

Seasonable Hints—July.

BY HORTUS.

To have fine fruit, fine trees, fine crops, &c., requires constant care and never ceasing industry. Not that there is very heavy manual labor about the attainment of any of the foregoing objects. No such wearying work as making bricks, or tasks of that kind, but still there is never any time to leave off, and for those who love to tend the orchard and the flower garden, they always have their reward in the shape of some fine fruit for the table, or if flower-lovers, they can inhale the fragrance of some newly opened roses.

In all labor there is reward, and self-gratification, and he that grows a tree from a tiny seed up, grafts or buds it, prunes and attends to it all the time till it puts forth the blossoms, and bears its fruit, enjoys a pleasure that cannot be understood by others till they have gone through the same experience. Such a man is a benefactor to the country, and leaves it all the better for his living in it. What most fruit-growers are apt to forget in regard to their trees, is their tenderness. There is none of them real hardy in the full sense of the word, not even crab apples, and to keep fruit trees of all kinds in good, healthy condition, they should receive good cultivation. The ground of an orchard should be well drained, good, large, sensible drains, not easily choked up by roots or settlements. It should receive every year a liberal dressing of manure and ashes, and if cropped every year, allowance should be made, when manuring, for both crops and trees, giving each their share. The trees should be annually pruned; most care being required when young, to give proper shape to the tree. They may be pruned in March, and again in July. They should be pruned *any time, rather than not at all.*

To get back to where we started about the tenderness of fruit trees. To get them to do well at all, in our severe climate, they must have the whole time the best treatment. There are a great many causes for the deterioration of our orchards. Some seasons are wet, and the soil not having good drainage, and the winter being very severe, the tree gets nearly frozen out of existence. Other seasons the trees bear so much fruit that it weakens them, the whole functions of the tree has been devoted to perfect an enormous crop of fruit which will take it years to recover from the injurious effects. Bad pruning, we think, kills more trees than all other evils combined, and is the most lamentable, from the fact that it might be prevented by a little study and enquiry by the pruner. That would be a rare thing to see, and one, could it be possible to move, so as to show it at our Exhibitions, that would be very instructive to our farmers, and that is an apple tree, say fifteen or twenty years old, with its branches evenly spread out, and the whole head, branches and trunk, in good shape, and healthy condition, not showing a sign of knife or saw, and the branches so disposed as not to require the use of either for some time. This would be well worth seeing, and here again we say that a saw should never be required in pruning—the knife should be brought into use in time that nothing else would be wanted.

Any signs of fireblight in the pear should be removed at once; this is the only way to check this evil, at present known. This remedy applies, likewise, to the black knot in plum. We advise the use of plenty of lime in the soil to counteract the disease.

Attention is directed to the insects—a disgusting and annoying pest is the slug, which infests the pear and cherry; it is easily destroyed by dusting on slacked lime or sand. Hellebore, mixed with water and syringed on, effectually destroys them. The past few Summers the green fly has

been very troublesome. For this we soak tobacco in water, and mix some lime with it, and dip the affected branches in it, or sprinkle it on in the evening; care should be used not to put it on too strong.

To stimulate the growth, and increase the size of grapes, we recommend the application of liquid manure. This used often in moderation, produces astonishing results in the shape of large, well ripened fruit, monster cabbages, and handsome specimens of flowering plants that cannot fail to be prize winners at the Exhibitions.

If you have any apple, pear or plum stocks that were grown from seed, they should be budded now; or, if they have been transplanted the past spring, and are now growing freely, you may wait till the growth shows signs of stopping, which can be easily observed. Pears can be grown with the mountain ash used as a stock, but to make standard trees the buds are put on pear stocks imported from the old country, which are claimed by men of experience to make a better stock than those raised from seed here, suffering less from blight and rust. For dwarfing the pear the quince proves the best stock as yet known, and the pear, particularly some kinds, notably the Duchess d'Angouleme, succeeds better on the quince, making larger and finer fruit in every respect than if grown on its own stock. Some kinds will not succeed at all worked on the quince—for instance, the Flemish Beauty, and also some others. To overcome this difficulty, nurserymen frequently double work them—that is, they first bud some kind (maybe White Dayenne), and when these are one year old work on them the kind wanted.

For dwarfing the apple, the Paradise and Don-cain stocks are used; Paradise stock mostly employed. Dwarf apple trees come into bearing right away, and the trees requiring but half the space to grow in that Standards do, they are valuable to parties having limited grounds, or to persons living in towns or villages. The following varieties of apples need never be grown as dwarfs, as they come into bearing sufficiently early themselves without this aid; they are: Red Astracan, Duchess of Oldenburg, Hawthornden, R. I. Greening, and some others.

The art of budding is a very interesting and simple operation, and every person in possession of a garden, or intending to make one, perhaps, in the Prairie Province, should make themselves familiar with it. Provided with a knife, which can be purchased made for the purpose, and strings or matting, with cions of this summer's growth of the kinds wished to propagate, they can make a start by making a T cut on the stock, one horizontal and one perpendicular; raise the bark with the thin end of the knife handle. Select buds that are well developed; those nearest to base of cion are the best. It is advisable to cut the bud thinly, and about an inch and a half long, having the bud in the centre. When cutting off the cions, the leaves should be removed immediately, or else they will soon evaporate what sap is in the cion, and thus render it useless. They should be cut off, not pulled, leaving about half an inch of stalk next to the bud. When the bud is all prepared, slip underneath the bark, seeing that the bud is fairly in the centre, and that the bark of the stock fits evenly on all sides. Wind the string evenly from the bottom, making it very firm and even the whole length of the cut (being careful not to cover the bud), and knot firmly. The buds will have taken sufficiently in three weeks to have the strings removed.

Layers of grapes, flowering shrubs, gooseberries, &c., may be made this month, and if well mulched and occasionally watered they will be found well rooted before fall.

The Orchard in Summer.

Those who have fruit trees and shrubs should attend to them now. The first half of the season is by nature allotted to wood growth, the rest of the season to ripening or hardening this growth, otherwise the frost of our winters would destroy it, or that part which is not matured, which means the tips of the shoots. Thus we see dead points in the spring, usually on young and only vigorous-growing trees; and the length of these dead points is always according to the rapidity and lateness of the growth.

It is an easy matter to force the growth, and rapidly, up to winter or till the frost arrests it. Tender as it is, it then wilts and turns black, as is the case when an untimely frost occurs in summer. It is therefore of importance that the ground is not too rich, which, however, is rarely the case. The most to be dreaded is late enrichment, especially if heavy, for this pushes on the growth, uninterruptedly, till arrested by the frost. The true way is to get all the growth possible that can be ripened so as to stand the frost; and this requires some experience, though directions can be given to the uninitiated that will be of use. Our soil, such as we find it, is not generally rich enough for a full and successful growth. It requires manure or cultivation, or both, according to circumstances, and different manures may be used. Cultivation alone has a wonderful effect, especially in a drouth; this repeated during the first half of the season. If the weather is dry I follow the working of the soil with a mulch of cut grass or weeds. This keeps moist for some time. In about two weeks I remove the mulch, stir the ground again and replace the mulch. This whether there has been rain or not, unless quite wet. With the next working of soil I work in the mulch, which is then rotten and puts the soil in fine condition, improving it manually and mechanically, and with material suitable for plant food. If the soil is quite poor, let the mulch be of coarse barn-yard manure. A sprinkling of wood ashes, leached or unleached, is always a benefit for trees and shrubs. The same may be said of bone dust. Either should be worked into the soil a little. If the ground is a stiff clay, coal ashes, applied plentifully and well mixed with the soil, will loosen it and greatly improve it, developing also fertility in its action upon the soil.

There is one thing of importance that is not generally understood: it is the breadth of space to be worked. The roots of trees and shrubs extend a great ways. In an orchard of advanced growth the whole ground is occupied by them, and, therefore, the entire surface needs to be cultivated or enriched. Where the soil is shallow and the trees are rather close, frequent and large quantities of manure are to be used, the absorption by this network of roots being immense. If not given the trees will suffer, show dead limbs, and now and then a dead tree, the fruit small and lacking in flavor.

It is not absolutely necessary that the ground of an orchard be cultivated, as is so strongly recommended. It may be kept in sod, a lawn made of it if desired, clipping the grass frequently with a lawn mower, in which case the growth (the clippings) remains to enrich the soil. But the manure must also be given in proper quantity. Where single trees or shrubs are treated, a wide space is to be cultivated or manured, say six to ten feet, and more in a large tree, as the roots extend much further than is usually supposed. A small space of a few feet in diameter cultivated or manured, as is the too common practice, is of very little benefit to trees. Saw-dust, muck or leaf mold will also do for a mulch, and may be worked in the soil with benefit; but coarse barn-yard manure is the best of all mulchers where the soil needs fertility.

The ground thus being attended to, the next important point is the thinning of the fruit. Few things in fruit culture are of more importance and more neglected. Where there is a heavy set, at least half wants to be removed; better if a third only is left. This greatly improves the fruit in size and quality, the amount being nearly or quite the same as if all had been left to grow, with the advantage in favor of the thinned out trees that it lessens the number of seeds which draw upon the vitality of the tree. The strain, therefore, is less, and the crop improved. It now requires, also, less enrichment. In no case avoid thinning out the fruit. Do not think it may pay with a few trees, but not with a whole orchard. If the treatment of one tree affords profit, that of two will afford a double profit, and so on to the entire number.—[Utica Herald.