

CAULIFLOWERS.

Among the unsolved problems which still puzzle the minds of the intelligent American market gardeners, stands prominently the one how to succeed every year in raising maximum crops of well-developed Cauliflowers. The practical and trained gardener gives himself no trouble of mind about growing paying crops of early Cabbages, Lettuce, Beets, or Onions, with the present well-established practices now in common use. But with Cauliflowers the matter is different. They are capricious, becoming very responsive to good treatment one year, while the next year the crop, grown with the same care, results in failure. Very often, not more than fifty per cent. of the number planted will make large, compact heads. This uncertainty is not in consequence of any neglect or oversight in preparing the ground, nor in the methods of cultivation, for I have known dozens of instances of failure where the ground was rich and the culture thorough, from planting-time to the close of the growing season. This serious and expensive obstacle has been partially overcome, of late years, by the introduction of some newer varieties, which are surer to head than the older kinds under the same treatment.

In growing Cabbages, one may get a fair crop with light manuring and indifferent cultivation. But it is a waste of time and money to risk this plan with Cauliflowers, no matter whether the old or newer varieties are planted. To start right, the soil *must be deep, mellow, and rich*. This will be the first step toward insuring success in raising a crop of full-sized Cauliflowers.

For the fall crop, the seed is sown, in the latitude of New York, from the first to the fifteenth of May, in a seed-bed in the open ground. The rows are usually a foot apart, and the seed

sown thickly and covered lightly. When the young plants come through the surface they are very frequently attacked by the "black fly," and, unless these are checked, they will destroy every plant. My plan is, and has been for years, to soak some tobacco stems in water, and add to this some soft-soap and urine. With this mixture, diluted with water, the plants are syringed early in the morning, and then dusted with air-slacked lime. One or two applications of this mixture, in the way described, never fail to save the plants. It is simple, and not expensive.

In former years, the varieties which were generally grown included the Half-Early Paris, Early Paris, Early London, and Walcheren. Of late years, the Erfurt Early Dwarf, Early Snowball, and the Algiers, have taken the place of those named first, and, on my own farm, and wherever I have seen them growing, I have become thoroughly satisfied that they are more reliable for a crop. While they attain an equal size, they are fully up to the standard in quality. In a lot of 3,000 plants of the Algiers planted on my farm last year, over eighty-five per cent. grew to full size, and made large, firm, compact heads, many of them measuring eighteen inches in diameter.

As mentioned before, to grow Cauliflowers to full size, the soil must be rich and mellow. We usually plant them on ground after early Potatoes. The ground receives a liberal dressing of manure in the spring, at the time of planting the Potatoes. The Potatoes are dug and marketed early in July, after which the ground is again manured, ploughed, and harrowed. The plants are then set out in rows two and a half feet apart, and two feet apart in the rows. They are planted with the ordinary dibble, in precisely