

THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

Cultivation of Carrots.

These roots are in request every day in the year in all large kitchens, and are also a most valuable root for cattle-feeding and hog-tattening, as no other root that we cultivate produces finer flavored beef and bacon than the Carrots, which I have practically proved. I have grown above thirty tons to the acre of the Long Scurry Red and the Green Top, and considerably more of the White Belgian sort; but, to grow such heavy and clean crops, the soil should be a good sandy open loam, deeply cultivated, thoroughly pulverized, and kept rigidly clean. Sow moderately thin, and timely, on land that was manured the previous year. Never sow Carrots on newly-manured land, as they are sure to become forked and branch rooted, seeking after lumps of manure distributed amongst the soil, and, besides, they are very likely to get attacked with the maggot and canker, are bad keepers, rough and ill-looking, and consequently much reduced in their value. In order to get a heavy clean crop, cultivate the soil deeply in winter, and expose to the influence of the atmosphere the greatest possible surface of rough-laying ridges. Rout it about only in frosty or dry April weather, and, when all is in good order and in readiness for the seed, which should be sown for the main winter-storing crop, the first or second week in April, according to season and conditions, have ready some hot air-slaked fresh lime, of which cast a moderate coat over the land, which should be harrowed well to incorporate the lime with the soil, and also drill in the seed with air-slaked hot lime, and the return will be a heavy crop of clean handsome Carrots, fit for any table or other use. To have young Carrots fit for table, choose the Early Horn and French Early Forcing. In storing large bulks of Carrots for winter use, never place them too thickly together, as the roots are apt to heat and sweat very much, and finish off in ridge shape, protecting the sides and top with bayans, or rough faggots, or Furze tied in bundles, and thatch the top with straight straw. If severe frost sets in in winter, protect the sides with additional Furze, litter, Fern, or Heath.—James Barnes, in *The Garden*.

Onions.

As grown in our market gardens, the onion crop, consists of those sold in the green state in bunches, and raised from "sets," refuse onions, "acorn onions," &c., and also the larger and main crop, raised from black seed, and sold in the dry state in fall and winter.

To secure the "sets" for the early crop, several methods are pursued. In many sections the top or acorn onions are very popular in private gardens for this purpose, but these are usually too expensive for the market gardener, and moreover, the flavor is so rank that the full grown onion is not popular in the market. The common "set," grown from seed, is raised by sowing on poor soil, about 25 pounds of seed per acre, and pulling and curing the crop as soon as the bulbs are of the size of hazel nuts. These are stored thinly away from frost, in a dry place, or else allowed to freeze in the hay mow, and then covered with sufficient hay to keep them frozen, and not disturbed until the frost is entirely out in the spring.

But a cheaper method than this, is to not thin out your main crop of onions from seed, until the bottoms are a third of an inch or more in diameter. Then as fast as pulled, lay them in the paths between the rows to dry, and turn them in a day or two, and again after a rain, if one occurs. But if the weather be very hot and dry, they had better be cured on racks under cover, where the air circulates freely, and finally stored for winter, as directed for others. Many of these will be very small, but they all contain a perfect germ, and if planted in rich ground, and well tended, every one will produce a fine onion, and not throw a seed stalk.

In sorting our main crop for the market in fall, we usually make three selections or divisions—the perfect ones fit for market, the very small ones sold at four times the usual price for pickles, and the third class is made up of all that will not go into either of the others. Set out early in spring, these last start several seed stalks at once, but if these be pinched off below the swell, the strength and growth go to the bulbs, and it forms several marketable onions for bunching, before those from sets are ready, and constitute the most profitable part of our crop. But if allowed to mature and ripen, they are not marketable as the stiff stub of the seed stalk injures their

appearance, and they are not of good flavor, nor good keepers.

To secure a good crop from sets, the ground is heavily manured—from 50 to 70 large loads, applied broadcast on fall ploughing during the winter, and ploughed and worked fine with harrow and plank, and rows or drills marked out a foot apart. In these drills the "sets" or refuse onions are planted by pressing them down firmly, so they will keep right side up, and dirt heaped over them with rake, hoe, or foot, and then ground rolled with a light roller. As soon as the rows can be traced by the sprouts, they are hoed, and throughout their season of growth, kept clean. The largest of the refuse onions can often be marketed in 20 to 30 days from their setting, and thus a long season for the sale of onions in one form or another secured.

In bunches of four to eight, according to their size, they sell at a uniform price throughout the season—3 cents per bunch at wholesale, or 5 cents at retail. At these prices it is a profitable crop, and though the labor of setting out seems considerable, it is really less than that involved in a single weeding of small onions from seed, and altogether, the labor of the crop is less than that of the field crop of onions from seed, aside from the bunching, which is really laborious.

The crop is usually cleared early enough, and the ground is rich enough for celery, late cabbage, or any of the usual second crops.—*The Fruit Recorder*.

LEEK.—To grow these large, crisp, and of mild flavor, we require good rich land, well trenched, pulverized, and manured. In order to grow them large, and blanch a good length of them, throw out a shallow trench 18 inches wide, and plant them in two rows for the convenience of earthing up, in order to blanch them, and also for a slight protection when severe frost sets in. Fifty years ago they were but little grown in this country, and were only distinguished by the name of "Leek." Of late years, although many varieties have been brought out as new, or under new names, such as Henry's Prize, Large Rouen, Aytton Castle, Giant, &c., the old London Flag, when well cultivated, would hardly be distinguished from the Giant, or any other kind with a new name.—*J. B. in The Garden*.

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

Plants in Rooms.

We copy the following from Buist's *Flower Garden Directory*:

"As the trying season is not at hand for all plants that are kept in rooms, especially with those that are desired to have a flourishing appearance during the winter, a few general instructions (although they have been previously advanced) will perhaps be desirable, to all those who are engaged in this interesting occupation, which forms a luxury through the retired hours of the winter season, and with very little attention, many are the beauties of vegetative nature that will be developed, to the gratification of every reflecting mind. The following is a routine of every day culture:

Do not at any time admit air (except for a few moments) while the thermometer is below 35° exposed in the shade.

"In time of very severe frosts, the plants ought to be withdrawn from the window to the centre of the room during the night.

"Never give water until the soil is inclined to become dry, except for hyacinths and other Dutch bulbs that are in a growing state, which must be liberally supplied.

"Destroy all insects as soon as they appear.

"Give a little air every favorable opportunity. (that is when the thermometer is below 35°, exposed in the shade) by putting up the window, one, two, or three inches, according to the state of the weather.

"Clean the foliage with a sponge, and water frequently, to remove all dust &c. The water thus used must not exceed 50°, but 60° is preferable.

"Turn the plants frequently, to prevent them from growing to one side.

"Roses, of the daily sort, may be obtained early, by having them in a warm room that has a south window, and as soon as they begin to grow, admit air in small portions, about once every day that the sun has any effect. Such must be well supplied with water.

"Bulbs in glasses must be supplied with fresh water at least once a week, in which period they will inhale all the nutritive gas that they can derive from that element if they are in a growing state.

Camellias, when in bud and flower, should never be allowed to become the least dry, neither confined

from fresh air. The effects would be, that the bud would become stunted, dry, and drop off.

"Therefore, to have these in perfection, attend strictly to watering. Give frequent airings and wash the leaves occasionally with water. Never keep them in a dry room where there is a strong coal fire. Most of the *Camellias* will bear 3° of frost without the smallest injury, so that they are easier kept than geraniums, except when they are in bloom. In that state, frost will destroy the flowers. The air of a close cellar is also destructive to the buds. The reason that the *Camellia* does not bloom perfectly in parlors or other heated rooms, is owing to their being too warm and arid, destroying the vital vegetative principle of the plant, and it soon perishes.

"There is one way in which these plants can be kept perfect, even in dry places, when the recess in the window is of sufficient depth as to allow plants to stand within it, enclosing them from the apartment by another sash, in such a situation, water could be placed, which would keep the atmosphere between the windows perfectly moist. The verdure would be rich and the flowers brilliant, and they would be completely protected from dust—the whole would have a very pleasing effect. Attention will be requisite to give them air during the mild part of the day.

"It does not appear that any of the scentless products given out by plants, are injurious to human beings, because those who live among accumulated plants are not less healthy than others, but rather enjoy more uninterrupted health, which, of itself, is a sufficient recommendation for all to spend their leisure moments in so healthful and rational an employment."

Monochætum.

The several varieties of *Monochætums* make very showy interesting green-house plants. The lovely color—a mauve purple—of the species *M. ensiferum*, is very beautiful, and as it blooms a long time away into the autumn months proves a very useful plant for bouquets and such other purposes as cut blooms are generally put to.

M. ensiferum, to which I have chanced first to refer, will do well in an ordinary cool green-house, or where *Camellias* and such like plants thrive. The genus likes a little additional warmth and warm sunshine during the process of forming young growths, blooming, &c., however, all the better where it can be afforded. The genus is intimately allied to *Pteronia* and *Malastoma*, they delight in peat, and, as the branches are extremely brittle, they need the constant support of stakes and will not stand hustling about amongst kindred plants in the free way gardeners are accustomed to do. It is a native of Oajaca.

M. tenellum is a lovely object, and might be well likened to a miniature *Myrtle*, with dark purple flowers. This variety is easily grown, and is generally so accommodating as to be easily grown into a handsome specimen of moderate dimensions. It is a native of Guatemala, a part rich in vegetable productions of a high order.

M. dactyloanthemum is a variety possessing blooms of a more rosy color than the latter, and as it blooms very profusely is an exceedingly showy object. The foliage is of a very beautiful *Myrtle*-like greenness. It was first introduced from Southern America, upon the more immediate elevations of the shores of the Pacific, perhaps upon the eastern ridges of Mount Pichmeha.

M. stratum multiflorum is a hybrid garden variety of a very meritorious order, and possessing rich mauve-colored flowers. It is of a very compact habit and dwarf, and generally blooms early in the Spring.

M. lemonium is another variety possessing rich rose-colored bloom, and is a very free bloomer.

Another variety is *M. Humboldtianum*, said to be a valuable variety, which I am unacquainted with.

The genus generally delights in a free open peaty soil. Good drainage should always be insured to all alike, and, as with many hard-wooded plants, they should not by any means be permitted to suffer drought at the roots, as this will not alone cause the leaves to drop off prematurely, it will give to the plants a naked appearance, and there is a risk of losing them altogether.—*William Earley*.

HOUSE PLANTS IN WINTER.—House plants ought to be gently stimulated once or twice a week. I am water, so refreshing to summer flowers, always contains ammonia, which also abounds in all liquid manures. Take an ounce of pulverized ammonia, dissolved in one gallon of water, it will make spring water even more stimulating to young plants than rain water. Keep the soil in the flower pots loose.—*Field and Factory*.