

## FORCING TOMATOES

THE forcing of tomatoes for commercial purposes has been receiving considerable attention in different sections of Ontario during the past few seasons and an increasing demand is causing the growers to erect greenhouses each year. As the best market is found during the Christmas holidays and from then until Easter a special effort is made to have the crop ripe shortly before Christmas.

In Bulletin No. 231, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, matters in connection with forcing tomatoes are dealt with by Professors Craig and Humm. It is of the utmost importance that a suitable size and perfect shape be obtained. Sales are usually made at a high price and the consumer orders a definite number of fruits rather than a specific weight. Tomatoes of irregular shape are unattractive, and if large the cost would be too high, as they are served one to each individual. Therefore, it is necessary to have them of moderate size and as uniform as possible.

After four years testing at Cornell, several varieties have been found which are adapted to forcing. The characteristics mentioned as being desirable are: slow stocky growth; healthy, but not heavy foliage; a habit of forming the first cluster of buds near the base of the plant and a protruding stigma capable of setting fruit with a minimum amount of pollen.

### BEST VARIETIES FOR FORCING.

In many respects the English types of tomatoes have proved to be far superior to those of American origin. They set fruit more readily in dark weather; they grow the fruit in clusters, ripening the full cluster within a short period, and they continue growing considerably longer. Among the most satisfactory American varieties are Lorillard, Mayflower, Combination and Pepper. For general midwinter forcing Lorillard and Combination (American), and

Frogmore and Holmes' Supreme (English) are mentioned as being the four best.

Too copious watering before dull weather brought on a yellowing and spotting of the leaves which considerably checked the growth. The White Fly caused trouble, but was controlled by fumigation with hydro cyanic acid gas, using potassium cyanide 98 per cent. strength and a 66 per cent. solution of sulphuric acid with a small quantity of water. Experiments with different strengths and under different conditions showed that damage was done when the fumigation took place in daylight or when the houses were very damp. Safe conditions are stated as absolute darkness, a still air, a temperature below 60 degrees, and a dry house. Fumigation once each month with one ounce of potassium cyanide, two ounces of sulphuric acid and four ounces of water to each 1,000 cubic feet of house space will keep down the fly. Great care should be exercised in using this gas as it is sure death to all animal life.

In different parts of Ontario growers force a few for the winter market. "I like to have a few tomatoes ready for market before Christmas," said Mr. Jas. Gibbard, of Doncaster, to *The Horticulturist* recently. "The seed is started outside and as soon as the plants are large enough to handle I set individual plants in old strawberry boxes. By August they are about six inches high, and early in that month I transfer them to the greenhouse.

"I prefer planting them on ground benches in about eight inches of rich soil made from sod and well rotted manure prepared the previous fall. As soon as the plants begin to lop over I string them up. Some stake them with laths, but I find the stringing much less expensive.

"All side shoots must be kept nipped off, leaving only the terminal. If this is not done there would be too much top for the