



Hop Culture.

THERE are several varieties of hops, and intending cultivators should endeavour to adapt the kind to the nature of the soil at command. Some of the coarser varieties will flourish in land where the more delicate sorts will not grow at all. The Canterbury, Farnham, and Golding varieties require a deep soil, as their roots have a tendency to strike downward. Other varieties, as the Grape or Kent, and Cluster, will do well on a lighter soil, since they are more shallow-rooted. The best position for a hop-yard is a somewhat protected one. If too much exposed, the wind will often make sad havoc in it. But a low-lying situation must be avoided, lest the hops rot and mould. In reference to planting and managing a hop-yard, a correspondent of the *Rural New Yorker*, writing from Hamilton, N. Y., says:—

“The manner of planting in this region is to thoroughly pulverize the soil, mark the ground into squares seven feet one way and eight the other, or 14 by 14, where wires are to be used. The last plan is not advisable in either case, as the hills are too near each other in the row. The first is preferable. The roots are prepared by cutting in pieces—each piece containing two joints. Two or more small holes are made where the hill is to be,

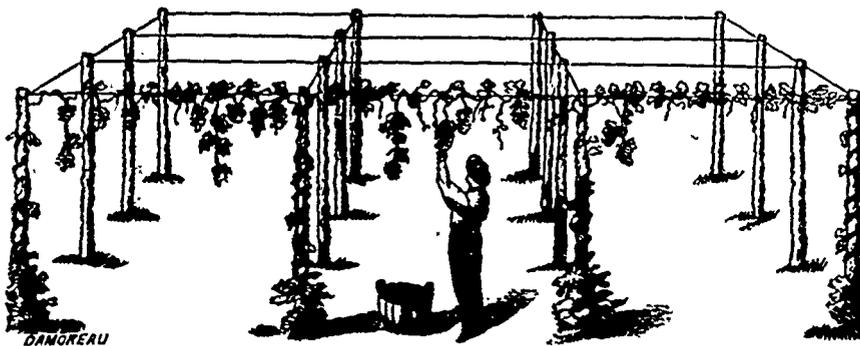
and two pieces of root placed in each hole, the operator being careful to fill all space around the roots with fine dry soil. The intervening space is usually planted to corn, hood thoroughly—no weed being allowed to seed. In fall, after the ground is cleared of corn, each hill should receive a liberal supply of manure. In spring, as soon as the frost is out of the ground, the manure should be drawn off from the hills to allow the plants to get a vigorous start. Care should be taken to break off none of the earliest vines; for experience has taught that the earlier they start the sooner they will ripen, and thus escape the mold and lice which affect them late in the season.”

We cannot do better than give an extract from a letter addressed to the *Country Gentleman*, on the after-treatment of a hop-garden:—

“After the first year’s crop, commencing with the second year’s crop, before the poles are set, the earth, by grubbing around the hills, should be removed so as to expose the vines of the preceding year down to the crown of the roots; the old stalk and suckers and offsets which may have sprung from the preceding year should be cut off closely with a sharp knife, leaving the crown of the hill in a convex shape. Cover the hill again with a thin coating of fine earth mixed with manure or other fertilizer, as may be, care being observed at the time to stick up a

mark to hills which are weakly, and will require smaller poles. Grubbing and pruning should be strictly adhered to in order to secure a good crop, and prevent the worm increasing. I have experimented on a few acres of hops in order to save labour by not pruning and grubbing, but trying to subdue the worm by using materials that I knew were not injurious to the hop vines. The effects were, the hop began to decrease by the worms working and eating the vines, so much so that the vines were entirely eaten off after they had reached the top of the poles. I know no better way than pruning and grubbing, for it helps very much in subduing the worms, although many times the worm makes such havoc on the vines that it becomes necessary to go through the yard the second time, which is done by working the worm from the hill by a sharp stick. As a general thing, the worm is found where the best and thriest vines grow, near the bed roots. In the management of hop grounds, it may be laid down as a positive rule that the ground should be kept clean from worms and weeds, and the soil kept well enriched.”

In some localities, the scarcity of suitable poles is a difficulty in the way of hop-growing, but this country is so well supplied with cedar—the very best timber for the purpose—that Canadian cultivators



need be at no loss on this account. The lack of poles and the injurious effects of high winds have led to the invention and introduction of a mode of culture which is illustrated in the accompanying wood cut:

This “stake and string yard” was patented in December last by F. W. Collins, of Morris, Otsego Co., N. Y., and is usually designated “Collins’ Horizontal Hop-Yard.” Though only recently patented, the invention has been tested for several years, and is highly spoken-of by competent judges. The *Hop Growers’ Journal* commends it in very strong terms. It says:—

“The plan referred to is not a new or untried experiment, but excellent and experienced growers, who are disinterested witnesses, state the results of several years’ use of this method in terms of high commendation.”

Its chief advantages as set forth by the inventor and patentee are,—

1. Cheapness. One stake from 8 to 10 feet high suffices for a hill. The poles necessary for one acre by the old plan will suffice for four acres on this plan. Broom-makers’ twine is used to connect the poles at the tops.

2. The hops ripen earlier, and are less liable to rust.

3. The yield is greater, and the hops are of better quality.

4. The labour of tending and picking is less than on the long poles, or the patent hop frames.

5. There is much less danger of their being injured by high winds, whipping against each other, the stakes giving away, or being blown down, than on the long poles or high frames.

6. The ground being much less shaded, the sun warms the earth, and matures the fruit not only earlier, but more perfectly.

7. The hops can be gathered without cutting off the vine near the ground, which always causes such a flow of sap from the root as to materially weaken, and in some cases entirely destroy the hill.

As already remarked, parties who have tried this mode of hop culture praise it very highly. One extensive hop grower states that the yield was at least fifty per cent. greater on the horizontal plan,

than by the ordinary method of cultivation. He adds that in the breaking of the arms and blowing down of the poles, there is a saving of at least ten per cent. more. Another says of it:—“In the first place, it is better, because you get, I think, about one-third more hops per acre than you can from long poles. Secondly, it is better, because it is a great saving of labour. A boy 14 years old can perform any part of the labour, or all of it, from setting the poles to harvesting them.”

Many other testimonies of a similar nature might be quoted.

The yield of hops in this country is far less than the demand for them. According to the last Provincial Trade Returns, there were imported into Canada, in 1862, 356,508 lbs. of hops, at a cost of \$58,165. Of this amount, \$7,571 went to Great Britain, and \$50,594 to the United States. Every dollar thus expended might very easily be retained in Canada.

Salt as a Manure.

We have received several inquiries on the abovesubject, in reply to which we may state, that much difference of opinion exists at present among agricultural authorities respecting the utility of salt as a fertilizer. It has long been considered that the action of salt was beneficial in various ways, but this view has lately been questioned, and some weighty