

lately, the chief exponent, it is proposed to levy an import tax against foreign foodstuffs entering Britain and admit colonial products free. There is no doubt but that a tariff arranged in this wise, affording preferential treatment for the British colonies in the home market, would seem desirable to most parts of the Empire outside the United Kingdom. But that is not the greatest point to be considered. The pertinent question is what effect would such tariff have upon the homeland? It is not the foreign producer of wheat who will be required to meet the import charges which Britain may levy against his product. That charge has to be borne by those who consume the commodity. One result will probably be a decrease in the foreign wheat entering the country for consumption and a corresponding decrease in the quantity of manufactured goods which the foreigner will take from Britain in exchange for his grain.

The British dominions beyond the seas are not sending up any serious clamour for preferential treatment in the home market. It would be of some temporary benefit, perhaps, but one the colonies could not enjoy without return in the way of preferential tariff treatment for British manufactured goods entering colonial consumption. Only by the most specious reasoning, therefore, can it be shown that the net benefit resulting to the colonies or the benefits that may accrue to Britain from such arrangement could be of any noticeable extent. The cost of labor and materials is the largest item, very nearly the whole cost of manufacturing. The cost of labor depends largely upon the living expenses of the laborers. It is inconceivable, then, that British manufacturers, taxing labor by raising the cost of foodstuffs, taxing, by means of import duties, the materials upon which labor is employed, could sell their manufactured commodities in the colonies at the same price as those commodities would sell for, were the labor and material employed in their manufacture, free and cheap. Nor is it conceivable that Britain's overseas dominions could be enriched in any way by trading high priced food products, for high priced manufactured goods. The break would be about even so far as the colonies were concerned. For Britain the situation would have a more serious side.

If Britain's colonies were supplying her with 75 per cent. of her foodstuffs, or 90 per cent., or if they were capable of filling her entire requirements, the situation would remain the same. It makes no difference to those taxed whether the tariff they are taxed under is called protective or preferential. The result in both cases is precisely the same. So long as there remains a modicum of protection upon any commodity the consumers of that commodity will be required to meet the charge. So long as competition for the supply of any market is exclusive, those supplying it will price their products up to the limits of the margin that excludes their competitors. Preferential tariffs afford facilities for advancing prices quite as readily as protection tariffs do. An imperial preferential tariff might have some considerable influence in shaping the direction of trade, in determining the channels through which it should flow, but it would affect those participating in it very much as the other kind does. They, not the foreigner excluded, would pay for the protection enjoyed, that is, if exclusive from free, open trade is a thing to be enjoyed.

Man.

FREE TRADER

## HORTICULTURE

### Preparing Prairie for a Garden

Give best method of breaking up prairie this spring and preparing it for garden, can use plow, disc harrows, drag harrows and lots of manure. The land is fairly heavy and well drained. Would be willing to put some time in on it to get good garden but my neighbors all say I cannot get garden first year. Advise how best to prepare prairie for potatoes.

Sask.

J. E. G.

It is not advisable to attempt making a garden on raw prairie the same season as it is broken. On fairly light soil you might be alright in breaking up the sod and working it down with the disc and harrows, but in heavy land it is better by all means to break and backset this season, getting the soil into shape for starting a garden next year. If you want to make the attempt, break it about five inches in depth as early in the spring as you can and work it down thoroughly.

On ordinary prairie soil it is possible to break in the spring and prepare the land for potatoes. Break it to a fair depth, and get it into as good shape as you can with the disc and harrows. The idea to carry out in preparatory cultivation, is to get the sod worked down into as good condition of tilth as possible. At best, it will not be in as good shape for potatoes as land previously cropped, but a home-sunder without any breaking has no choice but to make the best of what he has.

### Fruit Topics from Alberta

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I have received a great many letters from the readers of your valuable paper since my article on the growing of strawberries appeared in its pages. Most of these letters ask which are the best varieties to grow, and in reply, I would say, that I think any of the medium early, or late kinds will do well, but not the early kinds as they bloom so early that there would be danger of the late frost when in bloom.

Some have also asked me about the growing of other small fruits, red, black and white currants. All do well, and the Howton seedling gooseberry does well in the West. I have seen some of the largest and best black and red currants growing around Edmonton and Strathcona that I have seen anywhere, much larger than in Ontario or in New York State.

The raspberry also does well here, especially some of the native sorts. I am propagating one of the natives that I found near the Saskatchewan river that will compare favorably with any of the tame ones grown in the east, either for flavor, production or size, and will stand the winter without putting down and covering, which I find the tame ones such as Turner, Cuthbert and Marlboro will not, as I have tried them three winters.

The Transcendent crab apple is grown quite successfully here. I was shown one tree 4 years old planted in the garden of the Rev. Mr. Douglas, Edmonton, off of which was taken six hundred ripe apples last year. There are a great many people here who have crab trees bearing well for their age.

I think, though, that the trunks of the trees should be wrapped with burlap, or an old bag, or something to keep them from sun scald in the winter and early spring until they are three or four years old and the bark of the tree gets hard.

I find that most of the trees set out here, die from that cause "sun scald." Even a native tree when taken up for transplanting should be marked so as to plant it, as it grew—the north side set to the north—to prevent sun scald.

Leduc, Alta.

JAMES CHEGWIN.

### Early Spring Work in the Garden

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The arrival of the annual catalogs of the seed houses again reminds us that gardening time is at hand and ought also to determine those who have been slack heretofore that this year the time has come for a real first class kitchen garden. No one has greater need of this than the Western farmer and no one is better situated than he to have one if he will only use some forethought and management in that direction, and most assuredly no one will reap better returns from a good kitchen garden than the grain farmer, tied down as he is by the pressure of harvest for several weeks each summer and fall. Even if he would, and few will, he cannot spare the time to go after green vegetables, either to neighbor or town. Confined, as the more outlying farm households are, to a round of salt meat in hot weather, who has greater need of plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables to vary this monotony and counteract its effects on both the physical and mental well-being of the household?

Granted the need for having, and will to have, it is the part of wisdom to look far enough ahead to get the necessary seeds before they are wanted and in doing so, send direct to the seed house you prefer to deal with, and do not wait until so late you have to rush to the grocery and get from the ready-made assortment supplied there, as these are generally limited in their selection, and by a large number of experimental tests have been proved, also, to be very low in power of germination, as a rule.

In ordering seeds from a catalog, it is the part of wisdom to skip the colored pages containing the wonderful novelties, etc., quoted at much higher prices than the regular list and more often than not, of doubtful value to the plain every day gardener, let the experimental stations try these out—that's what we keep them for. A variety of any sort that appears in the regular list of several well established houses is generally to be relied upon, provided, of course, it is adapted to your conditions in other respects, for the Northwest, earliness of maturity is the first quality to be considered, especially in such as are to be held for winter use, and the varieties recommended by the Western experimental stations are generally pretty reliable.

In passing, I would just like to say that it seems too bad none of our Canadian seed houses have confidence enough in their own goods to guarantee either purity of variety or power of germination. I hate to think that if we want seeds guaranteed to be just what we pay for,

we have to go across the line for them. Last year I sent to the States for onion seed of a variety I had been getting in Canada for several years and under guarantee I got seed that gave me onions of one color and uniform in growth, and not of at least four colors, as they had been every year previous. It is pretty tough, too, that a man should sow four acres of onions and get as many leeks or garlies, as I once sowed, and have no recourse on the seller.

However, to return to our "muttons," every farmer should have a small hot-bed. At least one sash 3' x 6', and give his cauliflower, cabbage, lettuce (and if disposed to try these, also, his celery and tomatoes) a good start as well as have some early radish. In planning the garden, get as good a piece of ground as possible near the house (if far away it is likely to be neglected in care, and not drawn on often enough), and lay it out oblong, rather than square and then get all the fertility you can into it and give about twice as much preparation as you think necessary, not with one tool, but with a variety of tools, each will touch it up in a different way and be far better than repetitions with one. Then lay it off so as to have none of those little two-bit beds of our grandmother's days, but rows running clear through the longest way of the plot, and far enough from each other to work with the horse cultivator and save back work and hand work. Get this done the very first day the ground can be touched, this may keep the field crop back one man's work one day, otherwise the field work will probably keep the garden back a fortnight or even a month, and having got it ready, sow your onions, early peas, parsnips and radish at once, can't get these in too early, that is, unless you prefer to start your onions in the hot-bed also. I raised half a ton last year that way and can transplant them far quicker than I can thin the field sown ones, besides saving the early weeding which is so trying, and gaining, if you start the hot-bed early enough, at least a month in growth.

In looking ahead for the care of the garden after it is up, the twelve tooth cultivator is the best horse tool if used in time and frequently, to be able to use it early it is a very good plan to mix radish seed with all onion, carrot and parsnip seed, as one can then follow the rows long before it would be possible to do otherwise, and by getting a mixture of all seasons radishes they can be drawn on as wanted for the table before doing any injury to the other plants.

A good hand wheel hoe is a fine tool to have also, and will easily pay for itself in a large household as it is surprising how many will take hold of it and do a few minutes work, who except under orders, would never pull a weed by hand or use a hoe. Above all things, stir the surface often and keep it level to save moisture. Make an effort to interest the younger members of the family also and see by fall, if all told, it has not been the most satisfactory piece of work on the farm.

KINNIKINIK RANCHER.

### Hot-Bed for Early Garden

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Each day brings us nearer to the time when every minute we can spare may be profitably, and to most of us, enjoyably spent, preparing to have early vegetables and flowers. We cannot have an early garden without some arrangement whereby plants can be well started before weather conditions allow them to be planted in the open.

Many people seem to have the idea that it is quite an undertaking to make a hot-bed, and every spring we see numerous questions asked concerning the construction of one.

Any farmer can have one without the loss of much time or the expenditure of cash. If made use of, for one season with tomatoes, cabbage, celery and a few other vegetables, there will be no hesitation about having one every season.

The bed should be so located where there is a windbreak on the northeast and west sides, either by buildings or tight board fence, but not so close that the bed is shaded. It is practically nothing more than a board-edged pit, in which there is fermenting manure covered with several inches of soil and rooted with window glass. To make the frame, take six-inch lumber, and in each corner use a 2' x 2" and nail the boards onto it, and space the frame. Nail a piece of board across the frame every 3 or 4 feet, and nail the frame. On this the

sash rests, and can be very little trouble. Of the frame are two those in front should thus giving a slant to may run off quickly utilization of the sun.

Old windows or stave use can be made into some notches into to allow the water to fit the sashes you may pose and in this way without costing a cent.

For heating manure Haul the manure in, going to have the round topped but fl heat in a few days, p through the center; one side heating and breaking all hard manure throughout "smoking" uniformly the snow away where and spread about four over the ground, the manure, set on the more inside. On the of the frame with di window sash. When again, which will be it solid. Now, if it i trodden, there is too soggy and solid the should feel springy should not swell up when released from i is packed, fill in five should be rich, and sand. A soil made rotted sod and some earth for hot-bed. I preparations do not on this account. Ta at hand, and, if froze glass. When the so through-out, it should The space between t nowhere measure less the soil will sink as t

Seeds that germinate and which are similar under the same wind air, moisture and s rows, and cover wit sand and do not cov times the diameter should also find a plac be sown separately i sowing, replace the s plants come up.

Watering should b water that has been water so much as t the early part of the so that the plants are Later on, when th water towards evenin a chance to soak int sun evaporates it. upon the panes, ve Ventilation is essent plants. Open alway wind. As the plants warmer, more air is r dows may be remov and during chilly da glass at night with of the plants getting the season.

CROON