

TOMATO CULTURE.

CHAPTER VI.

GROWING PLANTS FOR MAIN CROP.

Seed for main crop may be sown from two to five weeks later than the first early. Usually the largest quantity will be soon enough, sown the first week in April. At this season they can be aired more and may be sown somewhat thicker, but care must be taken not to sow too thickly. If they come up too thickly, thin them out with a bold hand; always bearing in mind that one good plant is worth more than two or three poor, drawn ones, and will yield more profit. This lot of plants may be treated the same as the first early ones, only they may be planted out of the boxes directly into the open ground where they are to fruit. The boxes and pans that have been emptied when filling the forcing frames can be filled again out of this lot of plants.

If many plants are wanted for main crop several sowings of seed should be made up to the tenth of April. Out of the plants grown from seed sown in April, cold frames are to be filled. The frames may be prepared the same as those for the earlier plants except that they may be placed as close together as it will be convenient to work the glass, and no manure used. The objection to the use of manure is, that it causes the earth around the roots of the plants to crumble off when the plants are to be lifted; and also when the roots of the plants strike a lump of manure the plant does not start readily.

The south board of the frame should be only ten inches wide; the soil should be very fine, all small stones or rubbish of every kind should be carefully raked out. The soil should then be packed down pretty solid. These beds should be prepared only when the soil is dry and in good working order. Take good strong plants out of the seed beds and dibble them in up to the seed leaf, eight inches apart each way.

Water moderately and cover close with sash as fast as planted, keep them close for about two days, until the plants are well started. If the sun is bright do not open them but shade the beds sufficiently to keep them from over-heating. At the same time remember that a heat of eighty or ninety degrees is not too much for them until they are rooted and started to grow; growth should take place in two or three days.

The best, cheapest, and most convenient shade, may be made as follows: Take two pieces of pine seven feet long, and two inches square, nail on these pieces of lath $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and leave one inch space between each lath; also leave 5 inches at each end without lath, for convenience in handling. These will shade the beds sufficiently and at the same time admit sunlight enough to heat the beds in clear weather. They should always be taken off in cloudy weather. As soon as the plants are fully started, let them have all the sun and