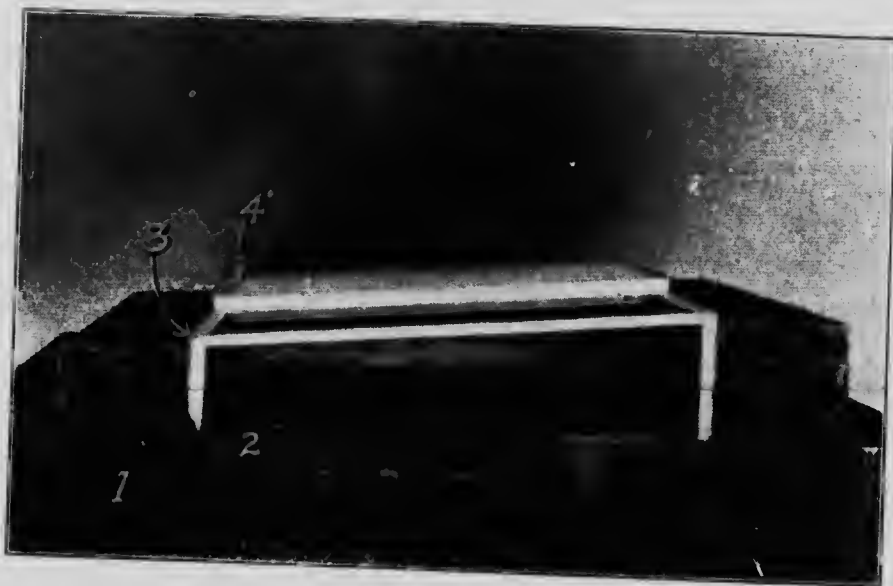


In making a hotbed, the first step is to choose a good situation on the south side of a building, wall or close board fence where the cold winds from the north will be broken and all the sunshine possible will be obtained. After deciding on the site, the frame should be made. The simplest frame is one made out of two-inch planks. It should be so constructed that it may be raised, as this may be necessary if the plants get too close to the glass. The frame should be at least six inches higher at the back than at the front, in order that the rain will run off readily and that the plants get more sunshine. The sashes generally used are three by six feet. A hotbed may be made either above or below ground. If above ground, it may be made in any situation where the water is not likely to lie. The one below ground is usually preferable if it can be made where the land is high and well drained. To make the latter, the soil should be taken out to the depth of about eighteen inches or more and about three feet wider than the frame so that there will be room for banking. The banking is a



Sectional View of Hot-beds.

(1) Manure. (2) Soil. (3) Frame. (4) Sash.

very important part of the construction of a hotbed as the conservation of heat in the bed depends very much upon it. It will be readily seen that much labour will be saved by doing the necessary excavation for the frame in the autumn when there is no frost in the ground. Horse manure is the best to use in making the hotbed and it should be quite fresh, not cold and rotten, and not already heated. It should be piled near where the hotbed is to be, and when it begins to heat it should be turned to make it of more uniform consistency. Five or six days after turning, it should be quite hot and is now ready for use. The bed is started from one end and the manure shaken in from a fork so that the long and short manure will be well mixed. When one layer is made it should be tramped well and then another layer started, and so on, tramping each layer well until the manure is the depth required. The depth will depend on when the bed is made. If made early, the manure should be from two to two and a half feet in depth, but if made during the latter part of March when the weather is not very cold, about a foot of manure will suffice. After the manure has been put in, the frame should be placed on and then about four to six inches more manure put in and banked well around the sides of the frame, both inside and out. Outside, the