen feet in height and spread twelve feet broad, and was then successfully transplanted. The larch, in 1873, had reached thirty feet, and had a spread of branches full twenty feet, and a circumference of four feet at the base. One larch had attained 40 feet from 5 feet in 17 years, and this on the dry, sandy loam that was distinguished for barrenness twenty years ago, so that only a medium crop of rye could be grown once in five years. I have grown rock maple trees from the seed on the same sort of land, in six years, to fifteen feet high and 2½ inches in diameter. The white maple excels many others in rapid growth. From six-feet trees, three years from seed, planted in the fall of 1864, they now stand thirty-five feet, and are from seven to fifteen inches in diameter at base. All these are on naturally poor soil, that has been kept free of weeds and grass. I planted elms in 1856 that were easily carried on my shoulder, and now they stand thirty to forty feet high, with a girth at base of six feet. Rock maples planted in 1855 stand now thirty feet high and fifteen inches in diameter. The bass and white ash I then planted have done as well in the race of life. So, with such living examples to behold, and as good or better examples in all towns, an enthusiasm could be generated that would shortly line all our streets and country roads with comforting shade. I know of a farm in Lisbon, N. H., Leonard Bowels's, on which were planted, thirty years ago, rock maples on the roadside as far as his land extended, and the result is, that hill on which these trees stand is memorable in the life of the planter. Those trees are distinctly visible from the top of Mount Washington, which is more than twenty miles to the east. It is very strange that more land owners do not appreciate such examples often seen in communities, and plant miles of trees, leaving a growing monument, instead, as is frequently the case, leaving a more desolate aspect to the land than they found.

Flower Pots.

We learn from the *Hamburg Gartenzeitung* that the fabrication of flower-pots from a mixture of cow-dung and earth is now extensively practiced in North Germany. As many as 16,000 were used last year in one establishment. For forcing they are highly recommended, though they will not bear plunging in a hot bed; and they are admirably adapted for nursery work, for plants raised in pots and afterwards turned out, in this case pot and all. Even standing dry the roots of plants will penetrate the sides of the pot and extract some nourishment from them. They are made by machinery, and one man can make from 700 to 900, or even 1,000, in ten working hours. There are machines for three sizes—2 inches by 2 (price 8s.), 2¾ inches broad by 2¼ high (price 10s.) Since the first introduction of these pots by Mr. MacIvor some years ago, we have heard little of their use in this country.—*Gardeners' Chronicle.*

The Destruction of Humming-Birds.

Extract from a letter written by a lady in Jamaica to *Land and Water*:—

"We have two magnificent ceifas, or silk-cotton trees, not far from the house, on which there must be many millions of dark crimson and maize-colored blossoms, with a perfume very much like that of the Turk's cap lily—rather too powerful for a boquet; but when mingled with the perfumes of other trees by the breeze, it is truly delicious, Among the blossoms the humming-birds are darting in and out like sparks of emerald and crimson fire, but unfortunately their number is being rapidly reduced by the womankind of England, who will decorate their silly heads with the lovely little bodies, which ought never to be seen except on the wing. Unfortunately, too (such is the course of fashion), the negro women here are adopting the same mode, and I fear there is not much doubt that the humming bird will soon be exterminated. It is, indeed, a shame to destroy these little beauties in the ruthless manner they are being destroyed at the present time."

NOTE.—For England read North America—Canada included—and for humming-birds read blue birds, and apply the moral.

Twig Blight.

The twig blight on the apple tree has been noticed by the writer for many years in central and northern Illinois, and in Wisconsin. It is always here connected with a vigorous growth. Usually very little blight is seen except on the current year's growth, sometimes taking a few inches of the growth of the previous year — rarely taking a whole limb, unless it be a newly set graft.

In some cases more than half of the grafts are entirely killed by the twig blight in mid summer, during the first year. Its appearance is much like the pear blight, and equally difficult to account for. There is no evidence that the injury is done by insects.

The injury by "Spores" is about the most plausible and popular way of accounting for the damage.

We have never known it to kill an entire tree like the pear blight. The limbs sprout and grow vigorously the next season.

Last summer, while travelling in Michigan, I noticed that where the soil was rich there blight was prevalent—but where the soil was light and sandy there was not much blight. It does not recur with equal severity every season, but several summers may be passed with little or no blight.—*E. G. Mygatt, in Small Fruit Recorder.*

Smoke for Curculio.

At the January session of the Iowa Horticultural Society, Mr. Kauffman, of Des Moines, stated that he and other cultivators had been very successful in fighting the plum curculio, gouger, etc., by burning coal tar under the trees. The tar is procured from the gas works, and a pint is poured into a long-handled frying-pan. It is then set on fire and carried about among the trees, so as to give them all a thorough smoking. The smoke is very dense and blackens both fruit and limbs, lasting for several days if there is no rain to wash it off. As this has actually been tried and been successful, it is worth trying generally, the remedy being cheap, easily applied, with very little trouble. Mr. Kauffman declares that the pests would never touch the smoked fruit at all. This is, indeed, "important if true."

A NEW CRAB APPLE.—Nowadays, when our nurserymen are hunting up all imaginable varieties of the crab apple for the purpose of planting in sections where the ordinary varieties will not succeed, a new form, embracing some marked peculiarity of promised excellence, will doubtless prove acceptable. The Messrs. Paul, of England, have now in their possession a cross (so it is alleged) between the Red Astrachan and ordinary Siberian crab. This new variety has the early maturing property of the former parent as well as its brilliant red color, and yet it is undoubtedly a large Siberian crab. The tree is of vigorous habit with handsome foliage, and makes an ornamental specimen. It has been named the "Imperial Crab." Doubtless our growers will soon have it for sale on this side of the Atlantic.

Season to Cut Timber.

If oak, hickory or chestnut timber be felled in August, in the second running of the sap, and barked, quite a large tree will season perfectly, and even the twigs will remain sound for years; whereas that cut in winter and remaining till next fall (as thick as your wrist), will be completely sap-rotten, and will be almost unfit for any purpose. The body of the oak split into rails will not last more than ten or twelve years. Chestnut will last longer, but no comparison to that cut in August. Hickory cut in the eighth month is not subject to be worm-eaten, and will last a long time for fencing. When I began farming in 1802, it was the practice to cut timber for post fencing in the winter. Winter oak posts and black oak rails, cut at that time, I found did not last more than ten or twelve years. In 1808 I began cutting fence timber in the eighth month. Many of the oak rails cut that year are yet sound, as well as most of those formed of chestnut. If the bark be not taken off this month, however, it will peel off itself the second or third year and leave sap perfectly sound. The tops of the trees are also more valuable for fuel then than when cut in the winter or spring. I advise young farmers to try the experiment for themselves, and if post fences do not last twice as long, I forfeit all my experience as worthless.

Turpentine and Kerosene for Cut Worms and Crows.

A correspondent of the *Tribune* says:—"Spirits of turpentine poured on seed corn before planting, and thoroughly mixed by stirring, so that all the seed shall be impregnated with it, is a specific for the terrible ravages of the cut worms. I have never known it to fail in one instance. My own practice has been to put one quart of turpentine to a bushel of corn, or in that proportion which is sufficient, and I have always thought corn came up two or three days quicker when thus treated. Besides, the scent of turpentine, which can be detected several weeks after planting, aids much in keeping crows at a distance."

Another writer recommends kerosene for the same purpose. These may be good remedies, but we would not use them on an extended scale until we determined by experiment whether there is any danger of injuring the vitality of the seed.

Treatment of Small Fruits.

The *Gardener's Chronicle* says: "Where water can be commanded, there is nothing so profitable as to well soak the soil about small fruits, just about the time they have set their frult. Much of the value of this operation, however, will depend on the nature of the soil. The advantages are least in a tenacious and greatest in porous soil. It is said that an animal derives most benefit from food when it is hungry before it begins; it is certainly so with plants. Water applied to soil already wet is an injury, and water never has so telling an advantage on vegetation as when every leaf is about to be withered up for want of it. A plant that never seems to want water is in a very doubtful condition in regard to its health."

WIRE WORMS.—A correspondent of the *Prairie Farmer* communicates the following:—Last spring I planted a field of corn, which was the second crop after breaking an old meadow. The wire worms attacked the corn before it came up and made clean work of it, in places, all over the field; some places for nearly an acre the corn was entirely destroyed by them, while in others, in the same field, the corn came up and looked well. We went to work with our hoes and replanted the vacant places. The ground being warm and in fine condition, I supposed the corn would be up in a very few days, but to my sad disappointment there was not one hill in fifty that came at all. When I examined for the cause, I found from four to six wire worms in each hill, which had entirely destroyed the germ and heart of the grain before the plant got through the ground. I thought I would not give it up yet, though it was getting late in the season, so I procured some early corn called the "Kankakee yellow," and put it to soak in copperas water in the evening, and let it soak till morning. I then poured the water off and went to replanting the same ground again. Nearly every hill came up in a few days, grew finely, and made good, sound corn. I am fully convinced that seed corn soaked as above directed, will prevent wire worms and other insects troubling it. The only difficulty is it may be some trouble to plant with a corn planter while damp.