

Horticulture.

Growing Peaches in Cold Climates.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER:—There is no part of Canada that would not grow peaches (and of course Nectarines), were it not for two opposing influences, namely, "winter killing" of the trees, and destruction of the blossoms in the spring by untimely frosts. As it is there is no part of Canada where the peach crop is certain, and there are only two places of limited extent, namely, the old Niagara Peninsula, and the lands bordering on the lakes Erie, St. Clair, and Huron, where the Peach as a crop is worth growing at all, and there, absolute failure every few years is pretty generally the rule. Fortunately, the tree is a quick grower, rapidly recovers the winter killing, and is either restored to bearing, or what is perhaps as good, or better, new plantations are so easily raised, that they come into bearing time enough to repair the disastrous loss which previous unfavorable seasons have inflicted.

Peaches, in far less genial climes (so far as heat and summer is concerned), are a constant and regular crop, requiring attention indeed, but well repaying all the attention bestowed. There is no gentleman's garden throughout England, and many other parts throughout Britain, in which peaches are not produced in considerable quantity, and in absolute perfection. In Canada and America we are chiefly dependent on two kinds, the early and late Crawford,—these are the best market fruits. There are others grown, but possibly not one basket of them to one hundred baskets of the Crawfords—at least if we may judge by the Toronto Markets.

Now the difference between a well grown peach from the walls of an English garden, and the ordinary American market fruit, can only be appreciated by those well acquainted with both classes of fruit. The English grown peach is generally much larger, and altogether infinitely superior. This is of course to be attributed not only to the kind of fruit, but to the fact that the American market fruit is necessarily picked before it is ripe. The English peach remains on the tree until it is too tender to bear anything more than the most careful handling. But when in perfection, a ripe melting peach in September is really a thing to make a song about.

The plan I propose to adopt in the growing of peaches in parts of Ontario not specially adapted to their almost spontaneous production, or in the districts before named, is the following:—Plant the trees in boxes or tubs, made of cedar or any wood, that will last well in the ground,—bury the boxes even with the surface of the soil,—when winter approaches dig a trench in front of the box, and upset or turn it over until the tree contained in it lies flat on the ground. In the case of standards, lay a tolerably heavy log on the branches to keep them down, and the work is done for the season. Where the snow lies deep, the trees will want no other protection, but where it does not, the branches should be covered with straw, or pine brush, or other material to keep the snow on as long as possible in the spring, and to prevent early growth. Keep the trees in this position in the spring as long as possible, but when the danger of the spring frosts is past, set the boxes back into their original holes, and allow the growth to proceed. This system will defend the trees against winter killing, for no person ever saw a peach tree killed below the snow line. In black winters they will of course be killed at times down to the ground, but in snowy winters the winter killing never extends beyond the line the snow occupied during the severest of the weather,—even branches which naturally grow about the snow, where accidentally or purposely pressed on to the soil are never killed, altho' the whole of the upper branches may be destroyed. The system will also guard against the destruction of blossom in the spring, as you can keep the trees back in their growth, until the danger is entirely past.

Both classes of trees, viz., Wall fruit and Standards, may be grown in this manner.

For Wall fruit the boxes should be about six feet long, but they need not be broad, so that they will not necessarily be more cumbersome than the Standard boxes; to the back of the box a boarded frame should be fastened—to extend from five to six feet high, the full length of the box, and to this frame the branches of the tree can be

nailed and pruned in the same manner as to a wall. When the trees and boxes are turned down for the winter, this boarded frame forms the most efficient defence possible, both against winter killing and in keeping back the trees in the spring,—the boards may be colored black on the front, and whitewashed on the back; the black front will greatly assist in the early maturity of the fruit, and the whitewashed back, will guard against the too early operation of the sun in the spring, while the tree is still on the flat. A few spadefull of earth thrown on the back of the boards, will form a most effectual protection, or a mulching of straw, brush, weed, or long manure, may be added and the effectual protection be secured.

For Standards, the boxes should be nearly square.

The advantages of being able to keep the roots of the trees thus under absolute command, cannot be too highly appreciated.

The great drawback to the training of the peach as a wall tree, is the sudden and exuberant growth which so often takes place, and which it is so difficult under ordinary wall fruit treatment to suppress. Trees trained on a wall, never have a sufficient supply of branches to balance the roots,—the latter are necessarily out of sight, and as they spread in every direction, they will sometimes meet with earth particularly favorable for their growth. Then the rampant growth alluded to takes place, and if it cannot be checked either by root pruning or otherwise, the rampant branches seem to rob all the rest of the tree, and goodbye to the crop of fruit for that year. This fact is well known to all old country gardeners.

Toronto, Ont

E. L. C.

Continued next month.

Securing a Wire Grape Trellis.

In this country of extreme temperatures, the chief trouble with wire fences and trellises arises from the contraction or lengthening of the wires with the cold or heat. Prof. Beale, of the Michigan Agricultural College, furnishes a sketch of the means they take to overcome the trouble in Michigan. He says:—About Monroe and some other parts of Michigan, wires of a trellis for grapes are stretched as follows: They pass through the end post, and then through a 1½ inch board, where they are secured. In winter the board rests against the post. In summer the board is pried off an inch or two, or more, and a little block or stone put in to hold the wires stretched tight, fig. 2. In autumn, again, the block is removed to allow

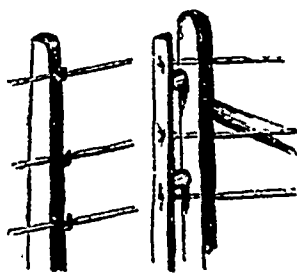


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

the wires to contract without breaking or pulling the posts over. Instead of staples or two nails to hold the wires to the side of a post, they drive a single 8d wrought nail below the wire until it is nearly in, then bend the head up over the wire, where it holds the wire neatly and securely, fig. 1.

The Parsnip—Why Is It Not More Generally Grown?

EDITOR CANADA FARMER,—My memory fails to remember a paragraph or a line written in the CANADA FARMER in reference to the cultivation of the parsnip, its good qualities or its adaptability for a root crop to furnish the farmer with a valuable additional supply of fattening winter food. I have looked over "Liebig's Chemistry" and other works to find an analysis, but I have failed to find one. I must go back some thirty years to the time I was in England. While there I read in some paper of an experiment of a gentleman who took quite a practical way of demonstrating its feeding qualities by feeding an animal with the parsnip, and that alone, till the animal became thoroughly fat.

I have known one gentleman in Canada who knew carrots were good for horses, and, acting on this knowledge, concluded that his horse could not have too much of a

good thing. He gave him nothing else, and the horse soon died. I have known one other farmer who, in the spring, had neither oats nor hay, but had plenty of carrots and straw, and with these two articles got through all his heavy spring work.

In looking through farmers' gardens (not their fields), you will find that about one in eight have got a patch of parsnips for their tables; but in their fields I have yet to see the first row. And why is the parsnip ignored? What vegetable more savory can the farmer have on his table than parsnips with pork? And what root can he have half so nutritious to feed his stock with (including his horses) during the winter? Let the CANADA FARMER show the value of this root, for surely when farmers know (in connection with its good qualities) how easy it is of cultivation, he will never be without his acres of parsnips. They can be easily stored, and unlike any other root, either in the ground or out of it. While in the ground the most intense cold does not harm them, and in this respect they are incomparably ahead of either potatoes, carrots or turnips. With suitable soil and good cultivation, the yield will range from fifteen to twenty tons per acre. In my next I will tell "What I Know of Parsnip Growing."

PUBLICOLA.

A Selection of House Plants.

The following is given by an English paper as a list of plants which will live in a room through the year, if the frost be kept out, and due attention given them in various seasons according to their requirements. All are handsome, some of them pre-eminently so:—

<i>Lomata elegantissima.</i>	<i>Aralia Sieboldi.</i>
" <i>ferruginea.</i>	" <i>variegata.</i>
" <i>salicif. a.</i>	" <i>trifoliata.</i>
" <i>polyantha.</i>	" several other species.
<i>Ner. um splendens.</i>	<i>Ficus elastica.</i>
<i>Dracena terminalis.</i>	<i>Rhopala Australis.</i>
" <i>ferrug.</i>	<i>Arundo Donax variegata.</i>
" <i>Cooperi.</i>	<i>Begonia, of sorts.</i>
" <i>gracilis.</i>	<i>Palms.</i>
<i>Aralia leptophylla.</i>	<i>Ferns.</i>

Many other things would be quite as tractable in a room, and far more graceful than *Ficus elastica*. Orchids for example, such as:—

<i>Ardis Warner.</i>	<i>Leptotes bicolor.</i>
<i>Barkorai Skinneri.</i>	<i>Lycaste Skinneri.</i>
<i>Brassavola Digbyana.</i>	" <i>aromatica.</i>
<i>Calanthe vestita.</i>	<i>Mormodes aromatica.</i>
<i>Chysis Limmingheli.</i>	<i>Oncidium ampliatum.</i>
<i>Cypripedium barbatum.</i>	" <i>flexuosum.</i>
" <i>venustum.</i>	" <i>divaricatum.</i>
" <i>insigne.</i>	" <i>cupreum.</i>
<i>Dendrobium nobile.</i>	<i>Pleione maculata.</i>
" <i>pulchellum.</i>	<i>Sophranites cerium.</i>
<i>Epidendrum vitaceum.</i>	" <i>violacea.</i>

Vexations of Cranberry Culture.

A New Jersey correspondent writes: The cranberry, like all other fruit, has its enemies, the most destructive of which is that popularly known as the scald or rot, though some separate those two blights. The vines begin bearing the third or fourth year after being set out, the yield increasing each season for double that time. The cultivator finds his whole field or "bog," as it is always called down here, blushing crimson, or about to do so, and he rubs his hands as he mentally calculates the near profits. An acre yields from one to four hundred bushels, which sell from two dollars a bushel to three and four dollars, and during the year the price obtained was three or four times that amount. But before picking time the blight sweeps over the field. A few berries turn a dirty yellow, and in a week the whole bog is badly off.

This scalding has kept up so long that it is becoming monotonous, and not the least remarkable peculiarity is the fact that no one has been able to find out a preventive for the plague. Finally Professor Taylor, the United States Microscopist of the Agricultural Department at Washington, was called in: and he visited the bogs here and at Cape Cod, and spent weeks in probing for the cause. His thorough investigations showed that the root of the evil lay in the root of the fruit, or rather in the ground, which, in all cases of the rot, was found to be sour, causing fermentation and decay in the berry. This was established beyond a doubt, and the apparently simple problem remained for determining how the soil should be sweetened. The professor recommended lime, sand and various fertilizers, and never did the cranberry season open upon a more hopeful set of men than were the growers a few months ago. Professor Taylor came down in this county to hear the results of following his advice. Lime had been used more than ever before, and the rot among the cranberries is greater than ever was known. One grower recommended sand; his neighbor, at his elbow, announced that it was worthless; another had tried plaster of Paris, and not a berry was tainted; a red-faced cultivator tried the same thing and declared his crop wasn't worth gathering.