

THE FRUIT GARDEN.

English Gooseberries.

EDITOR CANADA FARMER:—Accompanying this letter is a small box containing four gooseberries of the English sort I have grown them these three years without any signs of mildew on them. Of course I keep the land under and around the trees free from grass and weeds, and I give the trees plenty of manure and keep them thin for the sun and air to get through them; and of course I keep the worms off, or at least I kill them as fast as I find any on them. If I was to allow them to strip the leaves off, there would be but a very slight chance of much fruit the following year.

I raise them on the one leg system. It is not so much trouble to keep them in good trim. I am raising some from some seed of an excellent kind, thinner skin and better flavor than those I have sent you, and if I don't mistake, they are red ones. If the seedlings turn out as good as I hope they may, I will report again to you. I may say that I have no plants for sale.

Crosshill, Ont.

G.R.B.

The gooseberries arrived and were immediately put where they would do the most good. They were over an inch in diameter and of good flavor. English gooseberries can be grown in Canada with careful tending, as several cases in our knowledge, in addition to the above, sufficiently prove.

Rose-Bug on Grape Vines.

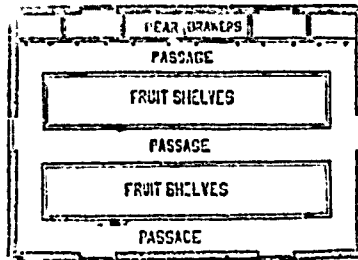
Last month, a reader in Western Ontario sent us for name an insect which proved to be *Macrodactylus sub-spinosus*, the Rose-bug, which he had found preying upon his grape-vines. Mr. Andrew S. Fuller gives in the *New York Tribune* his way of preventing their depredations. Many are the methods, he says, which have been tried in my garden to make the rose-beetles let the grape flowers alone, but only one has proved a perfect success, and fortunately it is inexpensive and there is no machinery to get out of order. Of course I am not positive that the *Macrodactylus sub-spinosus* will be as easily managed in every garden as it has been in mine, still I can see no good reason why they should not be, for locality is not likely to make any change in an insect's taste or appetite. The different species of insects which infest our gardens are supposed to have some preference in the way of food, but a few like the rose-beetle take a very wide range, so much so that few plants seem to come amiss, still by close observation we may soon discover that they do take to certain kinds more readily than to others. This is their weak point, and just where I made the attack to keep them from my grapevines.

Several years since, says Mr. Fuller, I set out near my grapevines, the following shrubs and herbaceous plants, the flowers of which have proved to be such enticing bait for rose beetles that these pests no longer trouble anything else, at least not to any extent worth mentioning. Snowball leaved spirea (*Spiraea opulifolia*), Goat's Beard do. (*S. aruncus*), Sorb leaved do. (*S. sorbifolia*), New-Jersey Tea (*Cronotus Americana*), Swamp Magnolia (*Magnolia glauca*), and the Purple Fringe Tree (*Rhus colinus*). Taking these plants together, they will furnish inviting food for the rose-beetles from the time of their first appearance in Spring until after the grapes are too large to be injured by them. The beetles are also much more readily gathered and killed when crowded upon the flowers of the above-named plants than when scattered over grapevines. I have found no rose-beetles upon my vines this season, although they are to be seen by the thousands on the shrubs only a few feet distant. Any nurseryman will furnish the plants named, and at cheap rates.

WHEN TO PRUNE.—There is no time for directing the growth of plants, grape vines, fruit trees, etc., so good as when that growth is most rapid. Growth may then be checked, and the sap and vigor of the plant turned in any desired direction of development, provided it be done with reasonable care. When large timber is to be removed, it is best to wait until the most vigorous growth is past, and this is usually about mid-summer. The sap will not bleed at this time, and the wood exposed will become close and hard, impervious to water and will often remain sound longer than the rest, should anything cause the tree to decay. Large limbs removed in spring, when the sap is quite liquid, leave scars which often "bleed," the sap running down and "scalding" the bark below. The wood becomes porous, absorbs water and decays, making holes in the trunk.—*New York Tribune*.

Fruit Houses.

A fruit house should be similar to an ice-house in its walls and construction, the intention of which is to exclude the heat in autumn as well as the cold in winter. Fruit which has been kept cool during the last half of autumn will keep several weeks longer than if housed, as soon as gathered, in a warm and damp cellar. If built above ground, which would be best, the walls should therefore be double, and be filled in with sawdust, tan, or other non-conductors of heat. A space of six or eight inches would answer. The interior may be arranged as shown in the accompanying cut.



Three shelves, one above another, may occupy the space between the floor and the roof, and the passages around them admit ventilation and access of the attendant. For ordinary use, apples may be placed on these shelves without cover, and the layer being only a few inches thick, any decayed specimens are easily seen and removed. If the shelves are occupied with pears, they will ripen more perfectly (especially summer and autumn sorts) if a woollen blanket is first spread on the shelf, the fruit deposited, and then covered with another blanket. Or if the shelves are made into boxes, with lids for excluding light, they will answer well. Where fewer pears are raised, a row of drawers at the side, as in the cut, will answer a good purpose. The windows of the fruit house should be either double or with double panes. After fruit has been gathered and placed in it, air should be admitted only on the north side, to keep it as cool as practicable; it should be opened in cool days or nights, and be kept closed during warm days. A thermometer should be hung in it, and in winter the temperature kept nearly down to freezing.

For large fruit houses, the pears, apples and grapes should be in separate rooms, in order that the odor of one may not injure the flavor of the others.

It often happens that a carriage house or other out-house may be spared for a few weeks in autumn for fruit, where a cellar is used in winter for storing it. The same care must be employed in either case to keep it cool both in autumn and winter.—*Country Gentleman*.

THE FLOWER GARDEN.

Aira, or *Agrostis Pulchella*.

The beautiful little variety of ornamental grass illustrated on this page is the *Aira pulchella* sometimes called



A. pulchella. It is an elegant and graceful annual growing eight to ten inches high, and producing numerous thread-like flower stems terminated by erect, delicate, graceful panicles. These panicles cut before the seeds ripen, and dried in the shade, will keep for a long time either in a natural state or dyed. Milliners and artificial flower makers use them extensively. The grass should be sown in April or May in good soil, and should be thinned out or transplanted allowing plenty of room.

SOOT TEA FOR ROSES.—Soot "tea" is a capital fertilizer and stimulant for roses, producing free blooming and also a healthy growth. Where a wood fire is used, as in many a farmer's kitchen, the soot, when the stoves and pipes are cleaned, should be carefully preserved and used occasionally through the season direct to the plants.

COMPOST FOR FLOWERS.—In cleaning off the garden and flower borders, there is more or less of leaves, litter, etc., that must be disposed of in some way. Take it and make the basis for a compost heap for the winter; empty all the coal and wood ashes of the house over it, as they accumulate from time to time; save all the bones and refuse of the kitchen, and all the greasy dish water, and the chamber lye, and add them daily to the heap. Gather, if you can, from the blacksmith's shop or elsewhere, iron filings or scales from the hammering of heated or rusty iron, the parings of horse hoofs, and, with a little sharp, sandy soil, add them to the heap. This, well mixed, in the Spring, will form one of the cheapest fertilizers for all kinds of flowers in the open border.—*Horticulturist*.

FLOWERS FOR EVERYBODY.—There is no class of plants in existence which affords more pleasure with less care and attention than the rose. Very many people merely dig a little hole in the grass-plot, cram the delicate little mass of roots therein, and ever after wonder "what under the sun is the reason that some folks have such miserable luck." Roses love a light soil, rich in decaying vegetable matter, and some decomposed manure. They don't need sand, neither do they like clay; such extremes being about equally injurious to their healthy development. It is in bad taste anyhow to set out a single rose-bush on the lawn; better by far dig a good large bed, chopping up the turf well, and enriching it somewhat at the same time. Make such a selection of varieties as will combine hardiness and free-blooming properties as nearly as possible, and very little attention afterward will secure the best results.—*New York Tribune*.

THE GERMAN IRIS.—This, the well known old Blue Flag of many a time-honored garden, still deserves a place in our modern collections, notwithstanding the many superior varieties of later introduction. It is the parent of a host of beautiful kinds, many of them hybrids with the Yellow Iris of England, so that the intermingling of colors and form has given us almost an entirely new class of plants. While some of the tints are exceedingly delicate and showy, others are more unique than pretty; and as to size, the plants vary in height from the typical species to the little Dwarf Blue Iris, so often used for edging. They are now coming into bloom, and a bed that I recently visited, containing some 70 distinct varieties, I imagined to be one of the greatest treats in flowers that I had seen for a long time. They need no special culture, merely preserving the surface of the soil clean from weeds and grass, with a slight top-dressing of manure in the Autumn. As this class is entirely hardy, it is especially adapted for grouping in with bulbs of shrubbery, where the diversified colors show to great advantage.—*New York Tribune*.

EVERGREENS FROM CUTTINGS.—The *American Agriculturist* says that the Arbor vite is readily raised from cuttings. The common Arbor vite is generally popular, but it is a waste of ground to grow this, if the Siberian and Pyramidal Arbor Vites can be had, as these varieties are quite as hardy as the original, and very much handsomer. As an illustration of the ease with which these Arbor Vites take root, last fall a friend sent me three small bits in a letter, for a name; though they had been cut two or three days, I stuck them in the sand of the greenhouse bench, and all three took root. To manage a quantity of cuttings, I use what the florists call a "flat," which is a box about three inches deep, made by dividing a soap-box. This is filled with sand, and in November cuttings about three inches long set in thickly, and the box put in the cellar until spring, taking care that it does not get dry during the winter. In the spring the boxes are set where they will be shaded during the heat of the day, and where they can be watered as needed, and in a few months the majority of the cuttings will be rooted.

PRUNING EVERGREENS.—The agricultural editor of the *Chicago Tribune* thus answers a correspondent who enquired the right time to prune evergreens:—If you have specimen trees, and your object is to check exuberant or straggling growth, prune in June, or before the new wood begins to harden. In pruning such trees, cut near buds, and from beneath up, with a clean cut. If you want to strengthen growth, prune in the same manner in the fall, after the season's growth has been perfected. Evergreen hedges should not be pruned, except just enough to keep them in balance, until they have made several seasons' growth, and the hedge has become well established. And, since the object is to encourage growth, the cutting should be done in the autumn, and then only to remove rampant growth. As the hedge gets older, the object will be to weaken the growth. Then pruning may be in June; for, at this season, cutting-back checks and weakens growth. A second trimming may also be given in the autumn. It is only by practice and observation that one can become expert. The object sought must be taken into consideration. When you have decided how you want your trees, a little practice will enable you to proceed rapidly. There are no prettier ornamental evergreen hedges for our climate than arbor-vite or Norway spruce, except it be, in situations favorable to it, that prettiest of evergreens, the hemlock.