

HORTICULTURE.

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

THE GARDEN.



TAKING it for granted that the manure for hot beds is procured and prepared as directed last week; now proceed to fit up the beds with fermenting materials for your frames; pack the manure (and if procurable put in a few layers of leaves) into a heap, not less than 2 ft 6 in. high and at least 8 to 10 larger every way than the frame to put over it, firming it down by beating it with a fork, as you work up, so as to form a firm wall and shelf all round. Having placed your frame in position, fill in 4 to 6 inches good, fine soil, half loam and half leaf mould, or old hotbed manure. Place a plunging stick into the bed and close the lights; try temperature daily, and do not plant till all fierce heat has subsided. The bed should be of a nice genial warmth—say 80 to 85 degrees. An extra frame can be prepared in the same way later on, and will be of great service, much better results being obtained by moving the young plants to the other frame as soon as large enough to handle; and it will be particularly suitable for cucumber and melon plants, when the heat in the first frame is subsiding. Some of the things that may be most useful for frame work are cucumbers ("Robinson's Telegraph" is the best), melons and tomatoes planted in 60 size pots or on turves 6 inches square, celery planted in boxes ("Henderson's Pink Plume" is one of the best), "Earl of Wakefield" cabbage and Henderson's succession cabbage—the latter for the main crop. Anyone fortunate enough to have plenty of frame room should plant "Shorthorn" carrot in drills 5 inches apart, and small sets of early potatoes 8 inches apart every way, early breakfast radishes, lettuce, mustard, cress, etc. The earlier you can raise your tomato plants the better. "Ham Grein" and "Ridgeway Perfection" are the two earliest and best English varieties.

Flower seeds may be raised in boxes placed in the frame, such as "Asters," "Marigolds," "Stocks," "Lobelias," "Salpiglossis," "Petunias," "Verbenias," "Zinias" and "Phlox Drummondii," which afterwards prick out into nursery beds. Never water your frames with cold water, but the water should be same temperature as the frame.

It is a good plan to have nursery beds prepared in a warm situation for pricking out flower seeds, small cabbage, cauliflower, etc. These beds should be well in the sun, and a few frames made very light and covered with a cheap, thin tiffany will protect them for a few days after they leave the hotbed, till they have well established themselves.

All bush pruning must now be brought

to a close. Much depends upon this being carefully done, how the bushes will be fruited during the coming season. Raspberries require little pruning; the old canes that died in November should all be cut out and the young canes shortened to equal lengths. Leave the best canes on on each stool, and only what are required. A nice way of training raspberry canes is to bend over the canes from each stool till they form an arch and tie them together. This causes all the buds to break equally and is easy for the picker. On no account should raspberries be dug amongst, but forked lightly, so as not to disturb the roots, which should be close to the surface, and should be heavily mulched with long manure.

Next week I shall continue this subject.

J. W. WEBB.

Fern Hill, Boleskine Road, March 3.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Editor Horticultural Department—I have several grape vines although seemingly healthy have never borne much fruit. Would nitrate of potash and ground bone help the production of fruit, and what quantity to each vine? G. C.

Answer—Nitrate of potash is a powerful stimulant, and should only be used in a diluted state. The best time to apply it is when the berries are swelling. Ground bones are excellent, but should be incorporated with the soil. In all probability your vines need proper pruning, and very possibly the roots have got into a cold subsoil; if so you will not make them fruitful by any manure whatever, but they would have to be lifted and properly treated.

Editor Horticultural Department—Would you advise cutting back roses this early, and to what extent would you cut out the old wood? SUBSCRIBER.

Answer—I will write an article on rose pruning next week.

Editor Horticultural Department—I have some young fruit trees which are badly grown with moss. Will you please advise me the best way to take it off, and is there any preventative? FRUIT.

Answer—Dust with powdered quick lime when the trees are wet. The trees in the fall of the year can be washed over with a solution of lime sulphur and cow manure.

Mr. J. W. Webb—In your article on the garden last week you say, "A row of peas may now be put in. Plant parsnips in drills well dug and manured ground." Is it to be understood that parsnip seeds may now be sown? AMATEUR.

Answer—Parsnip seed should be sown now; early as possible. J. W. WEBB.

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.

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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 plants 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.

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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	18 cts
Crabapples	1 "	"	15 cts
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