

## THE FRUIT GARDEN.

## Varieties of Strawberries.

Those of our readers who propose setting out strawberry plants the coming spring, will read with interest the following remarks from a correspondent of the *Agric. Observer*:

If any one wishes to know how many worthless strawberries there are, let him set out every kind he can get. I did so for my own instruction, but while this kind of planting is very edifying, it makes a poor show on the table. I at first thought that I would keep up a collection of all good and bad, but needing the land for other purposes, and considering that Dr. Hexamer was keeping up a stand and collection—many thanks be to him—this spring a large lot of my many sorts went under. I thought we should be nearly without strawberries this year, as a bed for fruit put out in another place, could yield but little until another year, but much to my surprise, we have had all the berries we could eat. The main claim I had been upon four rows of Charles Downing, each thirty-five feet long. A row of the Black Diamond—most excellent berry—has helped, but the rest, a dozen or more sorts, count for nothing. Two rows of Kentucky are coming on to prolong the picking, and instead of scarcity we have had abundance. It there is any berry upon light soil better for family use than Charles Downing, I am desirous of knowing what it is. It is good to know that a name so highly esteemed, as in this case properly bestowed, and the fruit is a precious legacy, left us by that excellent man, the lamented S. S. Downer, of Kentucky. Upon my soil varieties in high favor elsewhere are quite useless. In this class I am sorry to be obliged to place a berry that bears so high a name as President Wilder, but we can console him by saying that Napoleon III. is no better. Kissena, a prize berry of a few years ago, is on my best as small, sour, worthless, as a fruit can be; and so I might go on enumerating a long list of the kinds that are not worth growing upon my light sandy soil, no matter how well they are fertilized.

Last year Dr. Hexamer, of New Castle, Westchester County, N.Y., sent us specimens of the fruit of the Duchess, which seemed to be of excellent quality and early. Our own plants being too small to allow of a fair judgment, we requested Dr. Hexamer to state how the Duchess had done with him. He replies: "It has for three years ripened earlier than any other of over 100 kinds. Its berries are larger than those of other very early varieties, hold out well in size, and are of uniform globular shape, without neck; color, light crimson; flavor, good and sprightly, without being acid, like the Wilson; texture, firm. Berries sent to Virginia arrived there in good condition, three days after being picked. Foliage, hardy and vigorous, withstanding the severe drought of last year exceedingly well. This variety has not yet been disseminated, but will, if it succeeds in other localities as well as in the vicinity of New York, form a most valuable addition to the list of early strawberries."

As Dr. Hexamer has a soil quite different from ours, we requested he would state how some of the newer sorts have done with him, and he adds the following notes:

Monarch of the West. A large, irregular, globular berry, of dark crimson color, fair flavor, and moderate firmness. On our soil—a light clay—it is not productive enough to be profitable.

Champion. Reports from many localities show that this variety is not excelled in size and productiveness. Its quality is rather indifferent, and it lacks the firmness necessary to withstand long carriage, but for local markets it will, no doubt, be much sought for.

Black Diamond still continues to gain many friends. It seems well adapted for many varying localities and soils, and its large size, excellent flavor, and great productiveness, make it one of the most valuable varieties for the family garden.

## On the Cultivation of Vines in Pots.

The cultivation of the Grape Vine has been a study of mine for many years, and I think I may say I have met with a fair share of success. Where there is convenience for fruiting vines in pots I very strongly recommend their growth. Where there is not sufficient convenience to grow the young vines in their early stages, they can be procured from most nursery establishments. I am of opinion that vines for fruiting may be bought even cheaper than they can be grown by a gentleman's gardener or an amateur, because it is seldom that sufficient room can be spared for their proper development. Vines in pots, when well grown, are most useful in several ways, not the least interesting of which is the ornamental appearance which they have when placed in vases on the dinner table. By the following arrangement a beautiful effect may also be produced. Instead of putting the vines on the table, place them at intervals down each side, concealing the pots under the sides of the table and arranging the tops so as to form an arch over the table from one side to the other, keeping the arches all the same height, and shaping them with hazel rods, to which the vines are neatly tied; green moss and vine leaves may be woven round to hide any bare stems or hazel sticks which may remain in sight. It happens that a large party is given in the autumn, the autumnal tints on the leaves of some of the vines, such as West's, St. Peter's, Bartholomew, and several other varieties, produce a remarkable effect. Pot vines may be had in establishments

where there are sufficient forcing pits all the year round; they are useful for forcing for the first and second crops of grapes, a circumstance which renders the early forcing of permanent vines unnecessary, and which saves much time, labor, and money. I always think it a pity to force permanent and well-established vines before the beginning of January; the latest succession grapes (in gardens where there is no stint of forcing-houses) may be produced from vines in pots, and, by so doing, growers will be enabled to do full justice to their permanent vines. Every practical gardener knows how detrimental it is to leave grapes on permanent vines after the month of January; the French mostly cut all their late grapes off the vines in the month of November. I was at the late Baron James de Rothschild's, at L'Erreires, a few years ago, in the month of January, and there I found that all their late grapes had been cut, and that the stems were placed in bottles containing charcoal and water, having been severed from the vine about two months. I have stopped the bottles with Portland cement to keep the atmosphere from the water, and it has answered well; unfortunately, few gardeners have convenience to do this.—J. MEREDITH, in *The Garden*.

PROF. McNAB has presented to the Royal Irish Academy a memoir on the ascent of water in the stems of plants, to investigate which point very many experiments were made. He finds in the privet the rate of ascent to be about six inches per hour; in the elm, 16.6 inches; in the cherry laurel the rate varied from 21 to 12 inches. Experiments were also made as to the influence of sunlight and darkness, the influence of the bark, the influence of the leaves, and the influence of pressure.

## THE FLOWER GARDEN.

## Dianthus.

This is described in *Vick's Floral Guide* as a splendid gem of the most beautiful perennials grown. The Sweet William (*Dianthus barbatus*), the Carnation and Picotee, (*D. caryophyllus*), and the Garden Pink, (*D. hortensis*), belong to this genus. The species known as *D. Chinensis*,



embracing the old Chinese Pink, very much improved of late years, and the new and superb varieties from Japan, known as *D. Heidecigi* and *lacinatus*, are among the most brilliant and useful of our garden flowers. The last two run into many varieties, the result of hybridization, with flowers of monstrous size and varied and rich in coloring. Plants of the tall growing sorts are from twelve to fifteen inches in height; while the dwarf kinds make handsome, low, compact bushes, excellent for the garden and unsurpassed for pots. Seed may be sown in the spring, under glass or in a seed-bed. Easily transplanted. Set the plants from six to twelve inches apart, according to varieties—the dwarf sorts only about six inches. The Dianthus flower freely during the whole summer. If the flowering is checked by pruning, so as to keep the plants vigorous, they will usually survive the winter well, and make most beautiful plants the second season, even much better than the first. If allowed to flower too freely, they are sometimes so weakened as to be unable to bear the winter without suffering great injury, if they escape destruction. Seed sown late in the spring will produce strong young plants for the second season's flowering. The Dwarf sorts especially, and, in fact, all kinds, make very good house plants, if not kept too warm. In this family there has been very great improvement in the past few years, so that now flowers grown from seeds of the common China Pink are far superior to anything known among the China or Japan Pinks ten years ago. The engraving shows a flower of a good double Pink, of natural size. The single varieties are so brilliant that they are prized by some persons even more than the double sorts, and for beautiful markings and rich coloring few flowers equal the single Japan and China Pinks.

## Selection of Bulbs.

In making selections of bulbs, size is not a criterion of value, as many of the best sorts have comparatively small or moderately sized bulbs. The *American Garden* advises the selection of bulbs that are hard and firm, free from fungus or any signs of decay, and the rejection of such as yield to a slight pressure of the hand, or have the coatings or layers of the bulb closely attached. For indoor culture, it says, the single flowering sorts are the best, as they bloom earlier and more freely than the double, and the spikes of bloom and the individual flowers are much larger. The following standard varieties are recommended:

DOUBLE RED.—*Bouquet Tendre*, fine deep red; *Groot-roos*, delicate blush; *Courtesse de la Coste*, delicate rose, purple eye.

DOUBLE BLUE.—*A la Mode*, porcelain blue, purple eye; *King of the Netherlands*, pale blue; *Bloukerse*, violet blue.

DOUBLE WHITE.—*La Tour d'Auvergne*, pure white; *Prince of Waterloo*, pure white; *Triomphe Blandina*, bluish white, pink eye.

DOUBLE YELLOW.—*Louis d'Or*, straw colored, red eye; *Gaith*, cream colored; *La Grandeur*, clear yellow.

SINGLE RED.—*L'Ami du Cœur*, dark red; *Tubifera*, bluish, striped with pink; *Maria Theresa*, peach color.

SINGLE BLUE.—*L'Ami du Cœur*, dark blue; *Baron Von Thuill*, violet blue; *Nimrod*, light blue.

SINGLE WHITE.—*La Candeur*, pure white; *Grand Vainqueur*, pure white; *Voltaire*, bluish white.

SINGLE YELLOW.—*Heroin*, pale yellow; *König Von Holland*, reddish yellow; *Adonis*, reddish yellow.

Besides Hyacinths, the bulbs most easily cultivated in rooms, are Polyanthus, Narcissus, Early Tulips, and Crocuses. The Narcissus are best cultivated in pots, with soil the same as directed for Hyacinths, but using pots of one size larger, as the bulbs are much larger than those of Hyacinths. Early Tulips require the same sized pots and soil as Hyacinths, while Crocuses, having much smaller bulbs than the latter, can be planted a dozen in a five inch pot. Fancy flower-pots in the shape of hedgehogs, pyramids and other forms, can be obtained at the seed stores and florists for growing these latter. In all cases the soil and treatment is the same as for Hyacinths. The best for indoor culture are:

NARCISSUS.—*Grand Primo*, white, with citron cup; *Grand Monarque*, white, with yellow cup; *Grand Soleil d'Or*, yellow, with orange cup; *Paper White*, pure white; *Isidore Major*, white, with yellow cup; *Double Roman*, white and yellow.

EARLY TULIPS, DOUBLE VARIETIES.—*La Candeur*, pure white; *Rex Ruberrimus*, scarlet; *Tournefort*, red and yellow; *La Blason*, rose color; *Marriage de ma Fille*, white, striped with red.

SINGLE VARIETIES.—*Duc van Thol*, in its different colors; *Alba Regalis*, cream white; *Couleur Gramoli*, carmine crimson; *Monument*, red and white striped; *Grand Duc de Rome*, bronze and scarlet; *Couleur Ponceau*, purple and violet.

CROCUSES.—*Cloth of Gold*, golden yellow, striped with brown; *Albion*, white, striped with violet; *Sir Walter Scott*, striped; *Garibaldi*, dark purple; *Lilacine Superbus*, light blue; *Newton*, dark blue.

PETER HENDERSON says that experiments with pure water, sawdust, charcoal, anthracite, brick-dust, and sands of all colors and textures, showed that cuttings placed in each, in the same temperature rooted almost simultaneously and equally well. A sharp snap this at pretentious scientists.

FLOWERING SHRUBS.—We want to impress upon all the cheerful aspect of a home surrounded with shrubs. Plant them in groups and masses, so that in all the summer and autumn you may enjoy a perfect wealth of flowers. In the corners, at every bend of the walk, at your entrance gate, before some unsightly object, are all suitable positions. Certain species make lovely specimens standing singly in the lawn. Such is the *Hydrangea paniculata*, or the *Stuartia*, with their conspicuous white flowers. Other species look best in beds of different shapes, as *Daphne* (neorum), a small, partly evergreen shrub, with fragrant umbels of pink flowers. *Rhododendrons* and *Azaleas* are difficult to propagate, and must be left to the skillful gardener; but nothing makes a more gorgeous sight than a little group of these.

CAMPANULA AS A WINDOW PLANT.—*Barrelier's Bell Flower* (*Campanula Barrelieri*) is considered by a correspondent of the *Garden*, one of the finest of all dwarf-growing bell flowers for window culture; and, after trying many others, I have given this the preference. Grown in a pot of rich, sandy earth, it forms a bushy little plant in the spring, while a month or two later its branches elongate, until they hang gracefully over the pot sides, covered with pale, purplish-blue salver-shaped flowers. One of my plants looks splendidly just now, being a perfect mass of flowers. A good potful of this plant makes a capital substitute for a hanging basket; and the flowers show to better advantage when the plant is suspended in the window or on the balcony outside. It is also a capital bracket plant; or it looks well on the window sill, where the shoots can hang down freely.