

THE ORCHARD.

PROFITS OF FRUIT CULTURE.

There can be no question but that the raising of fruit for market may be made a profitable business in all the temperate regions; and nowhere more profitable than in many parts of Ontario. The same energy and push requisite to success in more tropical climates, will be well rewarded here. A correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, writing from Virginia, says:—One thousand dollars from an acre of grapes have been realized in one year, near Charlottesville, and \$75 from one apple tree in one year. The writer last year gathered 27 bushels of the best winter apples from one tree, and that not a large tree, and the product was sold from \$4 to \$6 per barrel.

APPLE TREES SUITED TO NORTHERN CLIMATE.

The climate of Wisconsin is more trying to fruit trees than that of the greater part of Ontario, hence we think it would be interesting to our readers to see what varieties are recommended by fruit growers in that state. Mr. O. S. Willey writing to the *Wisconsin Farmer* says:—

I am asked for a list of apples for an orchard of 500 trees, in Juneau Co., Wis. Without knowing any of the particulars as to locality, soil or other consideration I make the following. Some sorts are named only in small lots. This is more to give variety and trial than for actual value. I name:

SUMMER.—35 Duchess of Oldenburgh, 20 Red Astrachan; 5 Sops of Wine;

FALL.—50 Fameuse, or Snow Apple; 15 St. Lawrence; 20 Haas; 20 Bailey Sweet; 5 Colvert; 5 Lowell.

WINTER.—75 Ben Davis; 50 Rawles Janet; 50 Golden Russet; 20 Jonathan; 15 Willow Twig; 15 Grimes Golden Pippin; 15 Bethlehemite; 25 Plumb's Cider; 20 Utter; 15 Tallman Sweet; 25 Walbridge.

The above list would make a valuable collection, running from midsummer to late winter or even early summer again. I have put but few Walbridge on this list, from the fact that it has been on trial in so small a section of country. I have great faith in its value, but my experience is to move slow with untried sorts. Hyslop and Transcendant crabs may be added as best in their line, and valuable to graft on to when market is overstocked,

THE LAWVER APPLE.

The *Horticulturist* says, we received specimens of the Lawver to test its keeping and other qualities when in prime. There has been a good deal of noise made about this apple. It has been described as of a "rich, mild, tingling acid; very much like the cranberry; fine flavor, leaving an excellent relish, etc." But we do not find it quite so exquisite in flavor as all this would imply. For long keeping qualities it proves one of the very best, while for shipping, it must be peerless, for it has a skin like the hide of a rhinoceros. Size, above medium; form flattened, one sided; skin thick, almost entirely overspread with dark red and speckled with grey dots; cavity rather narrow, deep; stem medium to long; basin rather narrow and shallow; core large, open; seeds very large, deep brown; flesh firm, darkish yellow, sprightly, acid, moderate juicy; may be reckoned good; season, February to July. On the whole, the Lawver has many good qualities to commend it.

WINTER PEARS.

In answer to a young cultivator, the *Country Gentleman* recommends Beurre d'Anjou, Winter Nelis, and Lawrence to use up to about the first of January. After that the Josephine de Malines is the best, keeping till the first of February. Doyenne d'Alencon ripens about same time as the latter, but it is not quite so good in quality. It is, however, a hardy tree, good bearer, and on the whole a desirable sort. The Vicar of Winkfield ripens about mid-winter, but its quality, as ordinarily cultivated, is greatly injured by its being allowed to over-bear.

ASHES IN THE ORCHARD.

D. W. Kauffman, of Des Moines, Iowa, writes to the *Iowa Homestead*, that ashes are worth one dollar per bushel to put about fruit trees, and that he would not sell his ashes at that price, and do without their use in the orchard. He has used ashes about fruit trees

for fifteen years, and during all that time has never seen a borer where ashes were used. The borer is a terrible pest to the fruit grower, and if all other impediments to successful growing were as easily overcome, and completely controlled as the borer, then fruit growing would be very successfully practised.

At the recent meeting of the Fruit Growers Association of Ontario, Mr. Moore stated that he had been in the habit of using unleached ashes as a manure for his fruit trees, and that he values them more highly for this purpose than barn-yard manure. If our farmers knew the value of wood ashes for the garden and orchard and farm, they would not sell them for a few cents per bushel. The ashes that they barter for a few pounds of soap would, if applied to the soil, so increase their crops of fruit and grain as to yield them ten times the value they now get for them.

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

HARDY FLOWERS—CROCUS.

All are familiar with this widely-cultivated flower of spring and autumn, for there are autumn as well as spring crocuses, only the former are not so often to be seen in the smaller classes of gardens as the latter. Both sections of the family have equal claims on the regard of the lover of hardy flowers. If the one is in some of its varieties among the earliest gifts of Flora, the other can be reckoned upon as among her last gifts in the year. In one hand she holds out from the short days of October an offering of brilliant crocuses in no way inferior to those which with the other she scatters so profusely in the earliest months. A good selection of these should be in every garden, large or small, for if we want flowers at any time more than another near our dwellings, it surely is when they cannot be seen elsewhere. The true autumn crocuses are not those which commonly bear the name. The colchicum, or meadow saffron, is usually, but erroneously, called autumn crocus. The true autumn crocus and the meadow saffron have nothing in common with each other except a similarity in the flowers externally, and in the circumstance of their flowering each in autumn or early winter. There is more variety of color in the variety of true autumn crocus than in the meadow saffrons. Some of them are rather rare, and consequently difficult to procure; but *C. nudiflorus*, *C. sativus*, and *C. speciosus* may be got from any respectable nurseryman. The latter is purplish blue, the second is violet, and the first is pale reddish purple, and the flowers of all are enlivened by the large bright, orange or yellow anthers which form such a prominent feature in all the true crocuses. Of spring crocuses there is greater variety, and perhaps none exceed in brilliancy of color the commonly cultivated varieties. One of the earliest of these is *C. reticulatus*, the bright yellow one with the bar of brown on the outside of the petals, to be seen in every garden. The purple, blue, and white varieties are all forms of *C. vernus*. The crocus is one simplest of flowers to cultivate. Any tolerably good garden soil suits them well, but they reach their greatest perfection in light, rich, well drained loam. They are commonly planted in the front line of flower borders and among shrubs, and when once they are planted a revolution of the garden arrangements in the majority of cases only is likely ever to bring about any change in their position; they are left from year to year for a lifetime to be smothered by each other and their more powerful neighbors. This is not cultivation; the crocus as much as any plant requires a little change, and though it will flower unfaithfully every year under this neglectful treatment, yet the blossoms are poor and short-lived compared with what they are when generously cultivated. The roots should be lifted every third or fourth year in order that the ground may be dug and manured when they should be separated and re-planted, placing them two or three inches deep and about an inch apart. This operation is best performed immediately after the leaves have died away. It is customary with many to lift the clumps bodily as soon as the leaves have declined, and lay them in a somewhat shady place to dry; they are then separated, and stored away dry till autumn, say October or November, when they are again planted in their former positions, or new ones. This can only be practised with the spring sorts; those that flower in autumn require to be lifted in the same way immediately after the leaves have declined, but they should be planted as soon as the ground has been prepared for them.—*North British Agriculturist*.

LONGEVITY OF IVY.

"The English are fond of referring to the great longevity of the oak, but we question whether their ivy will not equal it. In this country the English oak, judging by the specimens in the old Bartram garden, will not last much beyond a hundred years, but the ivy shows no signs of any decay. One of our most beautiful gardens, 'The Grange,' the country seat of Jno. Ashurst, Esq., is famous for its beautiful specimens of ivy. The first plants were brought in a carriage from Judge Peter's celebrated place at Belmont, by Mrs. Lyre, 60 years ago, and look now as if they would flourish for centuries yet."

We have clipped the above interesting statement from the *Gardener's Monthly*, and would say to our readers that in our climate it will thrive best on the north side of buildings and walls. In those parts where the cold of winter is very intense, the thermometer falling frequently to fifteen and twenty degrees below zero, there the ivy will not thrive well in any exposure.

HANGING BASKETS.

Plants with slender branches which naturally hang down, are most suitable for hanging baskets. "Mother of Thousands"—the "Wandering Jew" with its pretty marked leaves—the "Lobelias," and some of the trailing "Campanulus or Bell Flowers"—the well named "Rat-tailed Cacti," and the so-called "Ice-plants," are all more at home when suspended than when grown in any other position, unless it may be when placed on brackets each side of the window, where they have a very charming appearance. I would suggest that the suspended basket or flower-pot should be supported by a piece of cord passed through a small pulley, by which means it will be easily lowered down for the purpose of watering.

HOUSE PLANTS IN WINTER.

Mr. James Vick, whose large experience as a florist makes him an unexceptional authority on the subject, gives the following suggestions with regard to the management of house plants in winter:—

"Few plants can endure the high temperature and dry atmosphere of most of our living rooms. The temperature should not be allowed to go above sixty-five in the day time, and not above forty in the night. As much air and light as possible should be given, while the leaves should be sprinkled every morning. A spare room, or parlor, or extra bedroom, is better for plants than a living room. A bay window, connected with a warm room, especially if facing the south or east, makes an excellent place for keeping plants in winter. It should have glass doors on the inside, which can be closed a part of the time, especially when sweeping and dusting. The main thing in keeping house plants in health is to secure an even temperature, a moist atmosphere, and freedom from dust. Sprinkle the leaves occasionally, and when they need water, use it freely. If the green fly, or aphid, appears, wash with soap-suds frequently, and occasionally with a little tobacco water, or a decoction of quassia chips. If the red spider comes, it shows the plants are in too dry an atmosphere. Burn a little sulphur under the plants, the fumes of which will kill the spider, and afterwards keep the stems and leaves well moistened. Occasionally, but not often, worms appear in the pots. This can be avoided in a great measure by careful potting. A little weak lime water is sometimes of benefit in such cases, also five drops of liquid ammonia to a gallon of water, though, perhaps the better way is to re-pot, removing the earth carefully, so as not to injure the growth of the plant."

BEGONIAS.—Begonia Rex will drop its leaves if kept too cool; it wants a temperature of from 60 to 75 degs. and air a little moist; pot with rich sandy loam and refuse hops.

PROTECTION OF APPLE TREES AGAINST RABBITS.—Paint the trees with blood and red clay. Have the clay pulverized and stir in the blood to the thickness of paint. It can be applied with a rag or brush; one application a year is sufficient, as the hardest rains will not wash it off. It is a sure preventive against rabbits, goats and sheep.

SINGULAR FREAK.—The peach trees near Piedmont, Va., known as the Black or Blood Peach, produced this year white fleshed and white skinned peaches—almost colorless in skin and flesh—some were of a light brownish yellow—all about the usual size, high flavored and fine, without any of the acid or peculiar characteristics of the Blood Peach. Was this caused by the intense heat and drought of the present year?