



GARDEN AND FARM.

HINTS FOR MAY.

May is the month bright in hope and rich in promise. The earlier months of the year are not so agreeable or pleasant as the merry month of May. They are not without their blessings. They have aided in preparing and enriching the soil of our gardens and fields. The snow, rich in its fertilizing stores of ammonia, has lain long on the ground; and the keen frost has penetrated and drawn forth, for the young plants, stores of food that would otherwise be unavailable; and the rains have come in their season and filled the springs for the nurture of all things on the earth. And now the winter has gone, though sometimes lingering as if unwilling to go, and the bright days have come; the fields are rich with verdure, and the sweet-scented blossoms of the orchards give us promise of their annual tribute of fruit.

But we must give our *Hints for the Month*.—If there be bright promise in the "sweet month of May," it is not a season for idleness; there is no little work to be done. The farmer's life is a busy one, though it is one of much pleasure, and this is a busy as well as a pleasant month. There is no season in the year that demands more the busy work and care of the farmer and gardener.

The farm stock needs the provident care of the farmer. Horses in this busy season must be well fed and groomed. This should be the rule at all times, but if at any time it be more necessary than another, this is the time. Keep your cattle off the pasture till the middle of the month, if you have any other means of feeding them. A provident farmer will always contrive to have a supply of fodder to keep his cattle well till the 12th of May. Turnips properly stored will keep well for some weeks in May. Your cows and young stock can have the run of the woods a few hours each day. The care and feeding, too, of our sheep must not be neglected.

The chief operations of the farm are the completing the sowing of spring cereals and the planting and sowing of root crops. Oats, if not sown in April, must now be sown as soon as the soil is in proper condition, though it is getting late; do not make such haste as to sow before the soil is dry and well prepared. In the old country, when the spring and its labor were a month or two earlier than it is here, March was the great month for sowing grain, and the provident farmer there, bearing in mind the country proverb: "A bushel of March dust is worth a king's ransom," took care to sow his seed only when the soil was dry. Clover and grass seeds, sown now with your barley or late oats on well prepared soil, will do well.

Have the ground ready for Indian corn to be planted any time from the 24th of May to the 15th of June. Plant some to cut as soiling for your milk cows, if you plant for no other purpose. When the pastures are getting bare in the heat of our warm summer, you will find the crop for soiling help to keep up the profits of the dairy.

Plant your potatoes at intervals during the month. In planting them early you incur the risk of the June frost; yet we prefer running some risk, as potatoes early planted will be of the best quality, and the Colorado potato bug's ravages are more destructive to the late crop. We must for the present guard against this alien enemy.

Finish the preparation of the ground for turnips and mangolds. No other crop will better repay the farmer for his labor. The turnip crop, from 700 to 1200 bushels per acre, is sure, though not so quickly convertible into cash as wheat or oats, to bring a greater gain to the farmer. The culture of the turnip field leaves the soil in better condition than it would attain from a naked summer fallow. Turnips cannot be dispensed with in the winter feeding of stock, whether it be in the fattening or dairy department. Store cattle will always do better if in the winter storms they have a daily feed of turnips, and to have your cattle do well in the summer it is necessary that they be well wintered. Sheep, also, will want their winter supply of turnips. In providing food for your stock, sow a mixed crop of oats and peas to cut for soiling when the peas are well podded. Sown together, they grow more luxuriantly than if sown separately. They are an excellent food for milk cows especially.

As early as you can in this month sow carrots; you will find them very useful in feeding your horses. Beans should be planted this month.

Dairy operations require your attention this month. At the time of your cows' calving, give them for a few days a little sheaf oats; it will strengthen them. See that the milk room is perfectly clean, sweet and well ventilated. If it be otherwise you cannot have good milk and butter.

The Garden calls for especial attention in its various departments. There is no time to be lost. Our Canadian springs are so short and vegetation so rapid, that every hour is valuable. The soil must be brought into the finest tilth, and seeds sown. Nor should the flower garden be neglected. In this, the ladies will gladly give a helping hand; but even in this, let not all be left to them. Let the heavier part of the labor with the wheelbarrow and spade be ours. Let no seed be sown till the soil be dry and in good condition. This is an essential rule for garden and field.

The Orchard, as well as the garden and field, calls for your attention this month. This is a good month for transplanting trees in your orchard, as well as shade trees. Plant liberally. In purchasing fruit trees be sure to purchase from a reliable nurseryman. This is said to be the best month for planting evergreens. We have found them to succeed best when planted the last days of May.—The balsams, cedars, hemlocks, spruces and pines of our woods, if planted carefully when young, may grow well, and are very ornamental; though they are not so sure as those raised in a nursery, nor will they grow so quickly. But whether from the nursery or from the woods or swamp, we say plant trees, evergreen and deciduous—plant for shade, for ornament, for future use. This advice we can hardly repeat too often.—A. S. Ed.

MEASURING THE HEIGHT OF TREES.

In the *American Agriculturist* is an illustrated article describing the mode of ascertaining the height of trees. The mode, although quite simple, is not always at hand when most wanted, and requires some nicety of management, and the extreme height of trees is less frequently desired to be found by farmers who wish to cut a stick of timber to some desired length from the timber woods. A more simple method, and one that can be put in practice at any time and place, when one has only a measuring rod, and has the experience of the writer, which is as follows: A stick of timber is desired, say fifty feet long; select your tree, measure fifty feet in a direct line from the foot of the tree on as near level ground as possible; now cut a stick the exact height of the observer and stick it in the ground exactly perpendicular; now let the observer lie flat on his back, his feet against the stick and head in line of tree and stick and look directly over the top of the stick, and where the line of vision strikes the tree, will be the length of the stick, fifty feet, desired. If the ground is not level the measure will not be exact, but all-vance must be made.

ORCHARDS—CULTIVATED VS. UNCULTIVATED.

In your issue of December 12, 1872, I notice "A Request to Fruit Growers," in reply to which I give you a little of my experience in apple culture. I have several orchards about fifteen or twenty years old, that have always been kept in sod, and received no other attention than a slight pruning every two or three years, and an occasional load of manure or ashes as a top-dressing. As a consequence we never had a bushel of perfect fruit up to the year 1870. The trees bore pretty good crops, but the fruit was small, wormy at the core, and knotty, while the trees themselves looked very badly. The soil in all of them is a black gravelly loam. They consist principally of Bellefleur, Smokehouse, Green Pippins and Romanites.

In the fall of 1870, I plowed the ground in one orchard, containing about thirty trees, to a depth of five inches, gave it a good dressing of manure, and trimmed the trees carefully. Since that time I have kept the ground cultivated and the trees carefully trimmed and scraped, and each year noticed a marked improvement in both trees and fruit until this fall, when I had the satisfaction of sending to market the finest lot of Bellefleur and Smokehouse apples ever seen in this section, and which I readily sold at \$1.25 per bushel, while apples were selling all through our streets at from 30 to 70 cents. The fruit was large, rich-flavored and high-colored, while from the trees growing in the sod I did not get ten bushels of first-class apples. This I think proves clearly the importance of

cultivating the ground and scraping the trees regularly and carefully, as by so doing we can most effectually destroy the harbor of all the insects injurious to the apple, besides giving the trunk and limbs a healthy, smooth bark, under which the sap can flow freely in sufficient quantities to ripen perfect fruit.

Some may object to plowing an old orchard, on the ground that we cut off a large portion of the feeders. This indeed is true, as we find the sod filled with fine roots that come to the surface to get the moisture and air that the heavy sod prevented from penetrating to the lower layers. But if the ground is plowed and manured heavily in the fall when the tree is partially dormant, it does not feel the loss at the time, and in the early spring, by the time it has put out all its leaves, new feeders will have formed, and these being in the rich loose soil where they can have the full benefit of the surface heat and moisture, will enable the tree to make a better and healthier growth even the first year.—G. H., in *Country Gentleman*.

EVERGREENS.

All over the Eastern States the evergreens are dying or dead. In the place of the dark green cones a few months ago, there are now reddish-brown masses of dry twigs. Of course the nurserymen are in trouble, and there seems to be no way out of it; and the owners of ornamental grounds are casting about for means of replacing their former favorites. This epidemic is ascribed first to the mild weather of February, which started the spring growth; next to the bitter cold weather of March, which abruptly checked it; and lastly, to the long drouth of April and May, which completed the mischief already done. The trials of the nurserymen are the hardest. They might possibly, if they tried, coax a fair percentage of their trees to live, but it would at best be two or three years before their recovery could be so evident as to satisfy buyers and nursery ground is too valuable to be devoted to such a purpose. Again, where can substitutes for the winter and drouth killed shrubs be found? Nursery stock is untrustworthy, of course, and we see nothing for it but a resort to the woods, and the slow process of starting afresh. A little advice to unprofessionals may be in order under the circumstances, and we will therefore hint that, provided the trees can be procured, the present time is suitable for planting or transplanting. Let the transit be as quick as possible, and mulch, after setting out, with decayed vegetable matter. The white spruce and Norway spruce are among the best for general use. The black spruce is at home all over the Northern States, but will not grow well south of the Alleghanies. A cool and moist atmosphere is generally essential to its full development. The hemlock is difficult to transplant, but if carefully tended for a year or two, grows admirably in light and dry soils. Such are a few of the most popular and the most easily procured evergreens, and we hope that every one who can, will take hold energetically and transplant from their native hills three young trees for every one that has died; so that if two-thirds of them fail, the remaining third may flourish, and in part at least, make good the harm that was wrought by the unusual distribution of favors by sun and frost.

BALANCE OF POWER IN PINCHING AND ROOT PRUNING.

M. Keane, in the *Journal of Horticulture*, of August 1st, in speaking of the management of Espalier trees touches upon the principal of maintaining an equilibrium of forces as follows: "The whole principal of pinching is merely this—in the first place, to pinch all young shoots not necessary for the frame work of the tree; secondly, to stop those shoots which threaten to outgrow their neighbors, by which means a due equilibrium of branches will be maintained, and, finally, having commenced a system of repression, to continue it in regard to lateral shoots which are developed by reason of this practice of stopping. While, according to the general plan pursued, every encouragement is afforded to the development of roots, by the applications of soils, a necessary limitation of wood destroys the unity of force between the two. Root-pruning, if thus obviously suggested, and may, at the proper season, be practiced with advantage.

MULCHING PEAR TREES with salt hay is recommended by a correspondent of the *Tri-bune*, he applying it to the whole surface in June and raking it up in November. This gives fine crops and protects the fallen fruit.

LIME FOR APPLE TREES, scattered in a powdered state over the soil late in fall or early in spring, at the rate of one peck per square rod, is said by a western writer to be most beneficial.

FORESTS AND DROUTH.

A correspondent of the *Scientific American* writes to say that it lies with us to decide whether our continent shall retain its present luxuriance and salubrity to remote ages or not. He regrets that the rapid diminution of our forests, and the decrease of moisture in the interior parts of the country; and concerning the latter point, he states that, in some parts of the country, where five feet of snow usually fall in a year, there are not now five inches.

Sardinia and Sicily, once the granaries of Italy, have suffered the penalty of their thoughtlessness in exterminating their forests. Two thousand years ago, those lands were celebrated for their wonderful productiveness, and were said to be the most beautiful in the world. In 1800, Humboldt visited Venezuela, South America, and was informed by the natives living in the valley of Araguay that they had noticed, with great astonishment, that a lake which lay in the middle of the valley had decreased in volume every year; the cause of this is clearly traced to the felling of a great number of trees which grew on the surrounding mountains. In Hungary the periodical drouths are attributed to the annihilation of the forests. In Cairo, lower Egypt, a great many years ago, rain fell but seldom, only once in three or four years; but since the time of Mohammed Ali, twenty to thirty millions of trees have been planted, and the result is now that the people have from thirty to forty rainy days every year. Surely these few of the many examples are warnings sufficient to put us on our guard.

SOAP-SUDS FOR VINES.

Soap-suds should never be wasted. It is well to have grape-vines planted so that the waste from the house can be used to fertilize them. If there is any food the vine especially loves, it is the soapy liquids which accumulate on washing days in families. Vines drenched every week with these liquids will flourish astonishingly, and extend themselves so as to cover large buildings, every branch bearing fruit. A distinguished Ohio horticulturalist says that his family of ten persons eat a ton of grapes, fresh and canned, during the year, and he thinks that not only does it pay in the matter of health, but also in the saving of groceries' bills, through the diminished desire for pastries and other rich food.

NOVEL GARDEN.

A hanging garden of sponge is one of the latest novelties in gardening. Take a white sponge of large size and sow it full of rice, oats or wheat. Then place it for a week or ten days in a shallow dish, in which a little water is constantly kept, and as the sponge will absorb the moisture, the seeds will begin to sprout before many days. When this has fairly taken place, the sponge may be suspended by means of cords from a hook in the top of the window, where a little sun will water. It will thus become like a mass of green, and can be kept wet by mere immersing in a bowl of water.

DO BEES INJURE GRAPES.

Geo. W. Campbell, an extensive grape grower, writes the *Ohio Farmer* as follows:—The point which I wished to establish was, whether honey bees were justly classed among the grape destroying insects, or whether they simply utilize the juices of the grape by appropriating what would otherwise have been lost after the skin of the berries had been broken by some other agency. I have, up to this time, been wholly unable to ascertain that they ever attack a sound, unbroken grape, and believe they have acquired this reputation only by reason of sometimes being found in bad company. The wasp is furnished with a powerful and efficient saw-toothed cutting apparatus, with which the grapes could be easily abraded; but this is entirely wanting in the honey bee, whose organs seem only suited to the suction of liquid substances. Grapes are often burst by over-crowding on the stems, especially if rainy weather succeeding a drouth occurs about the time of ripening, and wasps and other insects will then be found abundant among the vines.

SUGAR-MAPLE TREES.

The sugar-maple is one of the most beautiful of trees; its stately and graceful habit renders it an object of especial interest to those who practise landscape gardening. No other tree supports an equally massive head of foliage by so slender a stem. In autumn it displays a gorgeous variety of tints, and those groves or groups of trees which boast its presence in a goodly proportion, then stand arrayed in a mantle of beauty which is most captivating to a lover of the picturesque. Sugar-maple trees will grow on steep side hills, in gorges and glens, on mountains, on plains, among rocks and stones, in waste places where the ground may not be ploughed or otherwise utilized. It would by no means be out of place along lanes and roadsides, on lake shores and river banks, and along railways. There ought to be a sugar-maple "sap-bush" on every farm. It would pay in timber, in fuel, and in sugar, to say nothing of summer shade and beautiful landscape.—*Orillia Examiner*.

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