

Garden and Orchard.

Seasonable Hints—April.

BY HORTUS.

As intimated in the March number of the *ADVOCATE*, we will proceed to give directions and illustrations for grafting, which, if carried on with any attempt at carefulness, cannot fail to be successful. To give force and value to our instruction, and to draw the attention of the reader to grafting, we state the fact that there are thousands of fruit-trees to-day in bearing condition, covering many acres of land, that bear fruit fit only to be made into cider, or to be thrown to the hogs, that could be made to grow valuable market kinds by grafting such kinds upon them. Another thing not generally known or practiced is that old, decaying trees may be renewed into fresh vigor and usefulness by re-grafting. To graft a tree ten to fifteen years old, select the younger branches and those in such a position that when grafted a shapely head may be formed. About half of the branches may be worked upon at one season, leaving the remainder to carry on the growth of the tree. It would be dangerous to remove all at once for grafting. The smaller branches may be worked on at any convenient position, while the large ones should be cut back to a diameter of two or three inches—no greater. Strong, healthy shoots of last year's growth of the varieties you wish to grow should be used for cions, and may be cut off for this purpose any time before the buds swell; they may be kept packed away in sand or sawdust till occasion calls for using them. As to the proper time to commence grafting, begin as early as settled spring weather sets in,



Fig. 1.



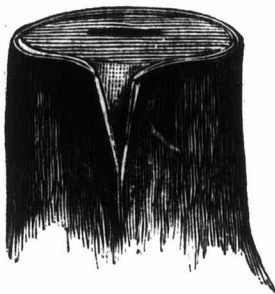
Fig. 2.

when the buds are swelling. If grafted too early, the alternate freezing and thawing will soon destroy the vitality of the cion; while, on the other hand, you can graft successfully up till the tree is in full blossom.

A great many methods of grafting are practiced, which it is not necessary to enumerate. Any one will do that will give the most surface exposure to the bark edges of both cion and stock. For grafting plums, cherries, pears, and the smaller branches of apple-trees, tongue or splice grafting is the most preferred. Cut the cions in pieces three to four inches in length, in manner shown in Fig. 1; shape the stock to correspond, as in Fig. 2; fit the cion tightly on to this, seeing that the bark of both cion and stock fits evenly, at least on one side, and your graft is made and ready for covering with waxed cloth, prepared wax or clay.

For grafting the branches two or three inches in diameter, the cion is made without splitting, the bark on stock is slit down about an inch and raised, as in Fig. 3, to allow the insertion of cion underneath, which should fit smoothly against the

bared wood; two or three cions may be placed on the same stock. To graft the wild plum stocks growing about the place, saw the stock off even with the surface of the ground, remove the soil to roots and prepare the stocks same as in Fig. 2, fitting the cion as before directed. Cover the graft



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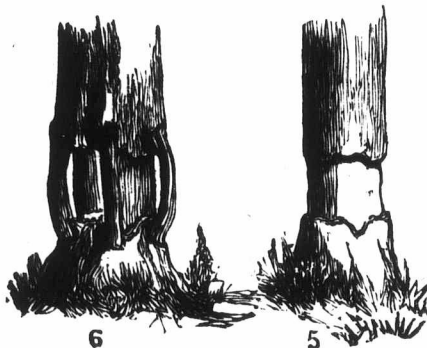
with waxed cloth, and draw back the soil carefully, leaving only top bud of cion exposed, as shown in cut 4.

GRAFTING WAX can be purchased, ready prepared, from seedsmen. A good composition, applicable in hot or cold weather, is made from four parts of resin, two of beeswax and one of tallow or fish-oil. Melt all together, and when boiling pour it out into cold water, then work it thoroughly to get the water out, and it is ready for use. The hands must be slightly greased, when applying it, to prevent sticking, but be careful and not put any grease on the stock or cion. To make grafting cloth, use worn-out cotton or other fabric that will tear easily. Tear this into strips and roll it up into neat balls, soaking these in the melted



wax till thoroughly saturated, then squeeze out the surplus wax, and the cloth is ready. We have been thus explicit about the operation of grafting, as many intelligent persons look upon it as a sort of magic art, and regard a grafter as a person gifted with wondrous power; whereas, if they would but try and do it themselves, following the foregoing instructions, they would find all the mystery vanish and the work resolve itself into a very simple operation indeed.

GIRDLED TREES.—In winters that there has been a heavy snow-fall, like the past, mice frequently cause great damage to orchards, so that the protection afforded the trees by the covering of snow has an offset, on the other hand, by the risk of mice girdling them. Trees affected like cut 5 may be saved by inserting small limbs of the tree in a notch made with a chisel above and below the girdled portion, fitting carefully as in grafting, the bark of the tree and that of the branches inserted, as shown in Fig. 6.



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PLANTING.—Whatever trees you intend planting out this season get them planted as early as possible; do not plant, however, unless your soil is nice and dry—if not naturally so, be sure to make it so by draining. It pays in the end to thoroughly pulverize your soil by subsoil plowing and heavy manuring. When planting be careful

and not plant deeper than trees stood before; it is far better to plant shallow and give a good mulching on top.

GRAPEVINES will require uncovering to the sun and air; give the border the vines are growing in a good coating of manure and bonedust. When mulching fruit-trees do not place the manure in a heap around the base of the trunk, as is the custom with a great many. The working roots of a tree are about the same distance from the centre as the ends of the branches, and therefore cannot derive any benefit from the stimulant piled in heaps fifteen or twenty feet away. A far better plan is to spread the manure evenly on the ground, or, more directly, in the spaces between the trees.

The imposition of the new duties on all kinds of fruit cannot fail but increase the demand and price of the home supply; it will also give a greater impetus to the cultivation of the same, and it is desirable for the benefit of our country and the growers thereof that they obtain every information respecting their successful cultivation, and it is a necessity, therefore, that too much attention cannot be paid to the important matters of

PRUNING, MANURING, and otherwise taking care of our large and small fruit-trees and bushes. This month calls for all the work that can be done in this way as much as possible. Farmers will find it to pay them to give their gardens and orchards more attention than they have hitherto been doing. Thinning out and cutting back the old wood on currants and gooseberries, shortening raspberry canes and taking away the suckers to plant new patches; digging in manure in the rhubarb beds and dividing the roots; top-dressing asparagus with salt and short manure—all will be found pleasant and profitable work in this month, and will be sure to verify the old proverb that "The hand of the diligent maketh rich."

Tomatoes.

When an early crop of tomatoes is desired, set out the plants in a light, sandy loam, not too dry nor yet too rich. Prepare the land by thoroughly plowing, harrowing and rolling. Set the plants in rows laid four feet apart, and allow about the same distance between plants.

Water the plants previous to transplanting, so that they may be set with considerable wet earth adhering to them; a shovelful of finely-pulverized and well-rotted manure, applied in each hill at the time of planting, will greatly accelerate the growth of the crop. Cultivate with the hoe until the vines cover the ground.

To hasten the maturity of the first fruit that sets, pinch off the extremities of the tops, and all the secondary shoots which afterwards appear above the flowers.

On suitable soil, with ordinary careful cultivation, one acre of land will yield about four hundred bushels of tomatoes. In small gardens, where space is limited, a greater quantity of fruit can be obtained by elevating the branches of the plant from the ground with brush or on frames made for the purpose. But for market on a large scale this extra labor is not advised.

Seeding on Sod.

Mr. H. R. Wood, of New Lenox, Will County, Illinois, recently gave the *Prairie Farmer* an account of some experiments he tried last spring with seeding an old pasture sod. On the second day in February, when the soil was only thawed one and a half inches, he ran the harrow over two acres of tough sod, and sowed thereon one peck of clover seed, afterwards going over the ground with a roller. Notwithstanding the seed was of the crop of 1870, he cut a heavy crop from this land, and at the same time he talked with us, the second crop was nearly ready to be cut for seed. He also put in considerable Alsike clover seed, a few days after the common red clover was sown, and produced an excellent crop. In this instance he used the cultivator instead of the harrow in preparing the land.