

support afforded by this simple and inexpensive means will in most instances be found all that is required. But perhaps the common practice of *covering the seeds too heavily*, causes more disappointment than all other errors. Small seeds should be covered very lightly, and with soil not liable to cake by exposure to sun and air. *Common garden loam and leaf soil, or old dung*, passed through a fine sieve and well intermixed, will be excellent for covering with. Half Hardy Annuals should not be sown in the open border before May, and the ground will require the same preparation, &c., as recommended for Hardy Annuals. But the best method of raising these is to sow in pans, or boxes, in April, or on a bed, about three inches thick, of light soil, placed on a gentle hot-bed formed of stable manure or vegetable refuse, and protected with a frame or hand-glass. Water sparingly and give plenty of air when the plants appear, and thin out, or prick off in small pots, and be careful to get plants well inured to the weather previous to planting in the open border, and also to give water as may be necessary, after planting, till established.—*Hand Book of Annual Record.*

### Improved Hollyhocks.

A taste for this fine old flower has of late been reviving both in Europe and America. *The Gardener's Monthly* says:—

“Radical shoots, taken off as cuttings in the spring, no doubt give the strongest spikes, but they may be easily propagated by single eyes in July and August. Plant eyes in March; the former month is best for early flowering, the latter for very late blooming. Never plant on new ground or in maiden earth, but choose a soil that has been well worked, and if well trenched, so much the better.”

IN MOURNING.—The gardeners of Great Britain are mourning over the deaths of many of their most valuable productions, occasioned by the severe winter, and don't seem willing to be comforted. The horticultural journals are filled with obituary notices of the loss of many of the finest ornaments of the lawns and grounds, which the keen and unwonted temperature of five or six degrees below zero has converted from a delight for the eyes into only material for faggots.

### The Poultry Ward.

#### Do you want Eggs in Winter?

Then give the manufacturers materials to make them with, and a comfortable place to work in. Let the egg-less say what they will, we speak what we know, when we assert that it is perfectly feasible to keep the hens laying all

winter. Give them animal food to supply the place of insects they catch in summer, and let them have a warm place to run into, with plenty of unfrozen water, not snow, and a frequent taste of green food, such as cabbage leaves, potatoes, &c., and remember to supply some gravel for their grinding-mill, and lime to make shells out of, and we will warrant the animals to repay all the care and food, in the plump eggs—no matter what the particular breed may be. Try it.

A hen without some kind of meat and gravel, and lime, compelled to eat snow for water or without, cannot make eggs. If she has to keep constantly changing from standing on one foot to the other to keep both from freezing, she can't stop to think about getting up eggs. If all she eats and can digest, must be expended in keeping the heat of her body, she has nothing left to turn into eggs. If her body is all shut up with cold, she hasn't room inside for an egg of respectable size, and though her instinct may sometimes induce her to produce a thin shelled “pullet's egg” at the expense of the lime of her bones, her pride revolts at such a dwarfed production, and she seldom furnishes beyond two or three.

Give Madam hen the odd bits of fresh meat, and the other fixings named above, not forgetting the water, and make her quarters so free from cold air holes that she is comfortable, and she can't help giving attention to her natural occupation of manufacturing eggs, much to her own satisfaction and the profit of her owner.—*American Agriculturist.*

TREATMENT OF HENS.—Two flocks of hens were compared. One laid eggs almost all the time; the other scarcely any. On examining their treatment, the following differences were found to exist: the former had a warm cellar to roost in during the winter; the latter roosted in a stable where the wind blew in. The former had a fine place on an open cellar for scratching, among the ashes, lime, and earth; the latter scratched in the manure heap, or in the stable when the cows were put out. The former had plenty of good water, with milk, &c.; the other had no drink, except what they could find.—*Rural American.*

### Veterinary.

#### Bots and Bot Insects.

[In Mayhew's *Illustrated Horse Doctor*, we find the following excellent description of the bots, and the uselessness of attempts to destroy them:]

No animal which has not been turned out to graze during the summer months can possibly be troubled with these parasites. Such annoy-