GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

FLAT LANDS FOR ORCHARDS.

Some discussion has recently taken place among fruit-growers and writers at the West, on the question whether high or low land is best for orchards. The experience of late years has shown that apple trees in many instances have succeeded best, lived longer, and borne better crops, when planted on low, flat and moist land. From these facts the inference has been drawn by some persons that apple trees need a large supply of moisture, and even that drainage is detrimental—and writers who have recommended upland are charged with giving bad advice. The cast-iron rule has therefore been laid down: "Always plant apple trees on low and moist land."

Some western orchardists have expressed the opinion that the reason low lands have given the best results, is that the soil is deeper, mellower, and more nearly resembling the manured and cultivated ground of the best managed orchards, and that if manure and cultivation were applied to the orchards on upland, they would give a different and more favourable report. Whatever the result might be, it is certain that in many places high ground gives as good, and often better, crops than depressions, and the above-mentioned rule should therefore be modified or changed to "always plant on such land as experiment shows to be best, whether it be high or low land." Success depends on the character of the soil, and on the treatment it receives, and not on its depression or elevation. Sterile ridges, where they exist, must either be avoided or else brought into a good condition by manure and cultivation.

Mistaken notions are sometimes adopted on the effect of draining. Instead of making the land drier, it tends to give a more uniform and continuous supply of moisture to growing plants, by changing a hard crust into a mellow or porous bed of earth, which will receive and hold surplus water, and give it off as wanted. The instances where orchards have been greatly improved by placing tile-drains between the rows of trees have fully proved the benefit of drainage.

The preceding remarks apply wholly to apple orchards. Peach trees, on account of the partly tender character of the fruit buds, usually bear best on elevations, in all localities where the crop is liable to destruction in winter. The cold air settles in valleys, and often proves fatal to the buds, while they escape and give good crops on ridges.—*Country Gentleman.*

RHUBARB CULTURE.

Rhubarb, like currant bushes, will grow almost anywhere and under any treatment, and consequently receives more ill usage than any other "green thing growing." But, for this reason, it should not be supposed that when growing under neglect and abuse it will do its best and produce as abundant crops and of equally good quality as when good treatment is given. After it is once planted, says the *American Garden*, rhubarb requires but little cultivation; but it must have at all times deep, rich soil, the richer the better. In field culture the roots are planted about four feet apart each way, and cultivated like any hoed crop. In the family garden they should be planted two or three feet apart, in a single row, at least four feet distant from other plants. It may be raised from seed; but as there is little reliance in the seedlings being of the same variety as the parent plants, division of the roots is the method of propagation usually adopted. Any piece of root with a bud or crown will grow, if planted about two inches deep in mellow soil, firmly pressed about it. Roots may be planted in Autumn or early Spring. Plantations are usually renewed every four or five years; yet when a liberal dressing of manure is given every Fall, the roots will produce a crop for an almost indefinite period. Heavy manuring, clean cultivation and liberal space are essential requisites for raising large, succulent rhubarb. The varieties best known are: Linnæus, grown extensively for market as well as home use. It is early, very productive and of a brisk, spicy flavour. Its principal fault is that it seeds so freely that, unless all flower stalks are cut off as soon as they appear, the crop deteriorates rapidly. Victoria is later, has larger leaves and stalks, and requires very rich, rather heavy ground for its best development. Paragon—this is a new variety, originated in England, and now introduced here. The stalks are bright red, heavy and produced in quick succession and great abundance. It is earlier, of more delicate flavour, and has decidedly less acid than any other variety we are acquainted with. But its most remarkable and most valuable qualification is that it does not produce flower stalks, to which fact its great productiveness is mainly attributable, all the strength of the plant being used for the development of its leaves.—*American Cultivator.*

SLUGS IN GARDENS.

Our dry, hot summers are not as genial to the development of these garden pests as the damp atmosphere of England; yet several enquiries from readers seem to indicate that they are on the increase in some localities. A subscriber writes: "A slimy, creeping snail is very destructive to my plants; how can I destroy these insects'?"

Well, in the first place, a snail is not an insect, but a mollusk; and, in the second, the animals which destroy your plants are, properly speaking, slugs. The garden snails of Europe (*Helix hortensis*) do not exist here. There are a few species of this genus found here in damp woods, but they are never seen in sufficient numbers in our gardens to do any damage. The term snails, as commonly used, comprises all land mollusks with shells or houses; while under slugs are understood all land mollusks without shells.

In English gardens slug-hunting is among the most important routine operations, and a method which is found as satisfactory as any is to go along all the walks of the garden each evening with a bag or bucket full of bran, and place a handful of it on the borders, at every eight or ten feet, in a heap. Slugs are very fond of bran, and it seems to attract them from all quarters, so that the heaps are soon found covered with them, often a complete mass. Early next morning traverse the same ground with an empty bucket, a dust-pan and a small broom, sweeping bran and slugs into this dust-pan and emptying all in the bucket. By the time the circuit has been completed many hundreds, if not thousands, are thus captured. By throwing some salt in the bucket they may be killed in a very short time.

Another plan is to lay cabbage-leaves, upon which some fresh lard has been spread, near the plants in most danger of the depredations of the slugs. This is done in the evening, and early next morning most of the slugs near by will be found under the leaves. They may then be scraped off and destroyed, and by keeping the leaves in a cool, shady place during the day-time, they may be used for many nights.

If cut worms infest the garden, lay pieces of board about. The worms will take refuge under the boards in the heat of the day and may then be killed.

SHELTERING ORCHARDS.

Among late topics introduced into some of our agricultural and horticultural contemporaries is that orchards to make them productive, must be sheltered on at least two sides from the cold blasts of winter. This shelter is to consist of hedges of evergreen trees and be of sufficient height and density to make a secure defence.

The thing in our judgment is a fallacy. Instead of proving advantageous to an orchard, we believe a hedge, or protection of any kind, would be a positive injury. Apple orchards planted in valleys and southern exposure will not, as a rule, be as healthy or yield crops at all to be compared to orchards planted in elevated positions, opened to the wind from every quarter. Indeed, if we were about to set out an orchard to-day, we should select a high northern exposure. All our experience and observation goes to show such a position to be the best. Those about setting out orchards the coming spring should avoid what they will be likely to find a serious error. It is a notorious fact that, even in Maine and other extremely cold States, northern exposures are selected for apple orchards, where they stand the severity of the climate much better than in valleys or where they have southern exposures or are sheltered. A Maine farmer says: "Were I to plant an orchard and had two locations, one a valley, surrounded by hills except on the south side, and the other a high elevation, exposed to the cold winds, I would choose the latter in preference to the former." The same holds good as regards peach orchards. A great object is to keep back the blooming as long as possible, and this can best be done in northern exposures without shelter.

This, we think, will be found to be the experience in Middle, Northern and Eastern States, of many observing apple-growers. There may be some exceptions, it is true; but they are only the exceptions to the rule.—*Germantown Telegraph.*

PLANT A VINE.

When a grape vine gives back so much for so little, it seems strange that any one, with a yard of earth at command, can fail to plant one. Yet how many farms have not a vine about them. This humble friend asks only a foothold of good earth, and a support, however rude, and it will throw out its arms and thrive luxuriantly, beginning earlier than almost any other fruit to reward our labour. By a judicious choice of vines, a succession of this delicious fruit may be enjoyed from early summer until the hard frosts come. While it rewards well the highest culture, it will shirk for itself fairly well in out of the way nooks and corners where nothing else can well be raised. One strong, old vine of ours, of the Isabella variety, threw its branches and tendrils all over a great oak, and grew there year after year, producing some years four bushels of grapes, which made excellent jam, besides delighting all the children visitors at the parsonage.

Dusting the leaves with white hellebore powder is said to be the best remedy for the gooseberry span worm. Be careful that you do not inhale the powder.

If you are young, plant trees; if you are about to exchange time for eternity, plant trees; they will be a more enduring monument to your memory than the costly marble.—*Seed Time and Harvest.*

If you are intending to save your own garden seeds, take more pains to select some of the best plants for this purpose. Do not wait until the best are gone and then save the leaves for seed. This is very poor economy at best.