

## GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

## TRIMMING APPLE TREES.

BY M. J. HARVEY.

Experience is the mother of wisdom. There are different opinions among farmers about the proper time for trimming apple trees. The main object ought to be to trim in that season of the year when the wound will entirely heal over or the tree is ruined, sooner or later. If that object is not accomplished, the water enters and a hole is rotted into the trunk. It becomes hollow and is destroyed.

Some trim in early spring. The sap forces itself out of the wound in abundance, runs down on the body or larger limbs; the bark turns black and often dies; and the tree is permanently injured. Another follows the opposite extreme, and prunes in August, or even in early winter, when the sap has turned into the wood. The wound does not turn black, as in the other case; but heals slowly, if at all, and a tree with holes in it is the final result. If the bark is entirely peeled off a tree, from the roots to the limbs, in the longest days of mid-summer, which is somewhere from the 15th to the 26th of June; a new bark is formed and the tree is not injured, and an old tree is said to be benefited by the operation. If apple trees are pruned at this time, if any bark is accidentally taken off, new bark will form, to cover the wound where the limb has been removed. It will entirely heal over, if the limb removed is not too large and the growth is sufficient for that purpose. The sap of the tree is not too thin to run out and blacken the tree, as in early spring, nor too thick and already formed into the wood and the wound comparatively dry; both wood and bark, as in later pruning, are not stopped in further growth over the wound. Many farmers, as a general thing, prune an orchard without discretion, sawing off large limbs that can never heal over, oftentimes cutting them off some inches from the trunk of the tree, or the larger limbs from which they are removed. The stub of the limb will die to the body, and the further decay of the tree is sure.

In pruning off too much, the natural equilibrium between the roots and the top is destroyed, and the body of the tree will come out in suckers or sprouts. Such ignorant pruners had better cut their trees down and trim them afterward, which is easier done and with more profit to themselves, as the ground could be employed for some better purpose. If a limb is dead, there is no option; it must be cut off close to the tree. The only living limbs that should be cut off are the small ones, that will heal over, coming from the larger branches in the inside of the top (and those that cross and gall each other), thereby letting in more sun to the apples, to give them a better colour and give the pickers a better chance in the tree. Everything beyond this is superfluous and pruning had better be dispensed with altogether. Many fine orchards receive their death-warrants from such ill pruning every year.

## FUCHSIAS.

BY MRS. MARY E. WILLIAMS.

Fuchsias, so called in honour of the distinguished botanist, Fuchs, are thought by many to be difficult of cultivation and of shy blooming habit. I learned by a seeming accident that these plants love the sun, if sufficient moisture is supplied to prevent a too rapid evaporation from the foliage. A few years since, I set out a large bed of rooted cuttings under a peach tree in the garden; a storm blew the tree down soon after, leaving them fully exposed to the blazing July sun, and

what made their condition more forlorn was that they were growing in soil thrown out in excavating for a cellar, almost solid yellow clay; a fact I had ignored when transplanting them from their nursery—a wooden box. Accommodating themselves to circumstances, the brave little plants began at once to throw out laterals, and before a month had passed the surface of the bed was entirely hidden by their luxuriant growth. They bloomed profusely till late in the fall, when they were lifted and removed to the cellar. This was my mode of treatment. Every day at noon, if the weather was dry or windy, I gave them a copious shower bath from a watering pot, loosening the surface soil toward sundown, to admit air to the roots and prevent it from baking. From first to last, there was not a particle of fertilizing matter applied, and, contrary to all rules, the water used was drawn from the cistern, as needed, instead of being left in the sun to become warm. I pursued this course in order to make one job of it, as I cultivate a comparatively large collection, and am obliged to divide my time giving each plant its portion in due season. Fuchsia cuttings will strike roots in three days, if they are taken from the succulent new growth. It takes much longer if the wood has become hardened, and the results are less satisfactory. Blossoms are larger and more profuse on young plants, which suggest vigorous cutting back of the ripened woods. This encourages new growth. I never cover cuttings. They are left out if the weather is warm. Trusting to the survival of the fittest, nine-tenths become thrifty plants, blooming, as soon as they begin to throw out laterals. They should be kept quite moist.

## HARDY PLUMS.—THE CHICKASAW.

There seems to be quite an effort made at last to make something out of our wild plums. It is an effort that should have been made long ago, but we suppose that hope has not been wholly abandoned of yet getting the old favourites to do as they once did—that is to be grown free from the curculio. The great trouble with the garden plum is its liability to destruction by the puncture of this pest. It has been noticed that some plums do not rot or drop as readily after attacks, as others, and hence there has been a hope that some one might be found wholly curculio proof. May be so, but thus far the efforts are not promising. We think, however, that much of this exemption is local. That is, that the same variety in some soils and under some circumstances would rot sooner after being injured than in cases where everything is favourable to the highest health. However this may be, nothing definite has been discovered to save the plum sound to us, except such labour as few have time to bestow by daily shaking the trees, gathering up and destroying the insect, thus making the fruit comparatively scarce and dear.

None of these native plums are as good as the old-fashioned or new-fashioned kinds; but then if one can get no good plums at all, why not have some that he can get though hardly worthy of the name of plum at all? This is just how it is with these new wild kinds. They bear in great profusion; the trees are vigorous and healthy; the curculio attacks them and some of them succumb, but not near the extent to which the sweet plums suffer. One may manage to eat them raw, but they will make very good pies and preserves. One may never be without a plum in the house if he grow some of these. It is an advantage certainly; and then there is the hope that a real substantial improvement may in time be gained.

There is a new wild plum called the Chickasaw, which is a decided improvement on all the others. It is of a good size and of a red or maroon colour.

It produces its like from the seed, is a profuse bearer, and the attacks of the curculio are so slight as not at all to interfere with the crop.—*German-town Telegraph.*

## ASPARAGUS BEDS.

No family garden is complete without an asparagus bed. This vegetable can be grown from seed, but the quickest method of procuring it is to put in roots, which should be one or two years old. The seed is sown in the fall or very early in the spring. There are two methods of cultivation, one being the digging of trenches, which are filled with well-rotted manure, setting in the roots so that the crowns will be below the surface. The second plan, which is better, but not generally practised, is to fill the trenches with manure and set the roots on a level with the ground, covering with rich earth. As they send up the shoots follow with a mixture of rich earth and manure, to which a fair proportion of salt has been added, and continue the hilling up until about two feet are attained. The beds will then be in the shape of high broad ridges, the cutting of the stocks being done with comfort and ease, and a neater appearance is secured. Asparagus should be cut when just peeping through the ground, with a long-bladed knife, and not when the stalks are six inches high. The less proportion of green stalks the better, for they are sufficiently tender when cut at the right period. Too much manure, compost, or soap-suds cannot be given them. The beds will be fit for cutting in two years after transplanting, and will last for twenty years or more. Conover's Colossal is the largest variety, and Defiance the earliest.

## CURRANTS.

Currants prefer a moist, cool situation. Plant in rows four feet apart, and the plants three feet apart in the rows. Keep the ground mellow and free from grass and weeds. A thorough mulching is absolutely necessary for large returns. As soon as the leaves turn yellow and commence to fall, with a pruning knife remove all the old wood and cut back the young shoots one-third their length, cutting to the ground enough of these to admit light and air into the bush freely. Should the currant-worm appear, dust the bushes with powdered white hellebore (to be had at any drug store) while the dew is on. It will also exterminate them to dissolve an ounce of the hellebore in a pail of water and apply with a syringe—the best way to use it.

## HOW TO GROW VERBENAS.

To grow verbenas successfully plant them in beds out in the turf. Chop the turf well, and thoroughly mix with a good share of well-decomposed stable manure. Never, on any account, plant verbenas in old and worn-out garden soil, as they will most assuredly fail. Give them a change of soil each season, as they do not thrive well two years in the same bed. As a house plant the verbenas is not a success. It is almost always sickly and infested with red spiders. They cannot be kept over winter in a cellar. With verbenas it is either growth or death.

The bulbs of the tube rose never bloom but once. They require a sandy soil.

In Europe fruit trees are planted by the farmers and cottagers with judicious care and discrimination in their fields and gardens. In an ordinary season they gather an abundance of luscious fruit—not only enough to supply their domestic wants, but also send large quantities to market; from which they realize an acceptable increase in their income.