

Horticulture.

Hanging Baskets.

Baskets of living flowers may be had in perfection. Select such kinds as will stand in rooms. As regards the baskets themselves, I like to see the wire-work painted dark green. Some paint it with bright colors, which greatly spoils the effect of the flowers, which should be gay enough as regards colors, without any addition in the way of paint. Inside the wire-work put a thick layer of green moss, so as to prevent the soil from dropping through; over this put some broken crocks, and then fill up with whatever compost is best suited to the requirements of the plants with which the baskets are to be filled. For summer decoration, there are numberless plants that can be grown in baskets, but for winter blooming nothing is better or looks more showy than Rollinson's Unique Geranium, or Scarlet Tropaeolum, both of which will continue in flower all through the winter, and droop down gracefully all around the basket. A basket, indeed, never looks well unless it is furnished with some drooping plant around the edge, as, for instance, with the variegated egg-leaved Polangomon called L'elegante, while in the centre should be a nicely-grown plant of Fuchsia. Pretty baskets may also be made of silver-variegated geraniums. Lay Plymouth and bright blue lobelia, or blue convolvulus with Christina Geranium in the centre; in fact, any flower that suits, and, if put in with good taste, will look well. For very large baskets—suited for lobbies—rich foliage plants, such as variegated Sedum, Echeverias, Irasines and Centaurias have an effective appearance. A window box made of wood and lined with zinc, suspended by four cords or wire, up which can be trained creepers, also makes a pretty room ornament. The great point as regards keeping plants in baskets or boxes fresh and in good health, is to give plenty of water during the growing season, but more sparingly in winter, and to keep the leaves clean. If baskets are hung high there should be some means of lowering them, as it is troublesome getting up to them every morning with steps. If the baskets are small the best way is to carry them away, and water them outside; but, in the case of larger baskets, this cannot be done, so a tea tray, or something of the kind, should be placed under them to catch the drops.—*Ladies' Floral Cabinet.*

Winter Planted Strawberries.

We published late last autumn, says the *Country Gentleman*, a detailed description of the method by which strawberry beds might be planted in a small way, late in autumn or early in spring, so as to bear freely the same or following season. We have now an additional proof of the success of this method in a row thirty feet long, planted on the 12th day of January last, or in the depth of winter. The place was a spot in the garden, well sheltered in the north and east by tall evergreen creens. The winter was remarkably open, and the ground was nearly unfrozen at the time of the planting. Square holes were first dug the breadth and depth of a single stroke of the spade, and in these holes were then placed blocks cut out of a tatted bed of the Charles Downing strawberry, with masses of earth just large enough to fill the holes to the surface. They were then covered very slightly with evergreen branches. We have already had a number of pickings of fruit from his row. The plants are as vigorous as any in older set beds, and have already begun to throw out numerous runners. This mode of planting cannot be rapidly performed, but there are cases where it may be found quite convenient to have new beds on a small scale, that shall come speedily into full bearing.

Forests in Germany.

Few people have any idea of the extent of forest land in Germany, and most imagine that of the Black Forest little is left except a tradition, and a conventional blister of woodland so named. On the contrary, in Hanover alone there are 900,000 acres of wood under State management, while early a fourth part of the area of Prussia is in forest, although half of that is in private land. As is well known, the forest administration in particular districts has long been famous, especially in Thuringia and the Hartz Mountains. In North Germany, generally, the responsibilities are allotted to districts among a carefully organized body of officers, presided over by a forest director.—*The London Garden.*

Feeding Pot Plants.

We have tried a number of experiments this season with liquid manure, and all lead us to have faith in the application of it at watering, in a weakly state. A number of old fuchsias were stunted and pot bound, but pressure of more important matters prevented our potting them into fresh earth; but to each watering a portion of guano was allowed, and the plants with their pot bound roots have not only made vigorous growth, but flowered freely from June onward till November. Some Pelargoniums which were cut down last season and allowed to break in the usual way, were shaken out of the pots and placed in smaller ones; but when they should have been shifted they were allowed to remain in the small pots, which were crammed with roots. Guano water was given at all times when they required moisture, and the plants grew and flowered better than others which are favored with larger pots and fresh soil. We could give many other examples to prove that giving liquid manure frequently, and not until roots are in abundance to consume it, is the proper way to deal with this important assistant to cultivation.—*Florist.*

The Yellows.

Every peach grower will recognize one of his greatest troubles in this disease, and would heartily welcome any discovery which would either cure or prevent it. Mr. Thos. Meehan, editor of the *Gardener's Monthly*, believes there is no mystery as to its cause. He says:—

"If you dig around a peach tree with the yellows, you will be first struck with a 'mushroomy' smell. Picking out the roots, and examining them with a lens, you will see millions of thread-like fibres, which are the mycelia of fungi. These eat the young fibres, and leave only the main roots, through which all the nutriment of the plant has to be gathered; and as an old root is unable to do much more than draw water, the tree becomes in a measure starved, and the leaves become yellow, just as they would be if growing in poor soil, which, though the plants might have plenty of roots, furnished nothing for the roots to eat. To have plenty of roots and no food, is equivalent to having plenty of food and no roots. The remedies which look to the destruction of this root are employed. Hot water has done it; so has a weak solution of salt; others have found a weak solution of potash succeed."

Cherry Trees.

These should never be highly manured. Singular as it may seem, better results have been obtained by growing cherry trees in grass than by cultivating them as highly as pears. Experienced fruit growers in Delaware, who once began a system of manuring and treatment of cherry trees, found, after an experience of a few years, that the bark would burst, gum would ooze out, and many portions of the trees show an unhealthy condition. The growers immediately discontinued high feeding, and seeded the land to grass. The trees recovered their health, and have borne beautifully since the system of grass culture began. It is the only fruit tree of all varieties which we can safely recommend to be treated in this way. A Delaware friend says his row of cherry trees, growing in grass along the fences, are the picture of health and luxuriance; while in previous years, with orchard culture, he could never make them successful.

Sunflowers.

Sunflowers are rich in honey, and are consequently good neighbors for bees. Oil, hardly to be distinguished from olive oil by any one but an expert, may be extracted from the seeds in the proportion of one gallon to one bushel. One acre will produce something like fifty bushels of seed. The seeds, too, make food, not unpalatable for human beings, and very good for animals and poultry. The Portuguese and American Indians make a kind of bread from them, and roasted they may be ground and used as a substitute for coffee. The stalks may be used as bean poles while growing. Dry, they make passable roofs for sheds and the like, and burn readily on the hearth. The ashes are very rich in potash. Altogether it is a very useful plant, and, to crown all, it has a reputation which the chemists have never disproved, for absorbing malaria, and acting as an effectual screen against that scourge of low-lying districts—fever and ague.

Proposed Park in Halifax N. S.

The public gardens must occupy an area of fifteen or sixteen acres. While beautiful shade trees, smooth walks, terraces, croquet grounds, fountains, ponds, everywhere meet the eye, flowers are the grand feature. They are not merely arranged in borders, nor sparsely scattered over large beds, but completely cover them with thick sward of endless colors and hues, all artistically arranged. So it is, area after area, acre after acre, but with endless diversities of wood and water, the ponds being made more picturesque by the stately birds that sail negligently over their surface, ever and anon floating nearer the grassy margin, as if to pay their respects to the visitors or receive tokens of their good will in the shape of bits of bread or biscuit. It is a fine sight to see the gardens well filled with well dressed ladies and gentlemen, or to mark the merry school children sauntering around in the pure air and freely exercising their lungs. But it is not a less touching spectacle to see the laboring man eat his frugal meal on a shady seat, near beds of flowers and other pleasant surroundings provided for him by the munificence of the citizens, or an evening to behold the artisans, their wives, daughters and sweethearts enjoying the scene, the grounds enlivened by music, and the shrubbery made gay by Chinese lamps. It is also gratifying to hear that boys and girls, old and young, readily obey the modest requests, "Please do not touch the flowers;" "Please do not walk on the grass." If this be the case—and the editor of the *Reporter* is our authority for the statement, the fact is most creditable to the juvenile public of Halifax, and points to the educating influences of the public gardens.

Singular Grass Rotation.

Wherever the pastures of Western Missouri have been destroyed by the grasshoppers, new varieties of grass have sprung up which the oldest inhabitant never saw before. The principal of these is a green bunch grass of a luxuriant growth, which now covers pastures and door yards where only blue grass has grown for many a year before. Stock eat it with avidity. Some persons contend that it is buffalo grass, while others see in it a resemblance to other grasses of the plains and mountains west of us. We hope that its development will be studied by some expert in the botany of this continent, for its origin may throw a new and important light upon the origin or migration of the locusts. The seed was evidently brought here and deposited by the swarm that laid eggs in this region last fall. If brought here from Kansas or Colorado only, its identity would surely be determined ere this by old plantersmen who are so numerous hereabout. It has put forth no seed stalk as yet, and perhaps in this climate it may not go to seed this year. Who will first inform us whence it came and what may be expected from it?

How to Pot and Grow Ferns.

The hole in the bottom of the pot being broken out very much larger than the maker leaves it, I put in three or four pieces of broken pot, then some rich soil and old manure, just what should be used for cucumbers; no peat, no sand; then I put in the fern, and very gently fill the pot with good garden soil, intermixed with a few small bits of soft brick as large as peas. The pot is placed on soil or ashes, perhaps surrounded with lycopodium. In any case the soil is always kept quite wet, in fact muddy, and the ferns grow as I never saw ferns grow before. The whole secret is in keeping them wet and warm, partially plunged, and thoroughly drained. You may take a pot-bound fern, pull roughly the drainage from the roots, break off the fibres anyhow, re-pot it in wet soil instead of dry, and it will grow and flourish as it never would with ordinary treatment.

When the legs of a horse swell upon standing in the stable, it is an evidence of debility, general or local. It would be well to increase the food in quantity or quality. The following might also be of use, viz: Powdered sulphate of iron, one and a half ounces; gentian root, two ounces; chlorate of potassa, one ounce; mixed and divided into twelve powders. One of those given in cut feed, as little moistened as possible, night and morning.

Ground oats would be better for feed than corn. Friction by rubbing with a coarse woollen upon the parts would also be helpful.