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The Family Fruit Garden

By G. D. BLACK

MANY families do not have and enjoy home-grown fruits because they have become discouraged by failure on account of improper planting. Many mistakes of this kind have been made and would sometimes seem laughable, were it not for the serious disappointment of the planter. A neighbor who had bought black raspberry plants in the spring, asked us in August to go and examine them. He said they were all dying. He had planted the crown of the plants six or eight inches below the surface of the ground, and the new growth had been unable to force its way through the soil. The portion of old cane that is usually left on the plant to facilitate handling had naturally died at the usual time.

Another party went to the opposite extreme by setting his grape vines so shallow that the middle and upper series of roots were left dangling in the air. Another man said that he had probably killed his with kindness, by placing a quantity of barnyard manure around the roots when planting them. Many failures of this nature could be cited, but the following rules, which have been successful with experienced planters, will be of more value to the amateur:

1. Never expose the roots to the wind or sun until they become dry.
2. Place the roots in the ground in their natural position.
3. Never place anything except good, moist soil in contact with the roots when planting.
4. Firm the soil well to the roots by tramping with the feet.
5. Keep the surface of the soil loose and free from weeds so as to conserve the moisture in the soil.

If these rules are strictly observed by the planter, he will be reasonably sure of success, and a good growth will result. If the garden can be located so as to have it in a few long rows, it can be more easily cultivated, and most of the hoeing which deters many from having a good garden can be avoided.

While waiting for the trees to become of bearing age, the young orchard can be used to advantage for growing small fruits, sweet corn, potatoes, vegetables, etc. Apple trees should be planted in rows, running north and south if possible, so that the trunks of the trees and the ground will be shaded during the heat of the day, and not closer than fifteen to twenty feet apart in the row. There should be at least two rods space between the rows and the same distance to other trees adjoining the orchard on the east or west. A good, thrifty tree four or five feet high is better for planting than a larger size. It is a mistaken idea that a large tree will come into regular bearing sooner and at the same time make a good, thrifty tree.

Unless it is raining when ready to plant, keep the roots of the trees wrapped in wet blankets, or cover them with moist soil, and take them out one at a time as soon as you are ready to set it in the ground.

Trim off any broken or bruised roots just before putting them in the ground. Dig the hole large enough so that the roots may be placed in the natural position. Never bend them. Where trees are liable to root-killing by severe freezing when the ground is bare, they should be planted from six inches to a foot deeper than they grew in the nursery, unless the ground is low and wet. Then they had better be mounded up to this height or more for several feet around the tree. This deep planting will cause the tree to grow new roots above where it was grafted, and they, being of the same hardy variety as the tree, will be able to withstand severe freezing.

Cover the lower roots with two or three inches of moist surface soil. The subsoil that is dug from the bottom of the hole contains very little plant food. Work the soil among and under the roots with the hands and then firm well with the feet. Be sure that the soil is packed well under the roots as well as on top. It is not necessary to use water when planting if the soil is quite moist. Fill the hole nearly full and tramp hard again, and finish with fine, loose soil without tramping. If you lean your tree slightly to the south it will probably be perpendicular when large, as the sun causes it to grow toward the north. If each tree is not pruned as soon as planted, in proportion to its roots, you may forget and not know how much to prune each tree later. The limbs should not be left closer than about six inches on the body of the tree, and pruned back half or two-thirds of their length. Do not cut back the center growth.

Plum and cherry trees should be planted closer than apple trees, as they do not grow so large. Many advise planting plum trees in the chicken yard. Cherries do best where the soil is not naturally wet. Berry bushes, such as currants and gooseberries, may be planted in the apple tree row, as they do best in partial shade and do not harm the trees until they begin bearing. They should be planted three or four feet apart in the row and deep enough so that the crown, which is the place where the roots are united to the tree or plant, will be about four inches below the surface when the ground is leveled. Always firm the soil well to the roots, but be careful to cover the crown lightly with loose soil until the new growth is a few inches high, when the ground may be leveled up when hoeing. Many black raspberries have been ruined by neglecting this precaution.

Plant grape vines from six to eight feet apart. Holes in which to plant them should be eight to ten inches deep and about two feet in diameter. Shorten the roots to ten or twelve inches and place in the bottom of the hole like the spokes of a wheel and proceed as in planting trees. The top of the cutting from which the vine has been grown should be a little below level with the top of the hole. Cut most of the vine away, leaving only a few buds and drive a stake or four-foot lath beside it to which the new growth may be tied the first season.

Plant strawberries eighteen or twenty inches apart in the row and have the rows

three or four feet apart. A hundred plants will set a row about ten rods long. The ground should be well firmed and smooth as a floor, as in no other way will you be able to set the plants at just the right depth, which is very important, so that the top of the crown from which the leaves start is about half an inch below the surface. We make the holes for setting strawberry plants by putting a spade about six inches in the ground with a slightly rotary motion, making the opening at the top about two inches wide.

Take hold of the plant with the crown between the thumb and fingers and with a swinging motion, as you place it in the hole, the roots will be spread out in the shape of a fan. This is much better than leaving the roots in a bunch as when planting with a dibble. At the instant the plant is in place, a pressure of the foot at the side of the hole will cause the earth to hold the roots in position. Then with all your weight on the heel of your shoe, tramp twice at the side of the hole so as to pack the soil firmly to the roots and entirely fill the cavity made by the spade. Finish by smoothing the surface of the soil and keeping it fine and loose by shallow cultivation. While planting, the roots of the plants, but not the tops, should be kept wet in a pail containing about an inch of water.

Note Books and Diaries

By M. E. B.

TO begin with, I think it is a mistake to combine the two; you need both. I have had a note book for years; a diary only four seasons, but I am sorry I did not keep a diary before, as its usefulness is obvious, especially in arranging a perennial border to get a fine effect. When you can refer to your diary and see just when a plant blooms, what are its contemporaries, its predecessors, and what comes next in order, the rest is simple. To illustrate, I will give the notes from my 1909 diary for a day or two:

May 22nd—

Gathered last of daffodils.
Mertensia virginica waning.
Polyanthus in perfection.
Pulmonaria maculata in full bloom.
Lamium maculata, ditto.
Lilac buds unfolding.

May 23rd—

Lily of the valley in perfection.
Trillium grandiflora turning pink.
Phlox amoena at its loveliest.
P. subulata beginning to make a show.
Iceland poppies in perfection.
Alyssum saxatile, ditto.
Tulips nearly over.
Arabis alpina (double) in full beauty.
Arabis alpina (single) nearly over.

Another entry might consist entirely of work done or seeds sown. Lack of space forbids more. I find a small pocket diary costing here fifteen cents answers every purpose.

Now for the note book. I got an ordinary blank note book of 152 pages, opening the long way, on the left-hand side of which I marked and cut an alphabetical index. This is the way I use it: For instance, I read in the *Garden Magazine* an article on the *Eremurus*; in the course of time I will forget where I saw that article. To avoid this I enter in my note book under the letter E: "E. *Eremurus*. See *Garden Mag.* Sept. '06, page 72."

Another time I see something in a book or magazine that I do not own; we will say on *pæony* nomenclature; so under the letter "P" I enter: "P. *Pæony* Nomenclature. In *Weekly Florists' Review* for June 28th, '06, page 342, Mr. C. Ward says," etc., and I would enter what is useful to me from his paper. I make it a point always to underline the subject of entry; then you need not skip a line between each subject. If in copying an article, say, on *pæonies*, some good varieties are mentioned in the body of the article, I always underline the names, so that to see if there is anything mentioned about a special variety, the eye has only to run over what is underlined, and it can be found at a glance.

One more entry will suffice to show how useful is such a note book. I find under "C" the following: "C. *Campanula latifolia*. Saw this at Queen Victoria Park, Niagara Falls, 6th July, '06. A lovely white campanula, very large drooping bells, deeply cut into points, looks like a glorified *C. punctata*."

In noting anything I always give the authority if I know it, because the value of a note, say, on spraying, or pruning, or anything else, depends largely on whether the person quoted really is an authority on the subject.



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