

TOMATOES raised in poorish light soil will ripen ten days earlier than those raised in rich soil. We know this from the actual test during the present season. If large, showy tomatoes are wanted, regardless of flavor or time of ripening, then the rich soil and the rank growth are needed. Cutting off all but one or two fruits of the clusters while they are small and green will also cause those remaining to grow to a larger size.—*Rural New Yorker*.

THE SILVER BELL TREE.—*Halesia tetrapetala*, known in England as the snow-drop tree, and in this country as the silver bell, is one of the handsomest of all our hardy shrubs. It is a native of upper Virginia and Southern Ohio. Its white, bell-shaped flowers appear in May, and impart a graceful appearance to the whole plant. The flowers are followed by a four-winged fruit, hence its specific name. It sometimes grows twenty feet or more in height, but in gardens is usually a large shrub. On account of its rather difficult propagation it has not been largely introduced into cultivation.—*Country Gentleman*.

LARGE PEACH ORCHARDS.—The largest peach orchard in the world, without exception, is that of John Parnell, at West Point, Ga., which contains 135,000 trees. The frost on the 23rd day of April destroyed about one-half the crop. The next largest orchard belongs to Judge Cunningham, at Griffin, Ga., and has 60,000 trees. About one-third of this crop is injured. The fruit centre of Georgia is two miles from Griffin at Vineyard, where the prospects are good for a fine crop. The peach crop of Georgia, this year, will be about half the usual average, but the fruit will be larger and better, from the thinning out by frost.—*Farm, Herd and Home*

APRICOT-GROWING IN CALIFORNIA.—The *Wine and Fruit Grower* says;—We learn from the Marysville *Appeal*, that apricot orchards are the rage in its immediate section. The past season, trees three years old paid ten dollars to the tree. The *Appeal* adds its testimony to the fact that there is not the slightest danger of overdoing the business, as the canneries can handle all the fruit that can be produced. It is stated that some of the far-

mers in the vicinity of Berryessa, located on what they have recently learned to call apricot lands, are preparing to engage extensively in fruit culture. Thousands of apricot trees are to be set out on lands heretofore "wasted" on grain culture.

PRESERVING PEAS.—The most effectual method we have found for preserving peas from withering or drying up in a drouth, is to mulch them thickly with coarse hay or straw, to a width of at least two feet on each side of the row. Our garden soil is a fine, porous gravel, and unless the season is cool and moist, the pea vines dry up so badly as to produce little fruit. Mulching heavily is consequently a necessity in order to save them. By doing this, we have obtained as good crops as when May, June, and July were cool and rather rainy. It is not necessary to bush dwarf peas. Still, when exposed to a strong wind, they will sometimes blow down, and then the further advantage of their being mulched is that the pods are kept clean and dry, and escape being mildewed. It is an excellent thing also to mulch both pole and bush beans, melons, squashes and cucumbers in the same way.—*American Argiculturist for June*.

AMPELOPSIS VEITCHII.—Among our beautiful climbing vines, the *Ampelopsis veitchii* stands in the front rank; and its well-deserved popularity should cause it to be more freely planted than it is. It is a native of Japan, leaves somewhat smaller than those of the well-known American ivy, *A. quinquefolia*, overlapping one another and forming a dense sheet of green. The plant is a little tender when young, and requires slight protection the first winter. It is of rapid growth, and has the clinging nature of ivy. Its foliage is of most beautiful green in summer, changing to variegated crimson scarlet in autumn. For ornamenting brick and stone structures, it is superior to all other climbing vines. The citizens of Boston are peculiarly attached to this vine, and many of the finest structures there are made more beautiful by the addition of this plant. It cannot be too highly recommended, and will meet the fondest expectations of all who plant it.—*Country Gentleman*.