

## NOTES FOR JUNE.

BY T. C. ROBINSON, OWEN SOUND.

[The following very interesting notes were intended for June, but they are so admirable and many of them so well suited for this month also that we insert them bodily.—ED. C. F.]

YOUNG GRAPE VINES are often injured by permitting too many buds to develop into shoots, which exhaust by dividing the strength of the vine—spoiling its shape and often preventing enough sap going to any one shoot to mature fruit buds to bear the following year. If last year's growth was thinner than an ordinary penholder, only one shoot should be allowed to remain; select the strongest and train it upon a stake or otherwise so that it will receive support, in which condition it will grow much better, and break all others off close to the old stem or close to the ground if they come from the root. If last year's growth was thicker than above mentioned then two canes may be allowed to grow this year. In no case should more than two canes be allowed to grow from the root. These directions apply to vines one or two years planted or to older vines that not yet borne.

THE "PUSH HOE," or slide hoe, will work in clay loam as well comparatively as in sandy soil. I have just been using one in an onion patch where the soil is, I am sorry to say, badly baked by the hot sun following very heavy rain, and even here it gets away fast from the common garden hoe, although harder to work, of course, than in a looser soil. If used when the surface is just beginning to dry after rain it will work in quite a stiff clay. If you have one made to order let the fork tines be on the under side, as my experience is that friction is less and consequently more ground can be gone over in the same time. If you work "right-handed" let the end of the blade project a little beyond the tine—half an inch to an inch—at the right side only. This will allow you to work close to the plants in the row at the left side without risk of cutting them—the tine being flush with the end of the blade at that side, serving as a guide to the eye while the blade is covered with soil. A person, who works "left-handed," will find it convenient to work close to the right hand row, and in that case the right tine should be flush with the end of the blade. The advantage of leaving the end of the blade that is farthest from the row to project beyond the tine at that side is that it may be used to pull out a small weed, plant of wire grass &c that may be too close to the cultivated plants to cut in the usual way without injury to the latter. I think I have stated before that the "push hoe" may be very simply made by riveting a blade of steel about eight or ten inches long and two or three inches wide on the (slightly shortened) tines of a two-pronged pitchfork. It is the handiest, most labor-saving tool on my place. We use it in cultivating all kinds of vegetables, when not hilling up, and it suits us better than the "wheel hoes," "hand cultivators," and "scufflers," that cost from five to eight dollars each, except when it is desirable to work at once on both sides of a row of vegetables, as onions, for which purpose the double-wheel-hoe is necessary. I believe that if persons fail to get satisfaction with the "push hoe" their failure will result from using it on stony or gravelly land, or from not setting it so as to work at the proper angle with the surface. When held with both hands in an easy position

for working the edge should incline into the ground very slightly. Do not let it lie quite flat, or it will tend to come out of the ground as soon as you push forward; and, only sharpen on the upper side, or you will have the same trouble. I am quite ready to be dubbed "enthusiast," respecting this tool. An implement that more than doubles the effective hoeing force on any farm or garden that is not stony, gravelly or too clayey, and that any one can have at the cost of a little brains and less than a dollar at any blacksmith shop, seems to me worthy of a little praise from any agricultural authority in the land!

IS THE "MANCHESTER" only the old Hovey Seedling under a new name? Is the question that our strawberry cousins across the line are holding their breath to hear answered by the present crop. C. M. Hovey, of Boston, opines from seeing the picture and reading the description that it is identical with the seedling which his firm brought out in 1834; and so high an authority as John S. Collins, of New Jersey, tells the Rural New Yorker that the Manchester reminded him much of the old Hovey Seedling which yielded with him over 8,000 quarts to the acre in 1855 (?). Perhaps no sort has ever been sent out with such high praise from the introducers and such flattering testimonials from men who are generally regarded as authorities, as the Manchester received, and considering the number sold and the high price (\$2 per dozen) at which they went off, it must stand, if this rumor is true, as perhaps the greatest fraud upon fruit men that has yet come to light. I hope it is not true for many reasons besides the fact that I have a stock of plants on hand, and hoped to turn an honest penny—several of them indeed—by propagating and selling young plants. I should be sorry to think so poorly of the honesty of some and the intelligence of others of the American plant growing fraternity, as I should have to think if it should prove true that one set brought out such a fraud, and the other set were stupid enough to swallow it and look on for nearly a year before finding it out. It was bad enough to have Trollope's Victoria hawked around the country as Golden Queen; it was provoking to have such fruits as the British pear and the Lombard plum sent out under half-a-dozen different names by cute Vankees each new name trebling the cost of the valuable old fruit; it was aggravating of later years to have that New Jersey man rake in the hard cash for the raspberry that he was pleased to call "Queen of the Market" from those who already were planting it as Cuthbert; it was just too bad to have that other firm in Connecticut (running Manchester now) take up the old Bella de Fontenay that had just fallen flat under the name of Amazon, and launch it forth on our devoted heads as the "Great Henrietta Raspberry—only \$1 per plant!"—but this Manchester strawberry with its colored plate and its pamphlets of praise—if it is the old Hovey—is the greatest humbug of all! It just bangs Banagher! Basswood hams and wooden nutmegs take a back seat. Yankee cuteness reaches as high a culminating point as beef did when the cow jumped over the moon!

AND YET this fraudulent business of sending out old fruits for new is not at all the only thing that prevents certain plant growers from occupying that honorable position as authorities and judges of merit in new fruits that

their prominent position and great experience would lead us to desire and expect. Those of us who have grown these new fruits in our own gardens know that some of them have realized fully the praise they were sent out with. What then must we think of that man in York State who persistently tries to put his "cowhide No. thirteens" on every new fruit that comes out, unless his finger is allowed in the pie? Who growled at the Cuthbert, and snarled at the Bidwell, and laughed the Crescent to scorn, until public opinion was too much for him, and he then secured a large stock, got out the engraving in his catalogue, and hurrahed with the rest? Readers who keep up with the times will recognize the portrait, and contrast it with that of another man in the same state who always gives everything new a fair chance, and though sometimes mistaken, puts on the praise or the blame just according to the behavior of the plant in question. When will fruit men of all stripes learn that the latter course is not only the best in its moral aspect, but in the end the most profitable!

THE PROPER way to settle this Manchester controversy is fortunately just the way that is being followed. J. T. Lovett advertises in American Horticultural papers that he will be glad to have fruit-growers visit his place and inspect the Manchester in fruit when ripening. This is just as it should be, and goes far to inspire confidence. After all it may be all right. Plants set late last fall on my place are certainly showing a large amount of fruit, and grow well on poor soil. I shall look forward with interest to the proposed conference, and will propagate the Manchester in hope.

THIS SHADOW on the reputation of the Manchester leaves the Bidwell ahead of competition among the newer sorts, and Mr. Roo invites all and sundry that are interested in it to inspect his bearing plantations on the Hudson. I wish I could be there, but must content myself with seeing that famous strawberry on my own grounds, on fall set plants, and old plants that are exhausted by taking every plant possible from them last year. Even on such plants the show of fruit is remarkable. Lots of full-grown plants of other well-known varieties do not show as some Bidwells set with clods of earth around the roots on the 1st of September last. It ripens about as early as Wilson. I have just eaten the first ripe Bidwell, or as much of the green end as a rascally bird left me, and I tested another that was beginning to redden on one side. The flavor certainly is pleasing, and would be preferred by most persons, I think, to fully ripened fruit of many other sorts. The berry I got was about an inch and three-quarters long, and an inch thick at the stem, tapering to the tip so as to form as perfect a cone as you may expect to see in the strawberry. The berries generally seem of more regular shape than any other large berry I have seen but are sometimes ridged. I do not like to speak of its faults, but it has two that I have noticed, and I mean to tell whatever I know about it; the first is that the seeds are somewhat sunken, so that the surface is not so smooth as I would like to see. The second is that like all long berries except the Prouty, the tip does not ripen up quite as soon as the rest of the berry. It is a firm berry, and it is said that if left till the tip ripens, the whole berry will be firm enough; but of that I will judge personally, and

my friends will hear from me again on the subject when I know more about it. It seems a great bearer, but whether it will do more in that respect than Wilson or Crescent, as Mr. Roo claims, I am not going to judge from the green fruit. The test will be in the pickling.

GREAT is the choice of variety in the strawberry business, greater still in manure, but greatest of all is keeping down weeds, and keeping on runners. Other things being equal, that man will probably come out well ahead of his neighbor, who not only keeps off the runners, but gets them nipped before they are six inches long, or in other words, before they absorb enough vital force of the plant to become tough. When they first come out a child can easily nip them with the finger and thumb. It is easier work for children than adults, as they do not have so far to stoop. I have just set a equal at an acre patch of Wilson and Crescent, before the fruit is ripe, and I expect to get enough extra quarts from the sap saved to the plants, to pay for the cost of nipping several times over, even with these common sorts. The advantage is in larger berries—hence greater crops and greater prices.

IT IS TOO SOON yet to speak of the Sharpless and other late berries. Many of these sorts disappointed me at first, because I noticed a smaller number of blossoms on them than on common sorts, and a blossom is only a blossom you know whether it is going to develop into a big berry or a small one. The fruit grower must not forget, however, that the bulk of berries is what is wanted, and if the same number of quarts can be obtained, then the fewer the blossoms the better, because that means quicker picking and larger prices for the big berries. Of course there is more danger of accident from birds &c. to a large berry than to three or four small ones, but all these things must be taken into consideration and "averaged."

READERS MAY REMEMBER my fear that the Cuthbert would not grow stout enough in the stalks to stand up in the snow, and to bear its load of fruit the next season. I am glad to note that with age the plant gets over its slender habit of the first year or two. Those who have observed the graceful willowy maiden of eighteen, develop into the stout hearty matron of thirty-five or forty, will appreciate this change in the Cuthbert, which fortunately takes place in it at a much younger period. I have been incorrectly quoted as saying at a horticultural meeting that the Cuthbert was no hardier than Franconia, when I simply stated that I could not be sure that it was hardier on one year plants. I am glad to say that with two and three year plants even on rich soil, where soft, tender growth may be looked for, and after the roots had been meddled with, to take up young plants, the Cuthbert came admirably through last winter, which from its open, yet severe weather was very trying, and beat the Franconia entirely.

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