

Horticultural Department.

By Alexander Pontey, Horticultural Editor to the Farmers' Advocate.

In pursuance of our promise last month, we now give a list of some of the varieties of seeds best suited for sowing in hot-beds, with a short description of each.

Among the cabbages, the best for early work are:

Early Australian—A very early and large growing variety; grows very quickly, and is consequently very tender eating; it is a great favorite among London market gardeners.

Early Jersey Wakefield—Somewhat similar to the preceding, but not quite so early.

Early Schweinfurt—A very large growing variety, and remarkably early; it is especially suitable for summer use, and should only be used for that purpose, as it will not keep.

Early Dwarf Nonpareil and Little Pixie—Two small English varieties, both very early and especially suitable for table use.

Early Golden Savoy—This variety is remarkable both for its appearance and its tenderness; when ready for use it is of a bright golden color, and when cooked it is the most tender of all the cabbage tribe.

CAULIFLOWER.

Extra Early Paris—A good market variety and generally known.

Early Dwarf Erfurt—The best variety for forcing early; very large, close and compact heads, and pure white. French or German seed of the above two varieties are said to succeed best in this country.

Early Walcheren and Early Alma—Two English varieties of great excellence, the latter not generally known, is well worthy of trial.

CELERY.

All the varieties of celery should be sown now. The best are:

Sandringham or Prince of Wales—This variety is grown to the exclusion of all others in the Prince of Wales' gardens, in England, where they raise an acre annually; it is white, very crisp and fine flavored.

Boston Market—The favorite variety among the Boston Market gardeners, and succeeds well in this section of the country.

Cole's Superb Red—A large growing variety, and one of the best red varieties.

CUCUMBER.

Governor-General of Canada is the name of a new variety (raised by one of our London, Eng., florists), pronounced by many that have seen it to be the finest and best forcing cucumber sent out of late years; it is the result of a cross between the Blue Gown and Telegraph, having the best qualities of each, and what makes it more valuable is that it is equally well adapted for growing on the open ground. Try it.

EGG PLANT, OR FRENCH AUBERGINE.

This vegetable is coming more into use every year, as it gets better known; it is cultivated the same way as early tomatoes. The fruit is cut into thin slices and fried; the taste somewhat resembles that of oysters when cooked in this way. The best varieties are:

American Giant Round Purple—Grown extensively in some parts of the States.

New Black Pekin—This variety comes from China. It grows to the height of two to three feet, and bears very ornamental foliage of a dark bronze color. The fruit is large and round, and frequently attains to the weight of 8 lbs. The flesh is white and fine grained.

LETTUCE.

The best varieties for forcing are:

Early Curled Simpson and Early Curled Silesia—They do not form a head, but make plenty of tender green leaves in a short time.

PEPPERS.

All the varieties of peppers should be sown early in a hot-bed. The best varieties are:

Long Red, Monstrous or Grossum, the Tomato-Shaped, and the Chili Peppers.

RADISHES.

The best variety of radish for forcing is the **French Breakfast**; it is olive-shaped and scarlet colored, and white tipped; very tender and nice looking for the table.

The **Rats-Tail Radish** is a new and very remarkable vegetable, and should be sown in a hot-bed; the pods of this variety are used (not the root); they frequently attain the length of two or three feet, growing very rapidly, from two to three inches in a night. There are two ways of using them; when about half grown they are cut up and eaten like salad, or boiled and served up on toast; used in this way it forms a most delicate and novel dish for the table. It also makes an excellent pickle. Being easy of cultivation, it is within the reach of all.

TOMATOES.

The best varieties for starting early are:

Canada Victor—Claimed to be the earliest in cultivation; it is round, smooth, and a heavy cropper.

New Early Dwarf Red—This is a new variety coming from France, and is said to be very early and very prolific.

MUSK MELONS.

The best for starting early are **Stillman's Early Netted** and **White Japan**.

FLOWER SEEDS.

The following varieties of flower seeds should be sown now in a hot-bed, in order to have good plants to plant out when the weather becomes mild and the ground warm.

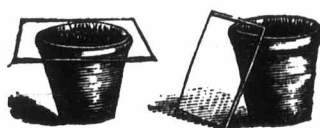
Truffant's Perfection Aster, Dwarf Chrysanthemum Aster, Victoria Aster, Cilanthus, Lobelia, Marigold, Mimulus, Pansy, Petunia, Phlox Drummondii, Double Portulacca, Salvia, Sanvitalia, Schizanthus, Verbena, Zinnia; among climbers, **Balloon Vine, Cobaea scandens, Cypress Vine and Thunbergia.**

Double Tuberoses should be started now in a hot-bed or green-house, if wanted early.

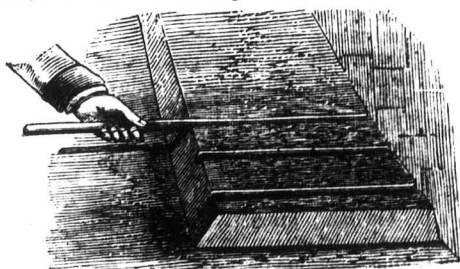
German Stock—Dahlia roots can now be started in the hot-beds, and cuttings struck from them if required; for fine blooms a plant made from a cutting is to be preferred to an old root.

[We have now nearly all the varieties mentioned by Mr. Pontey; the price of all the packages will be 5 cts., except those marked in our Price List at higher rates. The few varieties of seed we have not in our stock we have ordered, and shall have them ready as soon as your orders arrive.—Ed.]

In planting out Cauliflowers, Tomatoes, Melons or any half-hardy things, at a season when frosty nights can be expected, Bell Glasses and small frame and sash, as per following cuts, are an indispensable necessity in a well-ordered garden.



The end of this month, weather permitting, Peas, Onions, Parsnips, Carrots, etc., should be sown in the open ground. A bed thrown up some five or six inches above the level, finely raked and marked off into rows, as per cut,



is better for sowing small seeds in, which are necessarily slow of growth at that early season. The formation of the beds will shed off some of the surplus water, and by sowing in straight drills a small hoe can be run through the rows, and the young weeds kept down.

About the 20th of this month, Cauliflower seed should be sown in a cold frame, placed on the north side of a building or fence; plants so raised are later in maturing, and form their heads at a cooler season of the year than those raised in an early hot-bed, thereby ensuring a better crop and finer and more compact heads.

TOP GRAFTING.

During this month, or just as the buds are commencing to swell, is the proper season for top grafting. Scions for the purpose should have been gathered in the early part of the winter and kept in a cool cellar.

Almost everybody who has undertaken to grow a collection of fruits, has found it necessary to resort to top grafting to secure an orchard to his liking; either kinds have not proved true to name, or some others planted have proved unsuitable to the soil or locality, and as the trees are there, something must be done with them. When it has been desired, from whatever cause, to top-dress a tree, the first thing to be considered is, what branches to graft. Stand off from the tree, and see what limbs are superfluous, and would be cut out if pruning. Do not touch these, but leave them to be taken out the following season, then graft such of the others as will make the most symmetrically formed head. Begin always at the top of the tree, and cut the highest branches shorter than those of the sides, or lower down the tree. Grafts in the upper portions of a tree will attract a greater proportion of sap than the lower ones, hence the necessity of pruning shorter. It is better to extend the operation over two and even three years, than to subject the tree to the severe pruning necessary to remove it all at one time.

Cleft grafting, when the limbs are more than an inch in diameter, is the system generally used, and care should be taken in making the wedge as long as possible, and to fill the split as far as opened, touching the sides at all points. In very big branches it is necessary sometimes to fit in small hard-wood wedges, to insure the scions against too severe pressure. One graft on each side of a limb can be put in, in this manner. A common cause of failure in cleft grafting, is having the cut on the scion too short, thereby leaving a vacancy below the graft in filling up. For this manner of grafting, grafting-wax made of resin, tallow and bees-wax, spread over the cut is the best, covering the tip of the graft also. A graft four inches long with good prominent buds, cut from the bud end of the scion, is the best for use.

Grafts cut with a shoulder and inserted under the bark, making two cuts as far apart as the width of the scion, raising only the tongue of bark between them, are more likely to do well in the hands of a novice than put on by the former method. Grafting paper or prepared cotton can be used for winding around the limbs thus grafted. For larger limbs saddle grafting is often resorted to, making a slanting cut on the side of the limb of 1½ inches in length with a tongue in it commencing from near the top of the slanting cut, then tonguing the graft in a similar manner only in an opposite direction.

Ashes for Orchards.

The *Scientific American* says:—"The point to which we now call attention is, that our farmers and fruit-growers have ignored, or rather have been ignorant of, the importance of wood ashes as a vegetable stimulant and as the leading constituent of plants. Even coal ashes, now thrown away as useless, have been shown both by experiment and analysis to possess a fair share of alkaline value. We will relate only one experiment: Some twenty-five years ago we treated an old hollow pippin apple tree as follows: The hollow, to the height of eight feet, was filled and rammed with a compost of wood ashes, garden mold and a little waste lime (carbonate.) The filling was securely fastened in by boards. The next year the crop of sound fruit was sixteen bushels from an old shell of a tree that had borne nothing of any account for some time; and for seventeen years after filling, the old pippin tree continued to flourish and bear well."

Parties in want of plants, trees, and shrubs, will do well to deal directly with Storrs, Harrison & Co. Painesville, Ohio, whose advertisement appears in another column.

LATEST GRANGE ESTABLISHED.—Adelaide: W. Murdock, Master; C. Rapley, Secretary, Strathroy, P.O.