

The Tulip.*Written for the Farmer's Advocate by Dr. J. H. G.*

In the spring there is no class of flowers looked forward to by the amateur with more eagerness for its lovely bloom and gorgeous shades and markings, than his bed of tulips. The cultivation is very simple, and the care is small that is required; but the tulip demands this little most urgently, and must have it. Spring is now upon us, and very likely those who read this article, or many of them, will have an opportunity to see their tulips in bloom. It is an easy matter to grow tulips to perfection in Canada. The bulb is very hardy, and a sharp frost does it no harm. The experience of all countries, even the most remote in temperate zones, is nearly the same regarding tulip culture. It may be summed up in the following directions:

About the first frost in autumn, say the middle of September in Canada, the bed should be thoroughly dug over and cleaned, and, if clay, a good proportion of sharp sand, lime, ashes and charcoal broken very small, and soot, if possible, should be well incorporated, by trenching in two spades deep. The bed should be then well raked and leveled, and be allowed to rest and settle for a month. The sand is useful in opening the clay and leaving little points, into which the long and fine roots of the bulb quickly enter. The lime destroys vermin and worms; the ashes supply potash for the food of the plant; and the charcoal and soot bring out the colors of all blooms, as well as tulips, more distinctly and brightly. Charcoal is a great desideratum in all floriculture in this most important of points; for what is a bloom, if its colors are not brought out clearly, but a failure? If plenty of fine charcoal be mixed in the soil, the grateful tulip will put on its brightest glories and smile, in its gratitude, with more lovely tints and shades. At the end of a month, more or less, well-rotted cow, horse or pig manure, as can be obtained, should be spread at least two inches deep over the bed and dug in equally and carefully, and well worked in. Indeed, a third digging is all the better, as by this means all the ingredients are well mixed. Beds are generally made from three to four feet wide, and should never be so broad as not to be easily reached by hand from the alleys as far as the centre. This point should be carefully noted, as tramping spoils the appearance of the bed. I do not raise the centre of my beds, as advised by some, but keep them level, and throw a little thin skimming off the alley on. The next thing is the planting, and each variety should be planted by itself in lines across. Make a line in the trench about four inches or five inches deep, and never more than six in any case. In this place the bulbs about six or eight inches apart, and so continue making rows a foot apart, and as straight as they can be made. The length of the beds is a matter of taste and circumstance. Ours are twelve and sixteen feet long, respectively, across the garden in continued sections, with a walk dividing, and the alleys are fourteen inches between the beds. After the bed is planted it should be carefully leveled over with the rake, but we do not advise patting it down with the back of a spade, as it will be pressed hard enough in general with a coat of snow, and will be less liable to be raised by frosts. If more than one variety of tulip is in a bed, a tally should be placed over it with the name of the variety. A person's memory is in general very treacherous, and is useless when some hundreds of varieties are in cultivation. The bed is now complete, and you must wait over a long winter till the soft breath of spring invites them from the deep sleep to appear again. But although hid from sight, nature has been at work, and they generally show their budding and sprouting leaves on the surface as soon as the snow is gone. Can-

da is nothing without its blanket of snow, and the blanket protects the ground from the frosts and biting winds, and all the spring bulbs are growing beneath it, fixing their roots ready for a start. We will leave the consideration of the varieties of tulips till again, and suppose they have bloomed and the leaves have withered. Tulips must now be carefully lifted and placed in a shade to dry. If any one wishes to have a good stock for another spring, this "must" be done. The bulbs, when dry, should be placed in drawers if convenient, or hung up in bags, and a tally with the name put with each. Tulips require a perfect rest from this time till the season of planting again arrives. If they are carelessly left in the ground to take their chance for a few years, the finest varieties will die out, and the stronger and coarser ones become wild and turn red. If any one, for curiosity or experiment, leaves a bed of tulips to take care of themselves, he will soon be satisfied of the truth of this statement. Even one year much impairs them; and the finer sorts of by-blooms, roses and ducan thols will not submit even to that. Let it be laid down, therefore, as an axiom, that all cultivated tulips must be faithfully taken up after blooming, and laid away to have their perfect repose when carefully dried. They should be looked over occasionally, and stirred in the bag or drawer, as mustiness will thus be avoided, and decaying bulbs removed. If these simple rules be attended to, we will guarantee a splendid reward of the finest coloring and shades to the amateur or gardener. A tulip bulb never blooms twice. It dies to feed the flower, and produces from one to four bulbs, which will bear the next spring, and several smaller ones, that generally blossom in two seasons. Some are wonderfully productive, and increase monstrously, but they are seldom the finest sorts, whilst the most gorgeous are slow producers. In Canada, tulips do well and increase, and few blooms repay the anxiety of the amateur better. They are the delight of all our lady acquaintances, and we have sometimes to guard our beds jealously from over anxious hands. But such sins are easily forgiven. If you can only get the ladies interested in flowers, you will find success a certainty in floriculture.

In some future communication I will give you, Mr. Editor, a short account of the tulip mania that raged in Europe during the seventeenth and commencement of the eighteenth centuries. The prices that were then paid for choice tulips showed a thorough recklessness and temporary insanity. The sum of \$1,944 was given for one bulb—"The Admiral," and \$500 was common enough for a pair of good roots. Even at the present time large sums change hands in Holland for choice sorts; but \$25 to \$50 is about the highest, and a good new tulip is sure to get ready sale. It requires five years to raise a tulip from seed, but the chances of a fine one are poor indeed; and tulips must have their characteristics to command the market.

Our Pea Crop.

Judging from the returns in the report of the Bureau of Agriculture, we come to the conclusion that Peas are not so extensively grown in our country as they were some years ago; though, in the market notes of Great Britain and the United States, Canadian peas have the place, and command the attention of buyers, bringing good prices. Still we think, and we speak from experience, they are well worth cultivating, particularly on light, gravelly soil. So far are they from impoverishing the soil, that they are the means of imparting to it a fertility that it had not possessed. Peas feed on the same plant food as wheat or oats, and the greater part of their nutriment is absorb-

ed from the atmosphere. This has been proved by chemical experiments. A portion of soil was analyzed, then put into a box and peas sown in it. After the peas grew and matured, that soil was again analyzed and found to possess more of the elements of fertility than it possessed when first analyzed. This testimony from chemistry is but additional proof to that of our own experience. We know poor, hungry soil to be sown with peas, and the following season to bear crops that it would not produce before the peas had been sown. Not only do peas add to the fruitfulness of the soil—they smother and destroy weeds.

Though peas may not bring as large a money-return as some other crops, they pay pretty well. There are returns of 40 bushels to the acre, but they are few—let us calculate the returns at what is more common:—30 bushels. The N. Y. Tribune of March 10th reports: Canadian Peas, 2,400 bushels at 97½c. per bushel. The London (Ont.) Free Press reports peas, per cental, \$1.25. There is one great profit to be derived from sowing peas, putting aside the marked returns. For soiling cattle there is no better crop, succeeding fall rye and coming in before corn, than peas and oats mixed. It is good for all cattle, and especially for milch cows.

The prevalence of the pea-bug, or weevil, in some sections of the country has prevented its being more generally grown. Other districts are free from it. In this district they have done much injury. Farther north and east the ravages are unknown. We can, in a great measure, prevent the ruin it works, but it requires the farmers of infested districts to co-operate for their destruction. It is of little service to destroy them on one farm, if they be allowed to live and multiply on the farms adjacent. The larvæ feed on the green peas, and by the time he has become dry they have attained full growth. In the cavity it has made in the pea, the larvæ become purple, and they change into perfect beetles in the spring. To be destroyed they must be killed, either when the peas are ripe in harvest, or when about to sow the seed in spring. Put the peas into boiling water for a couple of minutes before planting, and the bugs are killed. In order to kill them in harvest the seed is put into a tight vessel, and in it is put pulverized camphor, 2 oz. to the bushel, or sulphuric ether, a tablespoonful.

In selecting the variety to sow, we must have regard to the quality of soil, as well as the purpose for which we design them—the hard white being best suited for grinding, and for the English and American markets.

Stock Registers.

We notice in an American exchange paper that a stock register is to be opened for Merino sheep, also for Berkshire hogs. No one can doubt that the registration of Shorthorns has had much to do with the advancement of that valuable class of animals and the cause of the high prices being paid for particular animals. A writer in this journal suggested the registration of the most useful classes of horses. If any Agricultural Society, or Farmers' Club, or Grange would take up this subject they might be doing a good service. Why should Canada be behind? Are not our Leicester, Cotswold and Lincoln sheep of more real value to Canada than the best Merino that ever lived. We should be pleased to hear from others on this subject.

The value of the sheep and lamb's wool imported into the United Kingdom from the Australian Colonies and New Zealand last year, was £16,009,762, as compared with £13,821,624 in 1875. The Australian wool trade materially increased in importance last year.