

## PRACTICAL PAPERS.

## PLANTS AND SEEDS FOR AUTUMN PLANTING.

Autumn is not only the best time for planting most bulbs, but it is the only time that beds of Holland bulbs, such as hyacinths, tulips, crocuses, etc., can be made. Obtain bulbs in September or October, and before Winter sets in cover the beds with a dressing of leaves or cow manure, four or five inches thick. Lilies can be planted either in the Fall or Spring.

All hardy plants, the peonies, hollyhocks, delphiniums, perennial phlox, day lily, dicentra, and plants of a similar character, indeed all that will endure our Winters, should be planted in the Autumn, if possible, as they get a better start in the Spring than if planted at that time.

Most people have observed, no doubt, that self-sown seeds, that is, seeds that have dropped from the growing plants of the previous season, sometimes produce the strongest and most healthy plants that bloom the most freely. This is true of several kinds, and particularly of those that suffer under exposure to our midsummer suns. The reason is, that self-sown seeds get a very healthy growth in the Spring, vegetating as soon as frost is gone, and are good sized plants at the time we usually put seeds in the ground, even if they do not start in the Fall. They thus mature and flower during the cool weather of Spring. The clarkias and nemophilas and annual larkspurs are noted examples. There are also several varieties of hardy annuals that do well with Spring sowing that will bear Autumn sowing in the open ground, and reward us with early Spring flowers. Sweet alyssum and white candy-tuft will give us abundance of white flowers for early cutting, if sown in the Autumn. In a sandy soil the portulacca may be sown in Autumn with good success. Seeds of biennials and perennials, if sown early enough to produce strong little plants, will flower the next Summer; and pansies and Chinese pinks, though they bloom the first Summer if sown in the Spring, will make much stronger plants and flower more freely and earlier if young plants are grown in the Autumn.—*Vick's Floral Guide.*

## POULTRY FLESH.

The value of poultry flesh comparatively, that is to say, when spoken of simply as table food, is not so various in different breeds of fowls, as some of the books and certain partial writers on the subject aim to make it out.

We not unfrequently see it gravely stated that the meat of the Chinese or Asiatic breeds is "stringy and tough," or that the flesh of this or that smaller variety of fowl is very "tender and juicy," compared with that of some other kind of poultry. This is all fallacious, and a groundless theory.

We have eaten of the flesh of every description of domestic fowl, from the Bantam to the Brahma—old and young—good and inferior. And we know that it is altogether more in the feeding of poultry, to render their meat toothsome when slaughtered, than it is in the sort or size of the fowl thus eaten.

An immature chicken of the slowly maturing sort, is, of course, lacking in rotundity and plumpness, if unseasonably killed for the table. But any variety of fowl, either young or old, that is badly or negligently fed and cared for, is naturally poor in flesh, "stringy," and unpalatable.

Well fed fowls of any breed, and such as have all they need for their comfort and thrift, from chickenhood upward, make excellent poultry for market, or for the private table. And there is no perceptible difference in the taste of the flesh of any sort of domestic birds, so far as we could ever distinguish.—*Poultry World.*

## HOW TO GATHER LATE APPLES.

The following suggestions on the care of late apples is from the "Practical Farmer." Hand-picking should always be resorted to, especially with winter apples, else the fruit will not keep long or present a saleable appearance when laid down in the markets for sale. Some few varieties ripen irregularly, and should be gathered accordingly. In most cases the latter varieties of apples should be left until late, so as to fully color up, when they should be carefully hand-picked, only the sound, unspiced ones being taken. A bag with two of the extreme corners drawn neatly together,

and slung over the right shoulder and hanging under the left arm is the most convenient thing to pick in, as it is readily used either on the tree or when the picker stands on a ladder. When the bag is full the apples are carefully emptied into baskets conveniently near, and the bag filled again.

When the fruit is picked, convey it to the fruit room, which should be a cool, dry and dark place, where it should remain till the time arrives for packing. While picking, after they are picked, and before they are removed to the fruit room, keep the apples in the shade. While some persons, new to the business, do not think it makes much difference if the fruit is a little mixed, we have found it is best to keep the varieties separate and to market them the same way, even though the quantity be small. And this is why we have advocated, continually, planting but few varieties, and those the best, for when the trees come into bearing you will have enough of each sort to make a fair marketing, which would not be the case if many varieties, and but few trees of each variety, were planted.

In packing apples they should not be barreled until they are free from moisture or dampness on the outside, else they will soon decay, become damaged, and be unsaleable. The barrel should be filled rather more than even full, and the head then pressed into place with a screw and appliance for the purpose. By this means the apples are prevented from being bruised in handling the barrels in transportation.

## ALDERNEY COWS.

Alderney is known for the breed of cows which bears its name. These are so called, probably, because the first ones exported were from that island, although now very few that are sold as Alderney cows are directly from there. Those of that breed actually exported from these islands are generally from Jersey, where the cattle are much the same as those of Alderney, small, with tapering heads, and of a delicate fawn color. The Guernsey cow is esteemed by some even more highly than the Alderney, it is rather larger, and more of a red, brindled in color. The cows are milked three times daily, and the milk churned without skimming. One pound of butter a day is by no means an uncommon yield for a good cow. The cow-cabbage is made to reach a size so large that the leaves are used to wrap the butter in for market, while the stalks are varnished and armed with ferrules, and extensively used at St. Helier's for canes. The cows are very carefully coddled. The grass they feed on is highly enriched by the vraise, a species of sea-weed gathered from the reefs at low tide. There are two vraise harvests appointed by the Government—one in the spring and the other in August—although it is gathered at other times in small quantities. All the hands turn out in the season, with boats and carts, frequently at night, and it is a very lively, picturesque occupation, though often attended with risk and loss of life from the overloading of boats or sudden rising of the tide. The cows are always tethered when feeding: they eat less in this way, really giving more milk than if glutted with food; and, while they are cropping the grass on one side of a field, it has time to spring up on the other side. When they have done eating, they are at once removed from the sun to the shade. The breed is preserved from intermixture with other breeds by strong and arbitrary laws very carefully enforced. No cattle are allowed to enter the islands (except for slaughter within a certain number of days), with the exception of oxen for draught.—*Atlantic Islands.*

## CLIMBING PLANTS.

There are some curious facts regarding climbing plants; their stems generally turn from left to right round the pole used for support; others follow a contrary direction; while to some it seems to be a matter of indifference. Mr. Darwin has concluded that light is an influential cause. If plants of this class are placed in a room near a window, the stem requires more time to perform the half revolution during which it is turned away from the light, than for that which is toward the window. In one case the whole circle was completed in five hours and twenty minutes, of this the half in full light only required an hour, while the other could not traverse its part in less than four hours and twenty minutes—a very striking variation. Some Chinese ignamas (*Dioscorea batatas*) in full growth were placed in a completely darkened cave,

and others in a garden; in every case those which were in darkness lost the power of climbing round their supports; those exposed to the sun were twisting, but as soon as they were put in the cellar they grew with straight stems.

The sleep of plants, which certainly has a connection with light, is another curiosity in nature. Flowers and leaves of some growths seem to fade at particular hours, the corolla being closed, which, after a state of lethargy, blows out afresh; in others the flower falls and dies without having closed. In the case of the convolvulus the flower is drawn up at noon. Linnaeus noted the hours in which certain plants blow and fade, and thus composed a floral dial; but science has not yet been able to explain these curious relations to light.

The green coloring of leaves and stems is owing to a special matter called chlorophyll, which forms microscopical granulations contained in their cells. These grains are more or less numerous in each cell, and it is to their number as well as to the intensity of their color that the plant owes its particular shade of green. Sometimes they are found pressed together, and cover the whole internal surface of the cell; while at other times they are smaller in quantity, and do not touch each other. It has recently been observed, also, in the latter case, that under the influence of light the green corpuscles undergo very curious changes of position; in certain plants they crowd to the part of the wall of the cells exposed to the action of the sun—a phenomenon which does not take place in darkness or under red rays only.—*Harper's Weekly.*

## THE HEIGHT OF TREES.

When a tree stands so that the length of its shadow can be measured, its height can be readily ascertained as follows:

Set a stick upright let it be perpendicular by the plumb-line. Measure the length of the shadow of the tree, and at the same time measure the length of the shadow of the stick. As the length of its shadow is to the height of the stick, so is the length of the shadow of the tree to its height. For instance. If the stick is four feet above the ground and its shadow is six feet in length and the shadow of the tree is ninety feet, the height of the tree will be sixty feet (6:4::90:60). In other words, multiply the length of the shadow of the tree by the height of the stick, and divide by the shadow of the stick.

## THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE HORSE.

From the superintendent of the largest street railway in Massachusetts, we have the following interesting facts:

"I find horses know much more than they have credit for. I once had a horse that would back out of his stall in cold weather, and go to another part of the stable where there was a stove with a fire in it. He would then back up to the stove, and stand an hour at a time, if not disturbed.

"I had another horse that would unhook a door to get at the meal. I have several horses now that will push the slide, in front of them, to let in fresh air. I have another that knows what to do upon hearing the sound of the bell in the stable.

"Let a little colt come into any of our stables and whinney, and you will see all the horses start instantly with delight. Some of them will be wild to see the welcome little visitor.

"Such facts show observation and reason in the horse, and I think he is too intelligent to be deprived of the full benefit of his sight, as he is by the use of blinders."

Too much preaching lacks spiritual baptism in preparation. Too much has but meagre, if any, real heart-power; and hence it is not strange that the masses are not more effectually reached, and lives up-borne.

It is difficult for us to realize that God is present in History now as much and as truly as He was present with His chosen people in the olden time. He rules the British nation, the American nation, as surely as He ruled the nations of other days. His rule is not confined to great nations, but it extends to every province, every hamlet, every house, every individual. Modern life is really as full of God as ancient life was. When we fear the unknown, we ought to remember that to God the unknown is well known, and the future is an eternal now.