

manure will be sufficiently heated to receive the loam upon its surface. The depth of loam required, varies for the purpose for which it is required, but six inches will be an average depth for the amateur. If the hotbed is required for growing lettuce, radishes, etc., for early use in the house, three to four inches of loam will be sufficient; but for general purposes, as growing plants, etc., six inches of loam is better, as the bed does not dry out so quickly, and therefore does not require such repeated watering. After the beds have been sown they should be covered each day with some matting during the hottest portion of the day, say from ten to four in the afternoon. At the time of covering, each sash should be shoved down or tilted at one end to allow the bed to air, at the same time prevent the plants from damping off. Water the beds in the evening after taking the matting off. If the hotbed is started the first week in April, which is the

best time for the amateur to commence, the plants may be ready to set out by the first of June. Ventilation should be increased as the plants grow stronger. About the middle of May the sash may gradually be taken off altogether, after which thoroughly drench the plants with water, as the roots will gradually be approaching the manure, and therefore dry out the quicker. I have endeavoured to be as explicit as possible in explaining the construction of a hotbed, but if there are any little details that the amateur may not exactly understand, the Question Drawer of THE HORTICULTURIST may be used, and I will only be too happy to answer such questions.

I must again say that any person attempting a hotbed will find the advantages equally as great as I have mentioned, and they may have their gardens thoroughly stocked with either flowers or vegetables, at but a trifling expense.

SEED SOWING.

BY N. ROBERTSON, SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNMENT GROUNDS, OTTAWA.

THIS, if properly done, will often save the cry that the seed was bad. The fault lies more frequently with the sower, and the attender, than anywhere else. Last year, I sowed many sorts, from different seedsmen, and there was only one that I could call bad. Another party sowed pretty much the same varieties, and from the same seedsman: the seeds were in every respect the same, his were nearly all bad in his opinion, whilst mine were all good. In many years, I have but very rarely got a packet of bad seed. I will describe my mode of procedure; it may be useful to some one that is afflicted in this way. In our latitude, about the first of April is the best time to sow, and seeds will come on at this time, and be as early, as those sown earlier; the

weather being more favorable, unless for some varieties that take a long time to germinate. I shall suppose your hotbed made of fair strength; if weak, your seeds may rot. This done, put in your soil. If in frozen lumps, I like it all the better; a day or two will soon thaw it out, and you will have a nice, free, pulverized soil. Avoid putting it in wet, or it will become hard, and in bad trim when thawed out. Level it with your rake, as nicely as possible. Pass a straight-edge over it, and be sure it is so. I make my little drills with a straight piece of half-inch stuff, sharpened on the edge, and if not level, some parts will be too shallow and others too deep. Before pressing this into the soil to make your drills, sift some fine soil evenly over the surface, so that your