

sidered crack mushroom cultivators for the London market the year through. There were at that time but very few mushroom cultivators about London, so that a good price was always obtained. I recollect my employer would never sell under 1s. per pottle, (that is, a strawberry pottle) for the buttons, and a small flat pannel for the open or flat mushrooms; but I have known them sold in quantities at that time from 2s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per pottle, and when very scarce, I have known a few sold for half a guinea a pottle.

I next undertook the management of a much more extensive market garden, on the Surrey side of London, where pines, grapes, cucumbers, melons, salads, and vegetables, &c. were forced very early and extensively; but mushrooms had not then been attempted. I soon got about it, however, on a very extensive scale, and also the manufacture of spawn, which I fully entered into, with great success; and I was here engaged by the then Lord Mayor's cook to teach his gardener to cultivate mushrooms.

I had now greatly simplified the Oldacre system, so that any one could grow mushrooms who could get a little dung and some fresh earth; good loamy holding or stiff soil certainly is best.

How I first arrived at this was as follows. I was removing an old worn-out bed in dry weather, in summer time, when I observed how the spawn had run into the earth, as well as into the muck or litter that had been used, and I traded about near the bed. I at once asked myself, why take so much pains and trouble in preparing and drying the dung to make the mushroom beds? So I set to directly, and laid the dung and litter from the stables, by shaking it only a small portion of the longest dry litter, intermixing with it a quantity of the natural earth there at command, ramming and treading it down as firmly as possible to the desired size and depth or height. Here was at once secured the full properties of the manure and soil, and genial heat, without a chance of burning or becoming too moist. Such a composition, in a general situation, will sometimes actually breed or produce spawn without using artificial spawn. Beds made on this principle always produce mushrooms in abundance, of the finest and heaviest kind, and continue to bear or produce them for many months. After the beds have for some time been in bearing, and are beginning to get dry, we always water with tepid clear manure-water, made or formed only from sheep, deer, or cow-dung; no chimney soot or lime is used for this purpose. It is astonishing the long time a mushroom bed may be kept in full bearing by this simple treatment.

For the last thirty years I have made my beds entirely on the floor in sheds; carrying in the stable dung as we bring it fresh, and a sufficient quantity of soil at the same time, incorporating and mixing it well together, treading and ramming firmly down, letting it remain free or six days; then shaking it up and intermixing it well together; and if it is found fermenting, as we consider, too strong, we add more soil, treading and ramming down as before. Very soon afterwards it is ready to spawn and ease with soil; when, a very gentle genial heat and moisture being secured, these properties are afterwards fully maintained.

In winter we make our beds, when finished and cased, about 16 or 18 inches thick, and in summer about 6 inches less, thus securing mushrooms every day in the year.

[Our readers will observe that Mr Barnes's system is much simpler than that in general use, and requires less time in preparation. The mushrooms are as well grown at Brixton as the Ives, which is equivalent to saying they are as well done as at any place in England. . . .]

Charms of a Country Life in Winter.

TWO PICTURES.

Ye denizens of the city, what know ye of these? At 7 A. M. this 31st day of December, 1861, my thoughts revert to you, now slumbering amid your walls of brick, as I look out on the noble forest stretching along my right with the sloping lawn before me, while to my left lies the garden, now buried deep in snow. How sublimely still and grand the scene! The lofty trees and clumps of evergreens, clothed like the lillies of the valley, in mantles of spotless white, through which may be seen the most picturesque and fanciful views, with groups of fantastic figures the whole presenting a perfect fairy scene; and all this wonderful change, wrought by nature's handy work, whilst I have been soundly sleeping on my bed of comfort. What know ye of these lovely works of Nature's God? Ye who pursue the

"Lying vanities of life,
Ye ever tempting, ever cheating train!
Where are ye now, and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment and remorse,
Sad sickening thoughts and yet, deluded man,
A scene of cruda disjuncted vision past,
And broken slumbers, still resolved
With new flushed hopes to run the giddy round."

You can scarcely have an idea how the heart of man swells up with wonder, love and gratitude to the Giver of all good, when on waking he opens his eyes upon such a wonderful exhibition of his power as the scene before me displays. Yesterday, as I retired to rest all nature lay stripped and bare. Now behold it clothed as Solomon in all his glory never was, and as no potentate, with all the wealth he may accumulate, ever can be. Yes, country life has its charms, its sweet repose of spirit, and at no time more so than at this season, when driven from out-door pursuits one has time to contemplate nature in her grander exhibitions. Spring has its loveliness and beauty, but its changes, though wonderful, are gradual, and come upon us more understandingly; the buds swell and open little by little till the leafless forest is again clothed with its covering of verdure, upon which the eye delights to dwell. Summer brings with it its flowers of marvellous variety, and so delightful to contemplate; and autumn its stores of plenty, tempting the appetite with its luscious fruits, but winter, stern winter, alone in its miraculous wonders, like the scene I have described, which while I write is fast vanishing, and as I again look out on the landscape, upon which at early morn my eye dwelt with such delight, it is gone as mysteriously as it came.

Now when we consider the power of God exercised in the energies of nature to produce this effect, we are lost in wonder and amazement. Speaking on this subject, a scientific writer on heat, remarks:—"I have seen the wild stone avalanches of the Alps, which smoke and thunder down the declivities with a vehemence almost sufficient to stun the observer. I have also seen snow flakes descending so softly as not to hurt the fragile spangles of which they are composed; yet to produce from aqueous vapour a quantity of that tender matter which a child could carry, demands an exertion of energy competent to gather up the shattered blocks of the largest stone avalanche I have ever seen and pitched them twice the height from which they fell." Need we wonder then at the amazement with which the mind contemplates a scene so suddenly and secretly wrought, and that it is led to acknowledge the truth of the declaration—"great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty."

So far a correspondent of the *Country Gentleman*. Not to spoil the beautiful picture above-drawn, but to show the other side as rendered by a pencil not less graphic, we clip the following extract from the "Editor's Table" of *The Horticulturalist*. It is, evidently, a lady's hand which holds the pencil in this case.

"How I dread the winter and the snow; I never loved it. It is so cold, so glittering, so shroud-like. I think of the earth as one great charnel-house, wherein decay jostles the dead with rudeness. I feel the slow procession of the hours, as separately they pass along in one vast funeral train. I fear the snow, for it turns to a blank all the beautiful book that the south wind and the west wind, and the warm rain opens for us to read. It frightens all my lute lovers, the ground-sparrow and the tree-sparrow, and the katy-did, and the bee, and it hides all the summer-brooks so deftly that none can find them, save sweet spring, and she sleeps. Why should I love the snow? I am fair and shivering when it falls upon me, and I loathe the heavy garments I must don. When I fold away the pretty adornings that are fitted to the season of the morning-glory and the sweet-pea, when I consign to the dark wardrobe, the transparent scarf and the pearl-white dress, I wrap up in their foldings many a tear that will fall, despite my womanly courage. May it please God, I die not in the days of the hoar-frost and the black frost, of sleet and white driving snow! I should leave the world gladly, forgetting to thank heaven for its beauty and exceeding loveliness. I should stretch out my hands towards the bannered golden city, built of emerald, and amethyst, and sapphires, forgetting that even with such help my pathway here been paved. I should lie impatiently on my sick couch, "biding my time." I would listen for the melody of the rapt seraphs near the throne, not remembering that the Lord had prepared richest music for my ear many thousand times, when I had not even prayed for it. I should say, "Thank God, I die!" rather than, "Bless God that I have lived."

(Incapacity,) like murder, "will out." Some say the defect is in my head. I think it is in my heel, where there is a shocking chilblain. I think Thetis must have plunged me in the Styx, as she did Achilles, all but my heel by which she held me, and that this spot is the only one vulnerable to Jack Frost.

I have had only one sleigh-ride this winter. Judge whether it was a joyful one when it led me to a hotel where an insufficiency of lights, fire, food and clothing made winter dreadful. You know I hate sleighing, and snow, and ice, and all other manifestations of cold weather. When I am queen, in my realm there shall be no winter, but one long, golden, glowing summer. There shall be a perpetual shower of rose leaves on my grass, and the poplar leaves shall be the only creatures to shiver all the year round. There shall be a violet-colored twilight to last all night, and sweet south winds in the morning. I am a summer child, and true to the season that gave me birth. How can you like snow? It is so unmeaning, dead, stifling. I would rather see the coarsest brown furrow in dear mother earth's wrinkled face, than all the brilliancy of frost, and snow in which poor shivering mortals rejoice."

DISTANCE APART FOR STRAWBERRIES.—I invariably plant in rows and never in beds. I hold that the objections to planting in beds are so great and so palpable, that it will admit of no discussion whatever. My standard rule is to plant in rows three feet apart, and plants two feet in the row.—*Cor. Hort.*

THE DIANA GRAPE FOR WINE.—Mr. F. C. Brehm, Waterloo, N. Y., thinks that the Diana grape is superior to the Delaware for wine. He says that the Diana makes a wine fit to sell in 14 months, and it brings a much higher price than that made from Delaware grapes. The Diana, being a very rampant grower, does best on a light, moderately fertile sandy loam, that is dry naturally or well underdrained.

STRAWBERRY CULTURE IN FRANCE.—It appears they are beginning to appreciate the stool system of culture in France, as well as we, thanks to the labours of Mr. Knox. Mr. Glæde, in his recent work on the Strawberry, "*Les Bonnes Fraises, maniere de les Cultiver pour les avoir au maximum de beauté,*" says the difference of produce between that of a plant with the runners regularly cut off, and one left to emit them freely, is, incredible. Digging between the rows is to be avoided; and the old leaves should be left for the protection of the plants till February or March.

SOIL FOR THE GRAPE.—It is a curious fact that very rich and highly manured land has rarely produced a grape that would yield a high quality of wine. The grape that contains the most saccharine matter will make the best wine and the different varieties differ widely in the proportion of sugar. In Italy and in Sicily the very finest and sweetest grapes grow on the rocky rubbish of volcanoes, and those that grow on low rocky soils or along hillsides covered with rocks are often the best. These facts ought to teach us not to select the richest soils, and not to stuff them with organic manures, for the grape. *Ploughman.*

GRAPE MILDEW PREVENTED.—E. W. Herendeen, of Macedon, N. Y., who has recently visited the Experimental Grounds at Washington, under the charge of W. Saunders, informs us that some experiments for preventing the mildew of the grape, by erecting a cheap roof over them, seemed to answer the purpose perfectly. The roof, he states, may be simply a board sixteen inches wide, nailed to the posts. On a hundred varieties treated in this way, not any mildew was seen; while all the rest in the same yard were entirely ruined. Further experiments are necessary.—*Co. Gent.*

CLIMBING DEVONIENSIS.—Thos. River, in his Descriptive Catalogue of Roses, the 32d edition, remarks:—"Some persons, ignorant of the nature of cultivated roses, have disputed the claims of this rose to be a climbing pillar rose. It evidently originated in some strong shoot of Devoniensis, and has retained its character by budding. Here it has made shoots 15 feet long without putting forth any blossoms; these generally break forth in autumn. The climbing deviations are no rarity. Geant des Batailles has sported into a climber."

THE CONCORD. A gentleman, says the Massachusetts *Ploughman*, who has been visiting the gardens of Cleveland and the grape growers on the Islands of Lake Erie, says that—"Everywhere I went this blight was visible, and no variety was exempt but one. This showed leaves as green and as crisp as if in June. One will want to know what vine has such remarkable vitality and such healthfulness and vigour as to pass unharmed through all the trying scenes of this most extraordinary season, and come out in flying colours. I will tell you. It is the blessed Concord. I am aware that it is reported as having done badly in parts of the East, but I am writing for the West. It is true, also, that the fruit did rot in some places in the West, but I am sure that this was owing to too thick planting, but everywhere the foliage is fresh and perfect."