

# THE SIMPLE LIFE

## The Fruit Industry of British Columbia

**F**RUIT-GROWING is one of the infant industries of British Columbia, but it is growing rapidly and is quite certain ere many years to rival mining, lumbering or fishing. A few years ago the man who would venture to describe the Kootenays as fruit-growing districts would be looked upon as a visionary or an imbecile; to-day all Southern British Columbia is acknowledged to be the finest fruit country on this continent. Not only will it produce fruit in abundance, but the quality of its fruit is superior to that grown in any other part of the continent.

In 1903 Messrs. Stirling & Pitcairn, of Kelowna, on Okanagan lake, shipped a trial carload of apples to Great Britain. The shipment consisted of Spys, Baldwins, Ontario and Canada Reds. They arrived in Glasgow, Scotland, on November 9th, in splendid condition, and sold at 6 shillings per box, or about \$1 more per barrel than the choicest eastern Canadian apples—reckoning three and a half boxes to the barrel. The British Columbia apples aroused much interest amongst fruit dealers as well as consumers, and many letters were received by the consignors from persons anxious to do business with the splendid fruit. In the year following, 1904, the British Columbia Department of Agriculture forwarded a collection of British Columbia fruit to London, England, for exhibition purposes. It consisted of apples, pears and plums, including the following varieties: Apples—Fall Pippins, Kinross, Vandervers, Twenty-ounce Pippins, Blue Pear-mains and Oranos, from Lytton; Ribston Pippins, Wolfe Rivers, Westhills and Snows, from Kelowna and Lytton; Warners, Boskoop, Baldwin, St. Lawrence, Greening, Golden Russet, Alexander, Blenheim King, Canada Red, King of Pompanos, Ontario, Jonathan, Northern Spy, Belle of Orange, Vagener and McIntosh Red, from Kelowna; Wealthy, Ribston and Gravensteins, from Victoria; Pears—Beurre Clairgeau, Easter Beurre, Beurre d'Anjou and Howells, from Kelowna, and plums from Victoria. The exhibit was greatly admired and evoked the highest encomiums from the newspapers. The London Times, while hesitating to declare the fruit superior to the best English specimens, admitted that they very nearly approached them in color, shape and flavor, even after having traveled 6,000 miles by railway and steamship. The Royal Horticultural society's appreciation of the fruit was shown by the award of the society's gold medal and diploma.

One result of this exhibit was the deluging of the agent-general of British Columbia (Hon. J. H. Turner, Finsbury Circus, London), with letters from prominent fruit-dealers, anxious to do business with British Columbia fruit-growers. To momentarily satisfy the demand for British Columbia fruit, and to emphasize the fact of its good qualities, the department of agriculture, shipped in cold storage a full carload of assorted fruits to London in the fall of 1905, in charge of Mr. R. M. Palmer, provincial horticulturist. This fine collection was the chief attraction at the Royal Horticultural Fruit Show at London, England, and at several provincial shows, and was awarded many prizes.

Following up the success of 1905, the department of agriculture forwarded a commercial exhibit last season (1906), consisting of apples and pears, to Great Britain, in charge of Mr. Palmer. This fruit was shown at Edinburgh, York, London and other cities, and won praise from press and public at every point. At Edinburgh the gold medal of the Royal Horticultural Society of Scotland was awarded the collection, and at London the province again won the gold medal of the Royal Horticultural Society for the best collection of apples, while seven silver and silver-gilt medals, and three bronze medals were awarded to individual exhibitors, whose contributions made up the collection. As in former years, the Canadian Pacific railway company co-operated with the government of British Columbia in the collection and transportation of the fruit, generously furnishing cold storage cars and cold storage space on its Atlantic steamships free of charge.

The prize winners at London were:—British Columbia Government, gold medal; Mrs. John Smith, Spence's Bridge, silver-gilt Knight; Thos. G. Earl, Lytton, silver-gilt Bankian; Coldstream Estate, Ltd., Vernon, silver Knight; Jas. C. Gartrell, Summerland, silver Knight; James Johnstone, Nelson, silver Knight; Stirling & Pitcairn, Kelowna, silver Bankian; J. R. Brown, Summerland, silver Bankian; Kelowna Farmers' Exchange, Kelowna, bronze Bankian; Jas. Ritchie, Summerland, bronze Bankian; Kootenay Fruit Growers' Association, Nelson, bronze Bankian.

After going the rounds of the fruit shows and securing unqualified approval everywhere, this collection was broken up and sold to fruit dealers at the highest prices.

An exhibit of apples was forwarded to Christchurch, New Zealand, and made one of the chief attractions in the fruit division of the International Exhibition. Writing of this collection, Mr. W. A. Burns, Canadian commissioner for New Zealand, says:—"The shipment arrived in excellent order, and the quality was of the highest and most reliable. The newspapers and the public have gone fairly wild over the exhibit, and now that it has been proven that the Canadian apples can be transported safely to this market, a good market is assured. I may say that the price of San Francisco apples at the present time is 8d. per lb. in the local market, so you will see that there is a good margin of profit."

This year a collection of over 800 boxes of apples and pears was sent to Great Britain and shown at the principal exhibitions and horticultural shows at Edinburgh, Hereford, Tunbridge, Exeter, Sheffield, Crystal Palace, London, and the Royal Horticultural Show, London. Gold and silver medals and certificates of merit were awarded to the exhibit as representative of the province, while individual exhibitors won many silver-gilt, silver and bronze medals and certificates of merit. Some of the Royal Horticultural Society winners were: Province of British Columbia, gold medal; T. G. Earl, Lytton, silver-gilt medal; Stirling & Pitcairn, Kelowna; Mrs. J. Smith, Spence's Bridge, and J. R. Brown, Summerland, silver Knight medals; Oscar Brown & Co., Vernon, and A. Unsworth, Chilliwack, silver Bankian medals; J. A. Ritchie, Summerland, and others, bronze

medals. In all the society awarded thirteen medals to British Columbia fruit.

These repeated triumphs have resulted in the establishment of a permanent market in Great Britain, to which several growers are now catering exclusively. Australia also wants British Columbia fruit—one grower alone receiving an order recently for 70,000 boxes of apples. Thus, fruit growers here have the satisfaction of feeling that apart from the unlimited market afforded by the Prairie Provinces, they can also count upon big orders and big prices from overseas. At present there is an embarrassment of riches, so far as markets go, for they cannot possibly supply the demand.

At the fifteenth annual convention of the Northwest Fruit Growers' association, held in Vancouver, December 5-8, 1907, the Kelowna, British Columbia Fruit Growers' association won the first prize gold medal, for the best display of fresh fruit, and Mon-sherger & Hope, of Grand Forks, B. C., won second prize. In two other competitions: Best five boxes of apples, five varieties, and best box of commercial apples, T. G. Earl, Lytton, B. C., won third prize. In these competitions British Columbia was pitted against the choicest productions of Oregon and Washington.

It has been estimated that in Southern British Columbia there are over 1,000,000 acres of land fit for fruit growing, while in the great northern interior from 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 more acres will be found available for fruit. Apples, plums, pears and cherries are grown with great success on the Skeena river, and it is believed that this will prove true of most of the valleys of the northern portion of the province.

In 1901 there were 7,430 acres in fruit, with a grand total of 850,000 fruit trees. In 1906 the fruit land of the province increased from 29,000 acres, with 1,700,000 trees, to 49,000 acres, with 2,700,000 trees. In

fuse or wood-ashes added to make it open. Dig out a hole about 4 ft. square and 3 ft. deep where the tree is to be planted, then put in a good layer of brick rubble for drainage, that is, supposing the subsoil is such as does not admit water. Cover the drainage with some sods and fill in the remainder of the hole with the mixture, allowing about 12 in. in which to arrange the roots. The tree having been placed in its position against the wall, with the ball of soil resting in its new bed, manipulate every root so that each is independent of its neighbor and free to wander at will horizontally. Finish up by leaving a basin-shaped hole round the stem, and in this give a good soaking of water, leave it to settle down.

### When to Plant and Prune Peaches

"Planting should be done, if possible, at once, so that the roots can make a little headway before winter weather. The system of pruning is not so simple to the amateur as that of most other trees, the reason being as follows: With Apples and Pears it is necessary to cut back the young wood in restricted trees to but three or more eyes, as the case may be, these spurs then form what are called fruiting buds and leaf buds, but in the case of the Peach only the young wood requires thinning out, leaving for preference those growths which are the thickness of a goose quill—if thinner the fruit is usually poor, and if thicker it generally falls off, but should the growth be very strong, it denotes the presence of sap roots and absence of fibres. These should be attended to immediately the leaves begin to fall, for without plenty of fibrous roots it is useless to expect good fruit. To root-prune successfully it is necessary to check the tree in such a way that the soil about the roots is not loosened, and at a reasonable distance from the stem. As each thick fleshy root appears,

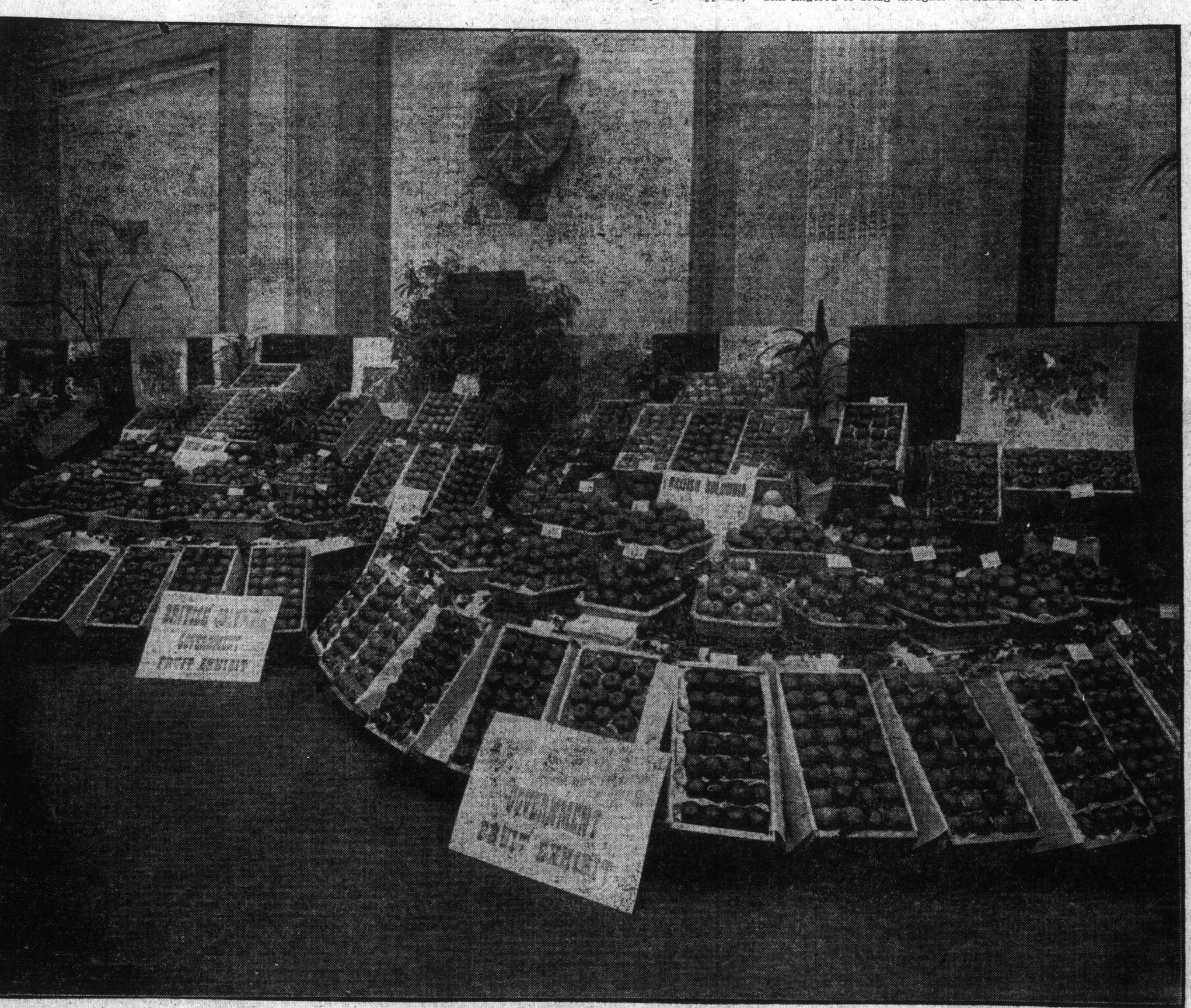
have a tendency to grow outwardly or inwardly; these, of course, are not required if a well-trained tree is to be expected. The next thinning should be one here and there of those that remain, bearing in mind that the top one and that nearest to the base of the shoot should eventually be left. These on no account should be removed. By reducing the numerous little growths by degrees, no great check is given to the flow of sap, which must be very rapid at the disbud-ding season. The tree goes on enjoying its freedom of growth satisfactorily, and with only the really requisite number of growths to build up the tree for the future.

### Varieties to Plant Outdoors

"It is not a good plan to choose very late sorts, for these are seldom of much use for dessert. It is far better to select such as Rivers' Early or Hale's Early for the first picking, Alexander Noblesse and Royal George for second and Prince of Wales and Barrington to follow. A well-matured Peach tree will carry and ripen successfully a fruit at every square foot and even a little closer; but if really good fruit is desired it is wise not to overcrop. In my opinion a peach tree should never be without moisture at any period."—Country Life

### The Sun Roses or Helianthemums

A correspondent writes for information about these delightful little flowers, which open to the sun for many weeks in the year. We were looking at a mass of them recently on a dry sunny bank, and flowers still lingered to bring thoughts of summer to one's



British Columbia Government Fruit Exhibit in Great Britain

the million trees increase, there is included fruit bushes, some 41,000 ornamental trees, 41,000 rose bushes, 22,000 plants and 17,000 shrubs, but the figures do not include the trees sent out from nurseries within the province, which it is thought would equal the total of the latter figures.

In the last four years, the increase in exports according to returns from the express and railway companies, was 2,400 tons, the total amounting to 11,882 tons.

### Peach-growing Outdoors

There is a general agreement among fruit-lovers that a good Peach is pleasant to eat at all seasons, whether it comes from a glasshouse or an open wall. For this reason the following hints from a correspondent may be useful to the readers of these weekly notes: "I suppose that no fruit is so acceptable in the late summer months as a ripe Peach, the culture of which cannot be made too widely known. Success is best attained when a south wall is available, for Peaches revel in sunshine, and it is difficult to ripen either the wood or the fruit when the trees are in any other position but south. Much care is necessary in the preparation of the soil in which the trees are to be planted, especially if the natural soil does not contain lime. Much lime is necessary, therefore, if it is not present, it must be procured, using it at the rate of a barrow-load to a carload of good stiff loam. The latter should be well chopped up with a spade and sufficient burnt re-

carefully cut it through with a sharp knife and fill in the gap made by excavating with a liberal addition of new maiden soil. If the work is carefully done and no roots are bruised, it will be found that where each one has been pruned new fibres will spring away to take at once to the new soil. This is the only way of checking strong growth. When Peach trees are old and well established, it is an excellent plan to make a quantity of lime and scatter it over the border, covering this with horse droppings and litter. The spring is the most critical season for Peaches grown outdoors, for they usually expand their flowers very early, and at a time when cold winds and frosty nights are frequent. A temporary covering should be at hand by which the pollen can be protected. When this is chilled or frozen the fruit seldom sets.

### A System of Protection

is a double thickness of fish-netting. This can be left on in the daytime, and admits plenty of air and sunlight. No artificial method is necessary in the fertilizing of Peach flowers. The action of wind and rain is sufficient, and I never have cause to regret not using the rabbit's tail or camel-hair brush usually brought forward by many growers. The flowering and setting season is one of great interest, and great care must be taken; it is then that the trees tell you whether they have been treated properly in autumn, and it is at this period that the growth buds as well as the fruit buds have an unpleasant way of saying 'We'll have no more of it, and fall off, never to be replaced. However, if the trees are carefully tended this will not occur, and as the growth extends and the leaves expand it is then that they require careful fingers the most, for what is termed 'disbudding' is necessary. This is a great thing in Peach culture and he-quires much thought. When the growths have reached the length of the little finger, they should be gradually thinned. It is best to do this at intervals of a few days, taking away first only those growths which

mind. One who knows this family as well as anyone says they are in danger of neglect in these days, and here, in the hope that their cultivation will be more ardently pursued. Helianthemums, as this authority writes, are some of the showiest and most brilliant of dwarf shrubs. Just now, when alterations and additions are being made in gardens, a reminder of these virtues may induce some planters to introduce a few of the best of them to their gardens. They are well-drained and sunny, a position, as possible, Shade and stagnant soil they cannot bear. They can be used to furnish ledges on the rock garden, for planting in patches in front of the herbaceous border, or even in masses by themselves. The soil for these does not need to be very rich, and certainly it need not be very poor; a sound sandy loam is as good as anything. The kinds can be increased with the greatest readiness by cuttings, which should be taken when they are quite young and succulent, and given a brisk bottom-heat; a few days will suffice to root them. Sun Roses are, of course, most beautiful in the morning. As the day advances the flowers close, the afternoon. The plant—range in color from some of the red sorts, however, like Fireball and Magenta Queen, are frequently open in the latter part of the afternoon. The varieties of the common Sun Rose—its British plant—range in color from crimson red and yellow to white, and there are both single and double forms. Besides the two mentioned varieties (crocus and serpyllifolium (yellow), mutabile (rose), hyssopifolium (coppery red) and macranthum (white and yellow) should be grown. There are also double-flowered sorts of most of these. If the species distinct from H. vulgare, H. formosum, is, perhaps, the most beautiful. It is a spreading dwarf shrub, not more than 2 feet high, has grey white foliage and large bright yellow flowers with a black spot at the base of each petal.

## Home-Made Devices for Transplanting Vegetables and Flowers

There are innumerable receptacles which can be used for starting seedlings, and no doubt several will suggest themselves to you. To me, one of the chief charms of gardening is the fact that there is always something new or different for each year and for each season, as well as for each operation.

### The Useful Tin Can

Probably the tin can is the most popular transplanting device. If set on the stove until the solder melts and the seams open, the bottom can be removed and the sides held in shape by a piece of wire twisted around the middle. A board or trayful of these is carried into the garden at planting time and each is slid off into the hole prepared to receive the plant. A knife is then run round the inside of the can, and the tin is lifted upward, leaving the soil and roots free. The can may be left in the hole with the plant, in which case the wire should not be loosened, but the can should be drawn up until the top of it is about two inches above the soil. This forms an absolute protection against cut-worms, and is especially valuable in new soil, or sod land when first under cultivation. If you raise tomatoes in cans, I would certainly advise this method of transplanting, for it is the most annoying thing in the world to have an entire plant cut off just at the top of the root. Other insects mutilate a plant, but there is some chance of its saving its life. Cutworms slay outright. It might appear that the can would confine the roots so that they could not obtain enough nourishment; on the contrary, they grow deep and spread out below the can, which also protects them from drought. These cans can be used over again, year after year, if they are stored away after their spring usefulness is ended. Each bottomless can can be a little fine gravel or sand put in below it. Powdered charcoal (or the pieces of charcoal that can be purchased from any plumber or tinsmith, and which are easily crushed fine enough with a hammer or hatchet) is the very best thing in the world to add to the drainage layer at the bottom of a pot, can or other receptacle designed to hold the roots of a plant. It will keep the earth sweet and loo, but the tin is filled with finely screened, rich loam in which the seeds are planted. Several seeds are put in each can and the stockiest seedling retained.

### Paper Flower Pots

Flower pots can, of course, be used, but they are more expensive than the cans, which are generally thrown away as a perfect nuisance. Paper flower pots are decidedly good for this purpose. They are made of a brown, practically waterproof cardboard, cleverly cut and folded in such a way that they may be easily and quickly opened at side and bottom. When the seedling is grown and ready for the garden, the pot is unfolded, the plant released, and the earth, if moist, will retain its shape. These paper pots can be purchased from dealers, in sample lots of one dozen, or in cases of 1,000. They cost from ten to sixty cents a dozen, the sizes ranging from two and one-quarter inches to six inches.

### Other Cheap Devices

Berry baskets are good nurseries for seedlings, especially the small, square or oblong ones with flaring tops, used for strawberries and raspberries. The spaces between the strips allow good drainage. The baskets, when filled with earth, should be set in a shallow box, so that any rootlets which come through the openings may not be injured.

If you wish to limit expenses as much as possible, there is another receptacle that comes to almost every house and is as promptly thrown away, when emptied of its contents, as the berry baskets are. I mean charlotte-russe cases. The bottom can easily be pressed out, and there is left a pasteboard cylinder, as good as a tin can, though smaller.

Roofing felt could be made to answer the same purpose, and it has this advantage, the cylinders can be made any size desired. A strip of this material, five by ten inches, rolled around and overlapped one inch, tied with heavy string or wire, makes a good size for tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, etc. The old-fashioned way of using old newspapers in the transplanting of cabbages is not to be forgotten. The plant is wrapped in a piece of paper slightly shorter than itself at each end. This protects the plant at the collar and upsets the plans of the cutworm.

### A Few Fundamental Rules

Avoid painted or glazed pots; the cheap, porous clay, freely admitting air to the roots, is superior to all glazed receptacles. Look well to the drainage. A hole in the bottom of the pot, a saucer, with a few pieces of brick, stone, or cinders, together with a bit of charcoal in the bottom of the pot before filling with earth, will ensure against stagnant soil.

A common error of the beginner is in using too large pots. Plants bloom more freely when the roots hold close communion; though, if they become crowded or protrude from the bottom of the pot, it is high time to shift to one of larger size. A five or six-inch pot is large enough to accommodate almost any plant of moderate size, and there is no reason for using a half dozen frezias, may be tucked within its limits. Use small pots in starting slips, and shift to larger as growth demands.

There is a well-established hygiene in plant life, a few fundamental rules requiring observance. A sickly plant is an eyesore to all beholders, and an easy prey to insect life. Thrift is the goddess of floriculture, and cleanliness is her handmaid. All leaves are covered with microscopic pores—breathing tubes—which should be kept open. Dust impedes their activity; hence the first requisite is cleanliness. Fresh air is also a necessity, but draughts should be avoided. Coal-gas is injurious. If frost threatens, paper is a surer protection than cloth. Avoid extremes; uniformity in light, heat and moisture give the best results.

By a fortunate coincidence, the banes of plant development in the living-room are those against which its human inmates should likewise guard—too high temperature and lack of moisture.