

THE GARDEN.

For April.

THE PROTECTION OF FRUIT BLOSSOMS.

The severity of the winter is already showing its effects on vegetation, which will be injured, and perhaps destroyed, unless means be taken at once to afford the necessary protection. With trees on walls this is generally an easy matter, as copings of glass may now be had, which, in combination with blinds to roll up and down, place them in almost as good a position for setting their flowers as they would be in an unheated house. It is not cold that hurts the bloom so much as wet, which prevents the pollen from ripening, or washes it off; without pollen it is impossible for the blossoms to set, as fructification cannot take place unless a grain or more of it be deposited on the stigma, in which way the ovary is fertilized and the fruit made to swell. Those who are not so fortunate as to have glass copings will find boards a good substitute, but they should not be used wider than nine inches or so, or they obstruct too much of the light, and thus weaken the bloom. This is the fault of all opaque covering, and, therefore, what is brought into service in front of the trees should be moveable, and not kept down or on any longer than is absolutely necessary to answer the purpose required. Blinds with rollers, or hung to be worked by rings, may be drawn towards night and run up or away at sunrise; by doing this air and light have full play. One good way of protecting peach and nectarine trees, as well as apricots, is to get some thin spruce fir branches and tie them up in front, close to the wall, so as not to cover or hide much of the blossoms, which branches break the wind and take the sting from the frost, and gradually become defoliated when the weather gets warm. Fishing nets may likewise be made to render excellent service in sheltering the flowers of trees; such nets, two or three times double, break up and arrest rain or snow, and prevent either reaching the wall. To make sure of their doing this, they should be fastened at top and then strained so as to stand out below and form a sharp angle, when not only will they ward off wet, but much wind and cold, and help a great deal towards securing a crop. S. W. P.

TOWN AND SUBURBAN GARDENING.

Owing to the severity of the weather we are still experiencing great backwardness in the growth of plants, and, without wishing to cause any unnecessary trouble, we think that some care should be taken to secure adequate protection against frosts and cold cutting winds. A few handfuls of dry oat straw, fern, or other material, greatly reduces the nipping power of the wind, by dividing it up into smaller and weaker streams, as it were, and greatly reduces the damage done, but at the same time causes a lot of trouble in clearing up. We apprehend that this year the use of protective materials will be very beneficial in many cases, and bass mats, or other materials of a like nature, should be at hand wherever plants of a partially tender nature are grown. Besides protection by covering, in many places of limited extent keeping gates closed will prevent much damage from cutting winds which rush through passages and around the corners of houses; it is very little trouble to close a gate after passing through it, yet this simple matter is, as a rule, neglected by tradesmen and errand boys, who seem to have no knowledge of the purpose for which gates and doors are made. These small points are especially to be looked after, as on them much depends; but of course such items must be left to individual judgment, as to give a catalogue of them would occupy a whole number of this paper.

Before proceeding to the necessary work of the garden which has to be done this month, we have a little advice to give; advice which a letter from a friend has brought to our minds. In the letter referred to the following question occurs:—"Is

it safe to purchase dry bulbs of crocus, etc., at this season; also roses and evergreens?" and, so far as the crocuses are concerned, our reply was, "Decidedly not." What was meant by the "etc." will, perhaps, only be a matter of conjecture, and certainly we could give no reply on so indefinite a point. But there are various lilies that can be planted at this season; roses and evergreens can be planted until the middle of April, and some of the latter until nearly the end of May, but care is necessary in selecting the plants most suitable. As a general rule, it is now too late to transplant deciduous trees; but where growth has not commenced replanting can be done with a fair chance of success, if care is taken to apply water in dry weather and to prevent wind waving; but unless absolutely necessary, we do not advise the shifting of hardwooded deciduous stock so late in the season.

In some small places grafting is a hobby of the proprietor, and often curious experiments are made in this direction. The operation of grafting in itself is very simple, and is fully described in "Pruning, Grafting and Budding," which can be procured by order at Allan's, King street west, or of the Toronto News Co., the most important requisite being to have a good connection between the alburnum of both stock and scion. Of course the primary reason of the process is to place an improved variety on an inferior stock; but, at the same time, many curious and interesting, though commercially valueless, results may be had, such as, for instance, grafting pears on the hawthorn. So long as the scion and stock are properly joined, and the graft is properly bound and rendered air-tight with clay or grafting wax—which latter is the safest—a good result may be expected; but for the *modus operandi* of grafting we refer our readers to the book already mentioned.

(To be continued.)

FORCING PLANTS.

The demand now for flowers is such that nearly all kinds of plants are pressed into service for forcing; but if people would only choose the right things, and give them more time, much fuel that is now used might be saved. There are many subjects that are naturally early blooming, which, if put in anywhere under cover would come on gradually, when a very little heat from hot-water pipes or sun would bring the buds forward quickly, and cause them to open. Deciduous subjects, such as Ghent azaleas, lilacs, Guelder roses, Deutzias, prunus, and numbers of herbaceous plants, like Spirea, Deutzia, lily of the valley, Solomon's seal, and others of that class, do not require light for a time, and may with advantage be brought forward in any shed, outhouse or cellar where they can be kept close; and if a little mild fermenting material, such as tan or leaves, can be put in, the steam from it will moisten the air, and make it so congenial that the plants are sure to do well. The mistake many make is in leaving them in the ground till they are wanted to start, whereas they should be taken up long before and potted, as then they form root, especially if not allowed to stand abroad, but put into frames and coaxed on in the way referred to above. By managing in that manner it is surprising what may be done with only a little glass, and even houses may be made to do double duty by utilizing the under parts of the stage, where we have now many plants, from which we keep drawing, putting one or two of a sort into heat at a time. Others that we have not room for are either under leaf-soil or cocconut fibre, both of which are capital non-conductors, and answer admirably for covering up lilies and other bulbs, spiraeas, fuchsias, dielytras, Solomon's seal, etc., as the friendly shelter the materials afford keeps off cold drying winds and frosts, and renders the crowns snug and comfortable through being in a uniform temperature. Evergreens, such as rhododendrons, and all other hardy plants in pots, should be plunged in fresh raked leaves or straw, which helps the plants much, and prepares them for forcing, which ought to be slow, as blooms obtained under such conditions are stouter in texture, and stand longer.

To Correspondents.

RULES

To be observed when asking Questions.

1. Write on one side of the paper only.
 2. Write each question, if on a different subject, on a separate piece of paper.
 3. Write name and address on the back of each query, unless they are to be published, when they should follow the question.
 4. Do not send more than three questions at one time.
 5. Do not mix up Editorial and business matter in the same letter.
 6. Do not repeat a question before thoroughly examining the different departments, and the column "To Correspondents."
 7. The full name and address of the querist must be given in all cases.
- Note.—We cannot undertake to answer questions by post.

THE QUERIES TO WHICH REPLIES WERE GIVEN BELOW WERE COLLECTED FROM OUR SUBSCRIBERS AND THEIR FRIENDS DURING THE PAST MONTH.

Correspondence is cordially invited in all Departments.

POULTRY AND PIGEONS.

(Answered by the Editor.)

REV. A. H. S.—Langshans—If the birds are as described they have not any right to be called "Langshans," which have neither triple combs, crests nor beards.

A. F. A.—Eggs dropped from the perch—You are feeding your hens too highly, if the eggs are dropped from the perches. The infertility of eggs is always occurring when fowls are kept in small runs, especially after they have been used some time, and the ground has become foul.

CAPT. NEMO.—Hens eating their eggs—We know of no remedy for this habit, and as it is apt to spread, always kill the hens.

DOGS AND HORSES.

(Answered by the Editor.)

SUBALTERN.—Pony with hard cough and slightly swollen glands—We would advise the throat to be well rubbed three times a day with this liniment: if it blisters, stop using for a day or two and dress with Field's Oozokerine, and then renew liniment to keep up external irritation: Castile soap $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., dissolved in 16 oz. of water; Tincture of Cantharides, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.; Spirits of Hartshorn, 1 oz.; Spirits of Turpentine, 3 oz.; Rape Oil, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint; mix. Also give the following nightly for a week: Powdered digitalis, 15 grs.; Camphor, 2 scr.; Nitrate of Potash, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ drs.; Powdered Gum Ammoniacum, 3 drs. Reduce all to a fine powder, mix with 1 oz. of honey, and smear well over the pony's tongue; your feeling is all right.

PERSONS REQUIRING ANY INFORMATION ABOUT DOGS OR HORSES ARE INVITED TO ADDRESS THE EDITOR.

ZADE MECUM.—St. Bernard pup eating cinders—He has probably intestinal worms. Give a tablespoonful of olive oil at night and a scruple of area nuts in the morning, followed in an hour by another spoonful of olive oil and some warm broth.

CAGE BIRDS.

(Answered by the Editor.)

BIRDIE.—Dead canary. Diseased liver was the cause of death. The bird had probably been ailing for weeks. No; the disease is incurable.

SPORTING.

(Answered by a gentleman well known in sporting circles.)

PERSONS WISHING ANY INFORMATION WITH RESPECT TO SPORTS AND PASTIMES, ARE INVITED TO ADDRESS THE EDITOR.

LEGAL.

(Answered by a Solicitor.)

AMADIS.—Notice to quit. No.

Z.—Sub-letting. You can sub-let (if there should be no covenant against it in your own lease) for such a term only as would expire at the first date at which your landlord could insist on your quitting by giving immediate notice.

THE FIRST SUBSCRIBER.—The landlord of 265 George Street is Mr. Mutton, 23 Adelaide East. We will communicate with him and give you further information next week.

TOILET.

(Answered by Miss Burton.)

JANNETTE.—It is evidently dependent on your state of health and we do not give medical advice. Consult a physician.

F. P.—1. Grey poplin, to re-make—You can easily re-make it for the summer by mixing with the poplin satin or silk to match. We advise you not to use maroon velvet with grey. The short skirt and polonaise drapery, as you describe it, will be tasteful and lady-like. 2. No; such an alteration would be in the worst possible taste. 3. Wash the lace in tepid water with curd soap, rub very little and pull out when nearly dry. 4. and 5. Your other questions must remain over till our next issue. See Rule 4.