

# HORTICULTURE.

(Under this heading all questions relating to flowers or horticulture will be answered.)

## THE GARDEN.

**G**OOSEBERRIES should be pruned so as to give the tree an open, basin-like appearance in the centre, to freely let in light and air. All sprigs that cross each other should be cut out, and only those left that grow outwards. The fruit grows on old wood on natural spurs and upon the previous year's growth. Red currants are treated much the same as gooseberries, but do not spur back quite so freely or cut off quite so much of the terminal branches. With black currants, all young growths should be left, and the old wood cut out only shorter, and thin out to uniformity. It is most necessary that all pruning should be done by one understanding it. One season's bad pruning by an unskilled man would ruin the growth of the trees and do injury that they would never outgrow. Amateurs fond of their gardens should make themselves masters of this art, rather than let their trees be mutilated by those who cut away here and there with no idea why they cut this or that shoot, except the great idea to form a bush, and they succeed in forming a bush that bears nothing but disappointment. The gardens of Victoria are particularly suited for fruit growing, and with care in planting and pruning and judicious selection of varieties, those who are now buying their fruit would have plenty for their own use and to spare. A gooseberry fence or hedge is a novel and useful one.

## ROSE PRUNING.

It is to be hoped that pruning has not been left entirely till now. It is a mistake to think one pruning is sufficient. Many varieties are safely pruned in October and November, and thereby secured from storms or winds that frequently break, bruise or destroy them. They should have been shortened back one-third or so of their entire length, which is not too much to cause the base shoots to break prematurely, and all the weakly shoots should have been removed, but tea and other delicate kinds of roses should not have the knife before March or April (unless it is to cut out old, useless wood), or they would advance too rapidly and the shoots be nipped by frosts. Unpruned shoots will have their buds shot along almost their entire length, and I look upon them as safety valves. Success lies in the semi-dormant buds at their base, as it is few winters the more forward buds escape injury, and therefore the character of the season must be the guide for the time to prune. As a rule, it is best to cut boldly back to mature wood, these buds will be longer breaking, and every day's delay in the breaking of your rose buds will be an additional chance of safety. The retarding of the buds is most important. Those who delay pruning till late should prune to the plumpest and best bud on the shoot. No hard and fast line can be laid down for the pruning of roses, but the dead wood and weakest shoots should be cut away. In many cases, the sharp frosts will have

ruthlessly done the work for you, and it will be now necessary to cut back hard, as they will spring forth into new life with the advent of genial weather. Strong growing climbing roses often throw up strong shoots from their base. One or more of these succession shoots should be preserved every year, and some of the older shoots cut out to avoid crowding. The modern remedy for excessive top growth is root pruning; search out a few of the strongest roots and cut them back to within a foot of the rose stock and excessive top growth will be checked, moderate size wood is more floriferous. Prevention better than cure should be applied to roses. Direct the growth into the more profitable channels by disbudding and pinching off the shoots during the growing season and reduce pruning to a minimum. Half the spring buds at least may be rubbed off—of course, choosing the weakest and worst placed—and the foliage as well, as the blooms will be improved by this practice, and you will get the growth just where required. Those who have a large quantity of roses would find it a good plan to prune at intervals; if a long and regular supply of flowers is wanted, a few should be pruned very late indeed. Having taken up so much space, I must leave an article on strawberries till next week.

J. W. WEBB.

Fern Hill, Boleskine Road, March 8.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

*Editor Horticultural Department*—In your issue of last week, I see that nitrate of soda, sulphate of ammonia, nitrate of potash and sulphate of potash are advertised as plant food. Will you please give directions for using same?

Yours truly, GARDEN.

*Answer*—I use all these strong stimulants by putting a little in the tub of water I keep for watering. It is the safest and most efficacious plan. A few plants should be kept separate for testing the strength. Bear in mind a growing, healthy plant will take what will kill a weak one, and flowers in bloom will take stronger stimulants than those not yet out. It is the same with fruit trees. When they are bearing, you can use it double the strength with safety, and, with cucumber plants, more than double when heavily bearing.

*Editor Horticultural Department*.—Please tell me in your next issue the proper culture of chrysanthemum cuttings, and oblige  
DAISY.

*Answer*.—Take the small growths nearest to the pot which are thrown up at the root of the plant and insert them in sandy soil, cover with bell glasses, or, if you insert them in a frame, keep them well up to the glass (they do not require a high temperature). When rooted, replant, using plenty of ground bone.

## FRUIT LAND.

We have several 5-acre blocks of land well adapted for growing large and small fruits, three to four miles from the city on good roads. Some of these blocks are all cleared and fenced, with residence and out buildings all ready for the planter to set out his orchard. Now is the time to take advantage of low prices, and the season to plant out your trees.

Winnett & Cooper,  
18 TROUNCE AVENUE.

## Important to those wanting Nursery Stock:

Having entered into an arrangement with the proprietors of this journal to open a horticultural and floral department, and, at the same time, to do away with the existing high prices paid for fruit trees and bushes and vines of all kinds, which have always been considered an obstacle to the planting of orchards to any extent in British Columbia, and, furthermore, has been detrimental in the settling up of the country, and, at the same time, one of the strongest arguments we have had to contend with in the sale of fruit lands.

Right here on Vancouver Island exists all possible natural conditions for a great diversity of fruit growing—apples, pears, cherries, plums, prunes, gooseberries, currants, raspberries, strawberries and blackberries grow better here than in California. They ripen later in the season, true enough, but ours is a better fruit, especially the prune, which grows twice the size of the California raised prune. It has also more meat in comparison to the stone. We would advise the growing of the prune, as what money can be made out of a small orchard is astonishing, and there is no danger of glutting the market. If all available land on Vancouver Island was planted out in prunes, it would not commence to supply the market of Canada.

By arrangement with the largest nursery in Oregon, and more especially a firm noted for delivery of stock true to name, places us in a position to deliver any of the following trees at Victoria, duty and freight paid:

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| Peaches    | 1 " " "           | "         | 16 cts        |
| Cherries   | 2 " " "           | "         | 17 cts        |
| Plums      | 2 " 6 to 8 ft     | "         | 18 cts        |
| Prunes     | 1 " 4 to 6 ft     | "         | 15 cts        |
| "          | 1 " " "           | per 1,000 | 10 cts        |
| Apricots   | 1 " " "           | per 100   | 13 cts        |
| Crabapples | 1 " " "           | "         | 15 cts        |
| Nectarines | 1 " " "           | "         | 20 cts        |
| Quinces    | 1 " 4 to 5 ft     | "         | 22 cts        |

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