

out in the open border, and lovely blue flowers freely cut for bouquets.

DWARF PEAR TREES.

I have about thirty dwarf pear trees whose leaves, after turning brown, have all fallen off and fresh foliage formed. The bark is not at all affected.

1. Will the trees die, or can they be saved, and how?

Will the *Horticulturist* kindly reply in the next issue?

2. Also, if the Clematis can be propagated by cuttings? R.

Toronto, 13th August, 1883.

1. It is impossible to tell whether the pear trees will die or not. The formation of fresh foliage gives ground for the hope that they will survive.

2. Clematis does not grow readily from cuttings, but does well layered.—Ed.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST.

MR. EDITOR,—Is the wild cucumber, *Echinocystis lobata*, poisonous? It is an annual. The leaves resemble the leaves of the cucumber of our gardens, but are more indented. The flowers are white formed on sprays. The fruit or pod is oval and covered with prickles. The plant is a rapid growing creeper. The seeds are similar to those of the water-melon.

Yours truly, F. G. B.

Ottawa, Sept. 14, 1883.

REPLY.—Not being familiar with the plant, we referred the question to Wm. Saunders, Esq., of London, an able chemist and botanist, to which he replies as follows:—"I have not been able to find in any book in my possession anything relating to the physiological action of the *Echinocystis lobata*,

but since it is closely related to the squirting cucumber, *Ecbatium officianum*, from which Elaterium is prepared, one of the most violent drastic cathartics known, I should expect that it would act violently on the bowels if any of the fruit was swallowed, producing abundant and watery stools."

Prof. Asa Gray, in his Manual of Botany, gives Wild Balsam Apple as the common name of this plant.

ALUM FOR CURRANT WORMS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST.

MR. EDITOR,—In answer to Mr. J. Savage's inquiry as to how to make and apply the alum water, I took the receipt from page 4, January number. The solution is one pound of alum dissolved in three gallons of rain water. The mode of proceeding is to dissolve the alum in a small quantity of water, then add sufficient water to make three gallons. When cold, put in a common watering pot with a rose spout and sprinkle the currant bushes as soon as the worms appear, at first for two or three days every morning, and then once or twice a week will keep them clean, or at least did mine.

Yours truly,

O. H. WEBBER.

Hamilton, Sept. 20, 1883.

SIZE OF JAMES VICK.

Mr. A. M. Purdy writes to us as follows: "Pardon me, but six such large berries as you show for James Vick could not be found on any plantation of that sort. Mine were not half that size."

We supposed that Mr. D. M. Dewey, of Rochester, N. Y., under whose supervision the coloured plate of James Vick was printed for our August number, had such a reputation for accuracy in these matters that no one could challenge his representations.