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Keeping Accounts with the Alberta Garden.

By "Alar."

I have sometimes thought that most farmers and their wives are like the old woman I met when I was first married. I had been speaking of my hens, and had said that I intended keeping an account of their feed and eggs, to see how much I could make from them. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "don't keep any accounts or you will never make anything." However, I kept the account faithfully, and after awhile the man of the family, who hadn't believed in raising chickens, began to get his eyes open, and one spring, when he got a chance, he bought twenty-five pullets at twenty-five cents each, and brought them home, and thenceforth the poultry profits were not all mine.

Accounts are great eye-openers.

A lawyer—heaven pity his clients—once argued for half an hour with my father, trying to convince him that if he raised a pig on the farm, and by and bye sold the pork for two and a half cents a pound, that was all clear gain, because it all came off the farm. A neighbor of ours was a swine-raiser, but one year, when pork was low in price, he kept an account of his expenses in getting about seventy-five hogs ready for market, and told us afterward that he found he made just eighty cents for all his work with them.

Why should farmers work for nothing any more than other people? A business man would drop a business in which he made so little. If the price of feed soared so high that he could not make it pay to feed chickens and pigs, he would drop them and sell feed.

The woman—I will call her "Eve," since I have likened her garden to "Eden"—believed in keeping accounts, so she kept an account with her garden. She kept several different accounts with it, but it is only the money side with which I am dealing now, and since her little account-book lies before me, I take the liberty of copying some of its first year's entries. Her method was very simple, for she had not studied book-keeping, and knew nothing about double entry and such. It must be remembered that she only cultivated one-tenth of an acre, and in that she had set out two dozen and a half berry bushes and some strawberry plants, as well as some flowers.

CREDIT.

To green peas, 2½ bushels	\$3.00
" beets, 1 bushel	60
" carrots, 1 bushel	30
" onions	75
" potatoes, 10 2-3 bushels, at 25c.	2.65
" turnips, 6 bushels, at 30c.	1.80

Gross gains

DEBITOR.

Rent of land and plowing	\$0.50
One-sixth cost of fencing	50
Interest on \$3.00 worth of fencing	25
Cost of seed	1.30

Expenses

Net gains

The fence had cost her \$3.00, and she estimated that it would last about five or six years, so about 50c. of it and interest, 25c., would come from the first year's crop. The prices given were the going prices at the time of digging, though some of them were much higher when the vegetables were taken from the cellar. However, Eve thought \$6.50 well paid her for her work, and especially as she had looked upon much of it as play; and, besides, no credit could well be made of the quantities of radishes, some lettuce, various beet greens, and a little celery they had eaten. At market prices, they might have raised the net gains to \$10.00 or more. Neither could she estimate the luxury of having fresh vegetables just when she wanted them.

Adam was just, and paid her that \$6.55 cash down for her own personal use, and Eve thought there was really no occupation on the face of the earth quite so pleasant as farming, even if it was only one-tenth of an acre. She had some other thoughts, too. How nice it was to put that money in her purse and feel that she had actually earned that much toward her board and clothing by keeping house for her husband and his hired men. If she had had children, she would probably have turned into the general fund for their clothing. As it was, after she had given her thank-offering tenth to the Lord's cause, she would use the rest to buy some new curtains and some silver-ware for the table, that she had long wanted.

And then she thought: "Why do not farmers, as a rule, give their growing children a practical training in farming, by marking off a small plot of good ground for them, putting it in shape for crops, charging them so much an acre for it, see that they put in and work some useful crop, and then paying them the market price in the fall, if it is wanted in the family provision cellar? If the family is poor, it could be understood from the first that it is to be used to help buy the child's clothing. But let him keep a debit and credit account, and never allow him to think that his work has earned all the gross gains. There would be less talk of the boy's leaving the farm if such a course were pursued.

Strawberry and Raspberry Culture.

By Anna S. Jack.

It is not to be expected that every one who attempts to cultivate the lesser fruits will be at once successful any more than in any other work, if entered upon without experience, and it is a false impression sometimes entertained by the novice that if a raspberry plant or a grapevine is once set into a hole there is nothing to do but sit down and expect a bountiful harvest, but there is no profit in fruit-culture under neglect. Such people, sooner or later, find by sad experience that they must "learn to labor," as well as "to wait," if they expect to reap any reward.

It is always best to procure plants that have been proved in one's own locality, for much depends on soil and location, and there are many difficulties to contend with that require to be intelligently met in order to be conquered. Perhaps the most important work is the preparation of the land, and in the case of

THE STRAWBERRY.

the first of the lesser fruits, the soil, to give the best results, must be rich, deep, light clay loam, cool and moist, but well drained, though there is no special soil suited to all varieties, for some thrive best on land where clay predominates, others do best on a light, rich sandy soil. It is not safe to plant on newly-turned land, for the plants are likely to be cut off at the roots by the white grub, and for this reason it is best to spade or plow in autumn, as by this means many destructive insects are destroyed.

Mildew and frosts often assail the lesser fruits, drought is a condition to be dreaded, and insect enemies are to be fought, but a survey of the markets, and the cheapness of strawberries in June, will prove that all these obstacles can be removed by careful experienced labor and intelligent care. Thorough preparation of the land is the foundation of success, and, being a gross feeder, it takes all kinds of fertilizing material. Thorough decomposed barnyard manure has always been considered best, but muck from boggy ditches, the refuse of a slaughter house or brewery, if plowed deeply in, will bear good results. Commercial fertilizers can be applied at any time—bone dust



Kitchen-window Box.

nitrate of soda, or phosphate—but they need careful handling, so as to not injure the plants. Wood ashes, unbleached, are valuable. They could be mixed with leaf-mold from the woods, but never with manure, or their value is lost. In preparing the land it must be plowed deeply and quickly, followed by two or three harrowings to pulverize the soil before lumps harden into clods, and, at the same time, it conserves moisture by covering the surface with a fine mellow soil that prevents evaporation. This method of harrowing directly after plowing is of primary importance, and leaves the ground in condition to be marked off into rows. A good marker can be made of an old buggy wheel, by attaching handles wheelbarrow fashion, and nailing short bits of lath to the rim, at the right distance apart for planting, with the ends projecting enough to give an indentation to the soil. A light wheelbarrow answers the purpose, and rows are made three to three and a half feet apart. When ready to plant, old leaves and runners must be taken off, and the roots shortened to about half their length; while the plants must be kept damp by means of a bit of bagging round them, or, better still, placed in a bucket containing an inch or two of water.

There are two important points in planting, no matter what method is adopted. In the first place, the plant must not be covered too deeply, or the crowns will rot, nor must they be left so shallow as to expose the roots, and, secondly, the earth must be firmed so well about the plant that, if properly set, a pull on one of the leaves will break it off before loosening it from the soil. Loose planting, with the earth porous and open, is the cause of many failures.

The cultivation of strawberries is a good deal like corn-culture, but it must be shallow at first, so as not to disturb the short, fibrous roots, while frequent enough to keep down weeds and prevent undue evaporation. In hoeing, there is a knack in using the implement properly. It should always be tilted a little, so

that the corner next the plant does not penetrate more than a fourth of an inch. Deep plowing in a hot, dry season is almost sure to be fatal.

Among the enemies of the strawberry, some attack the leaves, others the crowns, while some bore holes into the fruit or suck out the juices, and cause it to dry up. There is also the leaf-spot that attacks certain varieties, and it is well to plant the resistant sorts, and, by rotation of crops, keep insects and disease in check.

So many varieties are in the market that it is not easy to recommend any special one to suit a locality. Get half a dozen experienced strawberry-growers together, and it is not likely any two of them will endorse the same varieties. Generally speaking, for early fruit, Michel's Early is to be depended on among newer sorts, and Crescent is an old stand-by. For medium to late, Brandywine suits more localities than the average, and Gandy is late, but trusty, though not a heavy cropper. There are advocates of Glen Mary (late), and there are those who shake their heads at Clyde and Marshall, because they do not suit their locality. For a small garden bed, it is safe to recommend Cumberland Triumph and Brandywine, or Grenville for late. The first mentioned is of pale color, but delicious flavor, and very reliable. It is not necessary to cultivate after the end of August, until just before the ground freezes, when thorough work should be done by spade or cultivator, and, after the ground is hard, a mulch of two or three inches is necessary. For want of it many a promising crop has been lost. Swamp hay, being free from weed seeds, is preferable, or forest leaves held in place by evergreen branches, for small plots. Where the snow falls heavily, as in the Province of Quebec, winter protection seems easy, but the mulch is a necessity against the freezing and thawing that takes place in spring, and often destroys the vitality, if not the life, of the strawberry plant.

A RASPBERRY PLANTATION

is allowed to be less trouble than the same land devoted to the culture of strawberries, as it does not require to be so frequently renewed, and is able to stand alone, if given proper care and attention while growing. The cultivation is about the same, for there must be thorough preparation of the land, and attention given to suitable location and proper drainage, for the raspberry will not thrive with wet feet. The canes are biennial—that is, they are produced one year, bear fruit the next, then die, so that there is no such thing as three-year-old plants, it is a system of renewal. One-year-old plants that sprout from the roots are considered the best, but if grown from root cuttings they are equally good, because furnished with a large number of fibrous roots. The rows are made six feet by four, and after the first year or two, the red varieties may be allowed to grow sprouts or suckers, so as to form continuous roots. These growths sent up one season, fruit and die the following. It is best to pinch back new canes the first year, as soon as they reach a height of from two to three feet. This hastens the growth of side shoots, upon which the fruit is to be borne the next season. If these are cut back in spring to a foot in length they will have stems that will be self-supporting. In northern latitudes, the canes are often injured above the snow line, and broken down by its weight, and it is a question whether it pays best to keep them short and stiff, or so pliable as to be easily laid down and held in place by a shovel-ful of earth. Four or five canes are enough to be left at each root, and dead wood must be kept pruned out.

The most troublesome disease is anthracnose, which attacks the stems, causing large scars and leading to drying out of the canes. It is most troublesome in old plantations, and if once established the only remedy is to change the location and apply Bordeaux mixture, before growth starts in spring, again when young shoots are a foot high, and a third application two or three weeks later. This will generally secure a healthy, clean growth.

Nothing has been said of the profit of these two fruits, for it is impossible to form any ideas on the subject so as to judge one locality by another. The prices of labor, nearness to market, and methods of culture adopted, all must be taken into consideration when counting up profit and loss. Help has become such a serious matter in many places that even fruit-picking has no charm for nimble fingers, where, ten years ago, in this Province, girls and boys were anxious to obtain this summer work. Then, again, the market is so often demoralized by an influx of foreign fruit that it is not easy to cater for it, and a dry spell when the fruit is setting will often ruin the crop. Bees are useful adjuncts in a raspberry patch, and it is with them in flowering time a principle of give and take.

As a variety, the Cuthbert still holds its own as a market berry, among the red varieties, and the Marlborough is always first in the market. Loudan is a good cropper, and among the black raspberries there is not much choice. The old Brinkley's Orange is the best flavored of the yellow sorts, but too tender for market, though superior for home use. White Golden Queen carries well. But the buyer usually favors the red raspberry, and dealers tell that they sell a hundred red to ten yellow. Superior fruit put up in attractive packages has the best selling chance, and, like all other departments of the world's work, there is ultimate success for those who make a specialty of supplying the best fruit, and always with honest packing in such a shape as to gain the custom and goodwill of the purchaser.

(To be continued.)