

## Correspondence.

## IDLE HOURS—LIVE FENCES, &amp;c.

Messrs. Editors,—Time is a talent, and one that is much wasted, and in this extreme warm weather there are some hours at midday that I may use for my own amusement at the present, and perhaps the hours of idleness may be conducive to some good some future day. Might it not be useful to write some practical notes on the best mode of raising live fences? The subject has been discussed in clubs, but not to my satisfaction. Some practical man should take up the subject, and write what he knows about it, and, if in his power, he might apply some of the theories in vogue, experimentally, and so prove their worth. I shall try to commit to paper what I know on the subject, and as I am now very old, some one may come in just where I leave off, and so save himself the labour of going over experiments to no purpose. For these last seven years I have been trying experiments with some plants which I thought might succeed, and seeing the apple recommended I had a good chance, and made a trial. They don't stand cutting; they are short lived, their foliage is too large, and they are too expensive. Plums have also been tried by me, and they will do alone, but much better as a mixture in beech and privet. I even would doubt of them for farm fencing. The osage orange, if it could be made to stand our climate, would do for farm fencing, but it is not able to stand our severe seasons, nor can a hedge be raised much earlier of them than of the hawthorn. The Canadian thorns are hard to get from seed, and after they are procured their foliage is too large, especially the cockspur. Most of the other varieties that I have become acquainted with are not prickly enough, at least not so prickly as the hawthorn. I shall therefore recommend the culture of the British, or white, or hawthorn, and begin by saying, procure, if possible, acclimated seed, viz: seed from plants that have been raised in this country. As my method of raising the plants is within the compass of every farmer's means, I shall describe the mode in as few words as possible, because farmers generally do not like long puffing, except on wheat, or horses, although the day will come when it will be dung and green crops, cattle, &c. Every farmer grows at least *one rod of onions*; then prepare the land well for them, and before sowing lay off your bed in lines of two feet apart, draw a drill with the whole breadth of the face of a common hoe, say two inches deep; sow the haws into this drill so thick that they will touch each other, patting them well down with the back of a spade, or lay a board lengthways of the drill, and tread them well down, cover them up and sow your onion seed as if no haws were there—thus you will be able to keep the place clean of weeds, and have your crop of onions to boot. About one peck of haws will be sufficient to sow a rod. Clean the land well in the fall after removing the onions, and in the spring you will see the thorns coming through thick, but not so thick as you sowed the seed, as some take two or more years to come up. Now, say you sow in 1860, in the spring of 1861 they will begin to come up, and in 1862 you may draw up all you can handle conveniently, and plant them on a piece of well prepared land in rows, one foot apart, and about three or four inches apart in the row, leaving the seed bed for another year, or perhaps two years, as the case may be. The seed bed being in rows will not be difficult to keep clean, and in 1863 you may plant another piece of equal dimensions. Thus much for the seed and nursery beds. I prefer leaving the plants at least two years in the nursery bed, to acquire strength and get well rooted, that when planted out for good they may grow rapidly. Some will make shoots of eighteen or twenty inches the first year after planting for good; and I would prefer plants of from *three to six* years to plants of from *one to three* years, and the hawthorn will grow transplanted at almost any age.

My method of planting is as follows:—Prepare the site well with a spade; no necessity to raise a place for the plants. Lay them in on the level, one after another, at six inches apart, each plant headed down to within six inches of its surface growth, when the top of the second will be over the root of the first, and the third over the root of the second, and so on *ad infinitum*. I prefer heading down the first year's growth, whatever it may have been, to six inches, and the second to about twelve inches, which will leave your hedge about eighteen inches high to commence its third year's growth, and if kept free from weeds, and the browsing of sheep and cattle, the cause is won.

I had got thus far with my hours of idleness, when two friends called, both of them