



Agricultural Department.

CULTIVATION OF CELERY.

Celery plants, for best results, must be kept growing without interruption. They rarely recover fully, if from any causes they receive a check, hence great care is necessary in transplanting from seed beds to plant beds. Avoid breaking or drying off the roots, and when possible set out the plants in cloudy weather. Shelter them from drying wind and hot sun when first transplanted, and water often. The soil should be rich and thoroughly pulverized. The land best suited to this plant is a deep, mellow, sandy loam, rather moist in character. Celery will thrive, however, on drained clay lands if heavily manured. Land manured the fall previous makes an excellent bed for celery. Fresh manure is injurious, as it induces a rank growth which injures the quality of the stalks, rendering them pithy and flabby in character, a sorry contrast to the crispness of well-grown stems.

If the land is in order where it is designed to finally grow the celery there is no objection to transplanting directly from the seed-bed to the field providing arrangements can be made for watering and shading the plants at first. As a rule farmers delay the final transplanting until July when land previously occupied has been cleared off. If the weather is dry at this season, as it is liable to be, the plants will require repeated waterings until they are well established, for celery cannot withstand a drought. Frequent hoeings and weedings are also necessary until the final banking up.

The old practice of banking up celery plants as they grow is being gradually abandoned. Many cultivators attribute the rust on celery to the particles of earth which fall in among the stems during the process of hilling when there is dew or rain on the plants. Celery, therefore, in not a few instances, is allowed to grow and spread in all directions until such time as banking up is required for bleaching the stalks and protecting them from injury by frosts. The leaves at this time are carefully straightened up, held firmly together and earthed up sufficiently to bleach them. During moist warm weather in September celery will bleach within a fortnight if properly earthed; later when the day and nights are cooler, three weeks or more are required.

Celery is stored for winter markets in pits, trenches, &c., made for the purpose. The plants are set in these as closely as they will stand. Provision is made to keep water from standing in them, and the tops are covered to protect the celery from freezing. For family use a small supply of celery already bleached may be stored in the cellar, covered with light garden soil or sand. In bleaching celery be careful not to let it freeze, not to heat it by too close packing and heavy covering, and avoid standing water in the trench.

A method practised by the Edinburgh market gardeners is reported to be as follows: They grow their celery plants in temporary or nursery beds until they are ten inches or one foot high before planting in trenches. The trenches are dug out six feet wide and one foot deep; the bottom is loosened and well enriched and the plants are set in rows across the beds, fourteen inches asunder, and the plants nine inches apart in rows. By this means it is claimed that space is economized and the plants attain a fair average size and quality.—*N. Y. World.*

BALCONY AND VERANDAH GARDENING.

There is no one perhaps engaged in gardening pursuits that labors under more disadvantages than those who are engaged in keeping up a display of flowers in balconies and verandahs. In the first place, when the house happens to be in close proximity to a much-used thoroughfare, the dust arising from the road is destructive to vegetation. In the second, those who have a balcony or verandah with a southern aspect have to contend with the difficulty of preventing the plants being burnt up by the sun, which strikes upon the plants in a manner that is not very acceptable to them. Very often, too, the manager of the balcony garden has to contend against the discomfort occasioned by the surplus water dripping upon the occupants of the rooms below. None of these drawbacks can be said to be avoidable, therefore the best must be made of what cannot be avoided; and I have often been surprised at the success that has attended the efforts of some in securing a display of flowers where the work has been commenced and carried through in an earnest manner. Many attempts are made that result in failure more or less complete, owing either to a wrong start being made or after-management being

unsatisfactory. Seeing how many difficulties there are to contend against in balcony gardening, no one should enter upon it who is not prepared to make a good beginning, and ready to profit by experience. To begin well, some amount of skill must be brought to bear upon the work, so that a suitable selection of materials may be made.

The choosing of the pots or boxes, and making a selection of suitable plants, are the most important points. I will refer first to the work of determining the most suitable kind of pots and boxes. Looking at the position they are to occupy, wood boxes offer the most advantages from a cultural point of view, because wood is a good non-conductor of heat, and consequently plants occupying them do not suffer so much from heat and drought as those made of terra-cotta, metal or slate. Of course I am aware that wood does conduct heat, but it does not allow the warmth to pass through it so readily as slate or terra-cotta. For this reason wooden boxes should be used in preference to those made of other materials, but they are not so durable, as the constant damp arising from the soil penetrates and in time rots the wood. In positions where the boxes stand in the shade, or where they are shaded during the hottest part of the day, slate boxes are to be preferred, as they can be painted any color that may be desired to make them correspond with the surroundings. Wire baskets are the most unsuitable of any unless they are to be managed by some one who understands the requirements of the plants to be grown in them, as the occupants of wire baskets seldom receive enough water when attended by the inexperienced. In making the selection, care should be taken that, whether pots or boxes are decided upon, they must be large enough to hold a reasonable amount of soil, for a mere handful is of no use. Boxes for geraniums, petunias, tropeolums, and similar subjects, should, when possible, be eight inches deep and ten inches wide in the clear, the length to be in proportion to the space they are to occupy. It is not advisable to have the boxes more than three feet long, on account of the strength required to move them about. When the plants are grown singly in pots, and stand about on the floor of the balcony, it is a capital plan to place the pots in others two sizes larger, and fill up the spaces with fine soil. Geraniums and fuchsias do uncommonly well this way, because they suffer less from drought as the soil is kept in a more uniform state of moisture. If wood boxes are used they should be made the same size as those made of slate, and may be ornamented with rustic work, and when so ornamented and varnished they have a very nice appearance.—*Gardener's Magazine.*

AN ITEM CONCERNING EGGS.

"Yes sir," said the dealer, in answer to our enquiry, "a great difference in eggs is noticed, in size as well as weight. Now, just look at those eggs; they are what we term 'home eggs,' brought in from places near Boston, in small lots. Those are eggs of Light Brahmas, and they are the best and highest-priced eggs in market. Why, when Cape or Eastern eggs are worth 18 cents, those eggs are worth 27 cents. They weigh on an average, take them from the crate as they come, 2 lbs. to the dozen, while selected lots for family use will weigh as high as 2 lbs. 9 oz., to the dozen—just think of that!" "What do common eggs weigh?" "Don't know—let's see." On go a dozen of common eggs taken at random from a "Cape" lot. They turn the scales at just 1 lb. 5 oz. Who does not see the importance of producing the best eggs for the quickest market at the highest price; and who does not see the justice of selling eggs by weight rather than by count? "Are not Plymouth Rocks eggs of choice quality?" "Yes; but they do not come up to those of the Brahmas, though they are a fair-sized egg and weigh about 1 lb. 12 oz., per dozen."—*American Cultivator.*

This may surprise some of our readers, but it is nevertheless true as we know from actual observation. The quality of the egg not only depends much upon the breed of fowls but the food they get. Hens permitted or forced to roam abroad and forage for a living will not furnish as rich eggs as those that receive a proper supply of corn, meal, or other suitable food.—*Ex.*

AN IMPATIENT PLOUGHMAN.

Don't get angry at a dumb beast, just because you sometimes fail to understand each other. Animal nature is very much like human nature—and it appreciates kindness or resents insult or outrage in precisely the same manner. A few days ago, while out with a friend in the vicinity of Washington, I saw a darkey ploughing a bit of scrubby bottom land that had not been tilled since the war. The roots were tough, and the horse was tired and at length refused to pull, so the darkey, after deafening the animal by his screaming, cut a beech rod and—lost his temper. Of course the horse was frightened and pranced and kicked in fine style in his endeavors to get away from his merciless master;

then the negro unfastened the trace-chain and began to belabor the poor animal most unmercifully with no other effect than to put "the ole dibbil" into him worse than ever. Not caring to witness any further exhibition of cruelty, I stepped up to the trembling animal, and with a word to the man, took the bridle in my hand, and patting and stroking the horse's nose and face, let him rest and become quiet. He soon had confidence in me, and a few minutes later, when the colored man took the lines in hand once more, only a little more patting and coaxing was required, and away he went as briskly as could be desired. As my friend was sketching in the vicinity, I remained until after the ploughing was finished, but there was no need of further blows. Have you an ugly horse? If so, don't lose your temper and set him an awfully bad example.—*Correspondence of N. Y. Tribune.*

FINE PETUNIAS.—It seems hard to realize that the poor people who lived more than fifty years ago never saw a petunia, and that when about that time a poor white variety was discovered in South America the world could be pleased with it; and it was much more than pleased when, in 1830, a purple petunia was found in Brazil. About eighteen years since we were somewhat astonished by the announcement that a double white petunia had been produced. It was then only semi-double, but now we have the double of all colors, and as large as can be desired. Sow the seed in the spring, in a cold-frame if possible, if not, in boxes or beds in the garden, and by the middle of May or first of June plants will be ready to put out in the flowering beds, and will bloom abundantly until frost. Set the plants about eighteen inches apart. They come pretty true from seed, though not reliable in this respect, being inclined to spot. The petunia as at present cultivated embraces three classes. The grandiflora varieties make quite a strong, succulent growth, and the stems and leaves are sticky to the touch. These bear a few very large, magnificent flowers, often from three to four inches across. They give but a very few seeds. The double petunia gives no seed, and those that produce double flowers are obtained by fertilizing single flowers with the pollen of the double. The third class is the small-flowered varieties. They bear an immense number of flowers, from early summer until frost, and seed freely in the open ground. A well filled circular bed, six feet in diameter, will display continually, without a day's intermission, thousands of flowers.—*Christian at Work.*

In 1866 Mr. Carillet, of Vincennes, France, took two young pear trees, each of which was worked on the quince stock, and one of these, the Beurre de Aremberg, was made to serve as the stock, while the other, Beurre de Charneu, was grafted upon it in an inverted position, having its roots fully exposed to the air. The operation was performed in April and during the summer the stock grew vigorously and bore two fruits, while the scion tree threw out buds and shoots from the quince stock. To add to the complexity of the experiment, M. Carillet grafted four pear scions on the principal roots of the quince, and two of these succeeded. The sap thus passed from quince roots through Beurre de Aremberg, thirdly through the inverted Beurre de Charneu, then through the quince again, and finally into the two varieties of pears.—*London Garden.*

VEGETABLES have been more improved in their qualities and appearance by careful cultivation than many persons are aware. Celery, so agreeable to most palates, is a modification of a plant the taste of which is so acrid and bitter that it cannot be eaten. Our cauliflowers and cabbages, which weigh many pounds, are largely developed coleworts, that grow wild on the seashore and do not weigh more than half an ounce each. Beets and carrots were originally little more than hard, stringy roots; while the potato was at first no larger than a walnut. Turnips and carrots are thought to be indigenous roots of France, cauliflowers came from Cyprus, artichokes from Sicily, lettuce from Cos, peas from Syria, beans from Persia, spinach from Western Asia, radishes from China, onions from the East, and rhubarb from Turkey.—*Exchange.*

GRAFTING-WAX.—A grafting wax which may be used immediately or laid away and kept for years, is made by melting and stirring together four parts of rosin, one of tallow, and one of beeswax; then pour into a bucket of cold water. As soon as cool enough to be handled, work the mass over and draw it like shoemaker's wax until it is entirely pliable. The best way to teach boys how to graft or bud is to send them into the orchard under the instructions of any farmer who knows how to graft. They will earn more in an hour in this way than during an entire season trying to follow written rules without practical illustration.

SOOT FOR ROSES.—Collect some soot from a chimney or stove where wood is used for fuel, put into an old pitcher, and pour hot water upon it. When cool, use it to water your

plants every few days. The effect upon plants is wonderful in producing a rapid growth of thrifty shoots, with large thick leaves and a great number of richly-tinted roses.

DOMESTIC.

SIMPLE OMELET.—Measure out one tablespoonful of milk for each egg to be used, and as much butter, pepper, and salt as will season to your taste. Beat the eggs separately very stiff, add the yolks to the milk, butter etc., beating them well together; lastly add the whites. Stir well and turn into a hot buttered saucepan. Do not let it get hard, but roll the mixture in the pan, leaving it moist in the middle. It takes but a few minutes to cook; overdone, it will be hard and indigestible.

BAKED OMELET.—Beat the yolks of six eggs till foamy, and stir them into a cup and a half of sweet milk, a little salt and pepper, and a tablespoonful of flour rubbed smooth in a little cold milk; lastly add the whites beaten very stiff. Pour all into a hot buttered pan, and let it boil until it thickens, stirring all the time. As soon as it is thickened, pour into an omelet or baking dish, and brown in a quick oven.

TO RESTORE COLOR.—that has been taken out of dress goods of the color is taken out by acids wet the spots with liquid ammonia to kill the acid, and then wet with cholorform to restore the color. If the color is destroyed by alkalis wet with acid to destroy the alkali, and then with the chloroform to restore the color.

WHITE SAUCE FOR GAME.—Boil an onion in a pint of milk till it is like a jelly; then strain, and stir into the boiling milk sifted bread crumbs, enough to make it like thick cream when well beaten. Beat while boiling and season with salt, black and cayenne pepper and a little nutmeg.

MACARONI WITH TOMATO SAUCE.—Melt two tablespoonfuls of butter in a saucepan, put to it one medium-sized onion chopped fine, a small piece of celery and a little parsley. Let it cook slowly, but carefully, lest it scorch, which would spoil all. When the onion is delicately brown put in a pint of canned tomatoes if in the winter or a quart of fresh tomatoes in their season and boil for an hour; then strain through a fine sieve into a clean saucepan, cook until as thick as catsup; season with salt, pepper, and butter. This should be all ready before cooking the macaroni, but keep gently simmering to keep hot till the macaroni is done. Put half a pound of well washed macaroni into boiling salt water, cook twenty minutes, then drain it in a colander. Place a layer of macaroni in a hot dish then place over it a layer of the tomato sauce, then another layer of macaroni, then a layer of sauce, having the sauce on the last thing. Set in the oven for five minutes and then serve very hot.

TO STARCH AND IRON SHIRT BOSOMS.—A lady gives the following in the *Ohio Farmer*: To three tablespoonfuls of common starch, well boiled in one quart of water, add a lump of lard the size of a pea, a tablespoonful of loaf sugar and a little salt. Let it cool until you can use it without burning your hands. When the clothes are thoroughly dry, dampen your shirts in a thin, cold starch, roll them up and let them lie one hour before ironing. When ready to iron have a bowl of clean, cold water at hand, dip a clean handkerchief into it and wring it out dry; then stretch the shirt over a shirt-board, and with the dampened handkerchief wipe off every particle of starch that appears on the surface, taking care always to wipe downward. Be careful not to have the iron too hot. The more pressure you use on the starched surface the finer polish you will get. I have done up shirts in this way for several years, and know that it will produce a polish equal to any laundry work. I forgot to mention in its proper place that you should never boil the starch until the clothes are ready to hang up to dry.

A CORRESPONDENT sends the following to the *Western Rural*: Take nearly a tablespoonful of starch for each bosom; dissolve in a little cold water and pour in boiling water, stirring briskly until it looks clear; be careful not to have it too thick; boil three or four minutes. If the bosoms and cuffs are dry, wet them in cold water before putting them through the starch; hang out on the line, and when they are dry, put them through some thin cold starch so they will be stiff enough; roll tight and let them lie an hour or two before ironing. When you iron them, leave the bosom till the last, then take a damp cloth and rub over it to get it smooth before putting the iron on it. When the bosom is ironed dry, wring the cloth out of the water, leaving it pretty wet, and rub lightly over, then iron dry again. This makes the gloss. If the starch sticks to the iron it is because it was too thick. If you should happen to yellow it in any place (as is often the case) hang out in the sunshine and it will disappear. If you will follow strictly the above rule I don't think you will have much trouble.