

MARCH WIND.

A squirrel heard against his door
The noisy March wind tap ;
He scanned the whitened woodland o'er,
And chattered : " Dears,
I've many fears ;
We'll take another nap."

A tiny spear of grass peeped out
And heard the wind so shrill ;
It paused a while, in fear and doubt,
Then seemed to say :
" I'll go away
Till skies are not so chill."

A little bird, all pinched with cold,
Sat inuffled in a tree ;
It tried to sing, its heart was bold,
And feebly cheeped,
" The snow is heaped ;
Sad weather this for me."

A pretty rill crept from the ice,
To tinkle down the hill ;
It glanced in sunshine warm and nice,
Then quiet grew,
Ah ! well it knew
The frost would linger still.

A Snowdrop looked up at the sky,
With baby face so dear !
It thrived, though sleet and wind went by,
And smiled : " I'll stay,
Please, if I may,
Some weary heart to cheer !"

—Independent.

THE APPLE TRADE.—The exports of apples from the United States and Canada from 1882-3 were 365,107 barrels. A larger quantity could have been absorbed by the foreign demand but for the scarcity in the home markets.

DRIED APPLES.—Last year over three million pounds of dried apples were exported from the United States to the markets of China, India, Egypt, Southern Africa, Australia, and also to England and Scotland. Four-fifths of this amount was exported from the port of New York. The exporters gather them up from all portions of the country, the best, it is said, coming from North Carolina. The cores and parings are shipped to France, where they are used in changing the flavors of various brands of wine.

ASPARAGUS CULTURE.—How is it that most writers on asparagus culture recommend planting about a foot apart in the rows ? I think this is a mistake ; the best shoots can be obtained only by giving plenty of room to the plants ; four feet between the rows and three feet in the rows is near enough. Crowd the plants

and Conover's Colossal or any other giant asparagus cannot be produced, let the other treatment be ever so liberal. On the other hand give plenty of room and plenty of manure in good sandy loam, and giant shoots are produced every time. The roots require plenty of room to ramify in before large, well developed crowns can be secured, without which strong shoots cannot grow. When selecting asparagus roots to force, I always used to select the strongest and best ripened crowns I could get ; unless such were brought into heat good shoots could not be produced. Like the strawberry, this year's treatment is what forms the crops for next season, and if this is not attended to poor results may be expected the following season. Asparagus beds are often destroyed by not allowing enough of foliage to mature the crowns for producing next season's crops. M. MILTON. Mahoning Co., O.—*Country Gentleman*.

THE SWITZER APPLE.—The Switzer is one of the apples imported from Russia by the United States Department of Agriculture in 1869-70. The tree is a vigorous grower, upright and spreading, and an early and abundant bearer. The young shoots are dark brown (black walnut color) with not many, but very distinct white dots. Fruit medium to large, very smooth and fair, roundish-conical. Skin almost covered with bright, broad splashes of different shades of crimson, somewhat after the style of the St. Lawrence, but not so dark. No bloom. Stalk medium in size and length, rather deeply inserted. Calyx partially closed, in a shallow, smooth basin. Flesh white, soft, juicy, and of remarkably fine, rich flavor for a Russian apple. Very good to eat. Ripens in Northern Vermont from first to middle of September, or with Red Astrachan, but much more simultaneously. In quality it is the best of the Russian early sorts, being far better for eating uncooked than Red Astrachan, quite as beautiful, equal in size, and of about the same season. It will push the Red Astrachan hard as a market apple if introduced to general cultivation. The tree is considerably hardier than Astrachan, and bears very much younger. T. H. H.—*Rural New Yorker*.