

The Petunia.

The Petunia is really one of the most valuable summer flowering plants we have. Not much for cutting from it is true, but still they are so easily grown, so indifferent to heat and drought, so continuously flowering—and flowering in so many of its shades of color, so gaily—what in these valuable particulars can excite it?

There is besides all this some novelty in them. We recollect very well when the Petunia first came into general notice as a cultivated flower. It was then a pale rose color and not half the size they are now. At a year's age the big coarse white flower kind got into our minds, and since then there have been numerous forms and shades of color ranging between white and rose. The flower has taken hold of them and produced distinct races, and I given them fancy names borrowed from an imaginative people, as if that is the proper course to pursue in matters of ornamental culture. Then some of them are very sweet, especially at night, and their color attracts the night moths, until a bed of petunias at a light summer evening is by no means a small attraction in the most pretentious flower-garden. And then they can be had so easily. A ten-cent paper will give plants which will flower where they are sown in six weeks afterwards.—*American Telegraph.*

Put Flowers on Your Table.

Set flowers on your table, a whole day if you can get it, or but two or three, or a right flower, a rose, a pink, a daisy. Bring a few daisies or buttercups from your garden, and keep them alive in a little water, or in a glass of water, or in a handful of flowering grass, or in the moss, the gift of Nature's products, and you have something on your table that reminds you of God's creation, and gives you a link with the past, that has at it most honor. Put a rose, or a lily, or a violet on your table, and you and Lord Bacon have a conversation, for the great and wise man was of the habit of having flowers in season upon his table, whether morning, noon and night; that is to say, at all his meals, so that they were growing all day. Now here is a fashion that will last you forever, if you please, never change with silks and velvets, and silver forks, nor be dependent on caprice, or some fine gentleman or lady who have nothing but caprice and changes to give them importance and fashion.

Flowers on the morning table are especially suited to them. They look like the happy waking of creation, they bring the perfume of the breath of Nature into your room; they seem they represent an emblem of the very smile of our home, the graces of good merriment; proofs that a rational intellectual beauty are in ourselves or those about us, some Aurea (it is so lovely as to have such a companion) helping to strew our life with sweetness, or in ourselves some masculine wildness not unworthy to possess such a companion or unlikely to gain her.—*Leigh Hunt*

Bone Meal as a Manure.

Among all the specific manures for grape vines, pear trees, grass lewis, &c., none, perhaps, excels any more of the ingredients of plant food than bone meal. It should be applied as early in the season after the frost is out of the ground as possible. About half a ton to the acre makes a dressing that will prove valuable two or three years. We have used it to advantage in the growing of potatoes, peas, beets, &c. We sow it with the seed in the drill or hill, and in the culture of melons we have found it better than the best manures.

A BEAUTIFUL ROSE.—About a year ago, says "Daily Rural Life," in the *Rural New-Yorker*, my gardener purchased from one of our large florists a dozen plants of a *Countess de Bertha* rose, which has proved to be one of the best perpetual blooming sorts that I have seen. The flowers are of a deep pink color, quite large, double and elegant in form, and the fragrance is most exquisite, being entirely indescribable, but may be called a spiced sweetened tea. A bud cut off when it begins to open, and placed in a room, will perfume the entire atmosphere within, for one or two days. The plants are very vigorous, not being subject to mildew in the house, and they bloom almost continually; even small plants struck out from cuttings bloom when only a few months old. We may have more showy varieties, but there are few that will please better than the *Countess de Bertha*.

THE FRUIT GARDEN.

The Principal Varieties of American Vines.

The Catawba was long considered the vine of vines, and it would still be at the head of American products, if it were less disposed to disease, and more vigorous, so justly a favorite as well for the cellar as for the table, and not so easily and so often a prey to mildew and rot. But in the most favorable seasons the Catawba ripens too late. At first the best of all was the only other vine extensively grown, and as late as 1862 these two kinds were the only ones recommended by the American Pomological Society for general cultivation, although the president of that body, Marshall P. Wilder, himself declared that after taking great pains for twenty years he had not produced a single type of table grape in his garden. Ten years elapsed before the country, the leading authority in such matters, admitted three other species, the Delaware, the Concord, and the Diana, the last of which was soon afterwards dropped. In regard to the Delaware, however, a committee of the Connecticut Horticultural Society, composed of Messrs. John L. Motter, Dr. S. Moscher, and R. Buchanan, reported that they assumed it to be the head of the list, for which they gave the following reasons:

1. Best quality for the table. 2. Yielding a better and finer vine. 3. Resists winter frosts better than the Catawba. 4. Resists spring frosts better. 5. Does not suffer from mildew. 6. The berries never rot. 7. The leaves do not fall off before the fruit is ripe. 8. The certainty of growth.

So, however, it was ascertained that this certainty was obtained in many parts of the country; that in various districts where the Delaware, the Concord, and the Diana would not thrive at all; that in some places the Delaware would grow everywhere, and in some places it would not grow at all; that in some places it would grow in soil and situation where the Concord would not grow, and in some places it would not grow in soil and situation where the Concord would grow. In point of quality, particularly for the preparation of wine, it is far behind the Delaware and the Catawba, and would be a retrogression rather than a progression, were it not excessively valuable for the market of the people, and as a starting point for further improvement on account of its late, heavy, and fine qualities. Numerous efforts, some of them by the pomologists, have been made to obtain better quality by crossing and by crossing, and these efforts have not only produced more than a hundred kinds of grapes of greater or less value, but have led the way to a careful study and a better understanding of the various domestic grapes.

Not quite so many years ago the first of the Louisiana was produced in the North American vineyard, and it was considered for the market of the vine. As the present day is well known to the people in this class of grapes, the first of the Louisiana was produced, the plant which produced the best of wine is to be sought. In the cultivation of the Herbmont, and others we already have the choicest breeds; their juices are sweet, their aroma is agreeable, their acidity less than those of other early varieties, the flesh of their berries is of any rank or poor by flavor. True, you can find the first of the Louisiana to be a little lighter than the first of the Louisiana, but the isothermal line is twenty-two degrees for the four months of June, July, August, and September here, but if Wm. Saunders and some other American horticulturists are correct in assuming that the Delaware is the product of a cross between the *Asiatic* and the *Labrusca*, the best of vines, even for colder regions may be looked for in this class, and its crosses with the Frost grape.

Ten years ago little distinction was made between the table and cellar grapes, and by mistake the difference is not much regarded at this day. The *Labrusca* was once regarded as a cellar grape no more than the *Asiatic* was underrated. In the rank toxiness and musk of some of the former species is so delicate in some breeds as to be no longer unpleasant, the same delicacy is impressed upon the constitution of these varieties, which succumb to every stress of weather, and the improvements of the *Labrusca* by crosses with European varieties (of the *Vitis rotundifolia*) have still more clearly developed their character as grapes for the table. As such the various breeds, particularly Rogers' hybrids, deserve marked consideration, and still better results may be looked for if the growers, in selecting seedlings, will not, each therefore, look exclusively to the sterner or more delicate texture of the leaf, but also to the more estimating their robustness. Many of them are under the mistaken impression that the leaf of true Amer-

ican vines is in every instance thick, and provided with coarse ribs or nerves, and with a felty covering on the lower side, (see United States Report of Agriculture, 1873, page 149, and many others,) and ascribe to this peculiarity in the leaf the power of resistance to the inclemency of the climate and diseases to which the vine is subject, but not only are a few of the vines in our soil as well as a few of the vines in our soil with any of these indications, but there are many European grapes having a thick leaf, on one side. Thus, in France, the *Carignan*, the *Pinot Noir*, the *Alphonse-Lesqueux*, and the *Carette*, and in Italy, all the varieties descended from the grape known as *Cordobese*, besides many others.

But I will better understand and consider these vines in the species of American grapes and the vines of other purposes to which they are best adapted, and the position of soil and climate under which they flourish or decay, will we have reached the point at which American viticulture can be properly established, and start fairly in the race of progress.—*The Farmer, in the Fruit and Vine Reporter.*

THE VEGETABLE GARDEN.

How to Succeed in Raising Melons and Cucumbers.

As soon as the ground becomes a little warm I plough, and then, selecting a place where the ground is sandy, I dig holes about 20 inches in diameter, and 14 to 16 inches deep. Have the holes about six feet apart each way. Leave them open a day or two to allow the ground to warm at the bottom; then put into each hole nearly a half-bushel of manure—fresh horse manure preferred—tamp down the manure, cover with the dirt dug out, about two and a-half inches deep, and put down with the hoe. The hill will now be quite deep, say four inches or more. Now I place near my nail on a post a cask, into which I put a small wheelbarrow load of fresh cow-droppings and a couple of shovels of night soil. Into this cask I put soap-suds and I keep it full. If the weather is dry I occasionally moisten the hills from the cask; evening is the best time. About the 20th of May I cut up a thin, tough soil and place it, grass side down, in an old tarp, and sprinkle about half an inch in depth of fine sandy loam upon it. On this I put my seeds, and I put upon these another soil, as large as the pan, grass side up. Upon this I pour a tea-spoonful of boiling hot water and set the pan near the stove, where it will keep warm. Each morning I pour on a little more hot water. In about three days the seed will have sprouts about half an inch long. Now remove the upper soil, shake the pan a little, and the seeds will rise from the fine dirt put upon the lower soil. Put twelve or fifteen seeds in each hill after slightly scratching the dirt. Handle the seeds carefully, so as not to break the sprouts. Cover about two-thirds of an inch with dirt. By taking these course your vines will in two weeks be as far advanced as they would in four or five planted in the usual way. Let the weeds grow in an "about" the hill as a protection from bugs and worms. The vines will grow rapidly, and of course somewhat tall and spreading. If the weather is dry, moisten from the cask two or three times a week, always at evening. This will keep the manure moist and in a state of fermentation, causing considerable heat. When the vines have grown about four inches high remove the lowest weeds and perhaps some of the vines, and fill in with dirt nearly up to the leaves. By and by, on a moist day, remove the weeds from the hill, leaving them growing around the borders. Then cut the vines to two or six, leaving some for the worms. Keep the dirt well up to the leaves. Your hill will not be nearly level. Finally, thin out to three or four of the most thrifty vines. Remember the cask. Take away the old dirt with your fingers and add fresh dirt two or three times a week. The hill will soon become crowding. Make a small ditch around the hills, say two inches deep, and fill this occasionally with suds from the cask. After the vines nearly cover the ground, and the hills are well set and of pretty good size, cut off the cut of the vines. In this way the melons will grow much larger. I raise as large as five and six here in Ambler, Oswego County, On the east side of Lake Ontario, as I ever saw on Long Island or anywhere else. It of course demands labor and care, but let any one try this plan and he will find his efforts amply rewarded. I follow the same rule with cucumbers as with melons.—*Report of Agricultural Dept. of U. S.*

REMARKS.—The *Bruce Reporter* says: "Last Friday our venerable townsman, Jas. Brown, Esq., had on our table a stalk of rhubarb, taken from his garden, which weighed 5 lbs., 11 oz., the leaf measuring over 3 feet in breadth. Who can beat that?"