

CUTTING ASPARAGUS.

Many asparagus beds are ruined by those who do not understand the nature of the plant. We cannot do better than give our readers the following from the *Practical Farmer*, which is directly to the point: "In cutting asparagus early in the season it is not best to allow any shoots to run up, not even weak ones, as they draw most of the food collected by the roots—or it goes into them—and the eyes that would start into growth remain dormant, and, as a result, the buds do not produce nearly so many heads as if all the shoots were cut as they appear. By cutting all the shoots we call into growth the eyes that would otherwise remain dormant, and these almost invariably form the largest and best heads, which it is our ambition to secure by cutting away the weak as well as the finest heads until the middle of May, when we allow one or two shoots to run up from each crown. The case is different when all the shoots are cut as they appear to near the end of June. The roots are then so exhausted that there may not be sufficient vigor left to furnish good, strong shoots, and unless there is good haulm this year the prospects of heads next year will be very slim. We have seen buds cut so hard and late, even in July, that the plants have not been worth keeping afterward—not furnishing a head fit to gather for the next three years, and some times not then."

HARVESTING THE CORN CROP.

The best way to harvest corn is no doubt to cut it up at the ground, the closer the better. The lowest joints of the corn stalk are much stronger than those higher up, and it is an object to set up the stock so that the valuable portions are as far as possible above the ground. There is no gain in cutting so as to leave these tough ends of the stalks in the field. They are not eaten by cattle, and will be turned under at the next ploughing; most farmers think that they save a good deal of labor in not hauling them to the yard, and back in the form of manure; but there is a positive loss: 1st, because there is more danger of the stocks getting down, and the corn and fodder becoming wet and decayed; 2nd, because it is better to have this inedible portion of the stalk become partially decayed and soiled by the ground than a portion where the leaves are attached; 3rd, because it is best to cart to the barnyard or compost heap all such rubbish, potato-vines, and much that farmers are in the habit of leaving to rot, and to be ploughed in on the field. It is an easy matter to go to the field with a corn knife and cut up the crop, setting it up around a centre "hill," which remains uncut, or about two "hills," with their tops twisted together, and to finish the stock by binding the tops with a band of limbered suckers, or weakly stalks. Such stocks will be sure to fall over, and much of the corn will be damaged as well as the fodder. It is much better to go prepared to make a first rate job of it. A stooking-horse is almost indispensable to putting up stocks that will stand. The common corn knife is good enough for cutting corn by hand, but a light steel field-hoe, well sharpened having a handle 12 to 14 inches long, to which a strap is attached, is better for cutting close to the ground. It needs only a single blow to cut up a "hill." The question as to the number of "hills" to the stock may be settled by the size of the corn and preference of the farmer.

OCTOBER.—Farmers' daughters are looking out for the variegated foliage of the season with which to adorn the sitting-room of the dwelling house. Flowers, ferns or plants, of any kind may be taken fresh and green, and laid smoothly between newspapers on a table; then put heavy books or weights on them for a few days until they are thoroughly dry. Mosses can be pressed into any desired shape while green, twine a fine thread around them, and lay them in paper boxes until dry. Autumn leaves and ferns, in wreaths, crosses, or any form, and pressed by this simple process, can be kept for years. Grain and grasses of various kinds intermingled with bunches of scarlet berries from the mountain ash tree, if gathered and dried at the proper time, are beautiful for decorative purposes in winter.