

GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

FOR THE RURAL CANADIAN:

WALKS IN THE GARDEN.—VII.

JULY is the month for weeds and he who would reap the reward of his labours for the past two months must keep the cultivator constantly going. Too many gardens are sown with care, and the first growth of weeds plucked out, but afterwards when the scorching July sun makes work a burden, allowed to grow up with all kinds of noxious vegetation, which not only destroys the crop, but scatters their seeds far and wide, and doubles the work for the next year. The corners and out of the way places are too often allowed to run waste, even where the main garden is closely looked after, and a very little space will supply thistle or groundsel seed enough to sow an acre. If any success is to be had in a garden there should be no waste places. Every inch should be made to grow something useful and it will do it, if it is looked after.

I SUPPOSE the Canadian thistle is one of the worst weeds we have, but it can be killed out by persistent cutting and never allowing it to seed. Burdocks, too, are bad, but if never allowed to make leaves, the roots will soon die. Groundsel is an annual, but ripens two or three crops of seed in a year, and if not looked after very closely will soon overrun the place. There is a new-comer in our parts, which people call the milk thistle. It is a persistent grower, as a yellow flower, with downy seed which is borne on the wind, and carried to considerable distances. The mallow, too, with its long roots penetrating a foot or more into the ground, is a foe not easily to be conquered; but all of them can be overcome by a vigorous and persistent onslaught, and, believe me, it is worth the trouble.

I HAD a good deal of trouble with the weeds in the gravel walks, which seemed to defy everything, especially an insignificant-looking wire weed, which soon covered the surface, and presented a very untidy appearance. I found salt applied thickly enough to completely cover the surface, a perfect cure, and as cheap as it is easy of application.

APART from the economy of raising several crops on the same ground, which I have spoken of several times—it is one of my hobbies—it is absolutely necessary to keep the ground clean. If the land that peas, spinach, or any of the early vegetables are raised on, is allowed to remain uncultivated when the crops are gathered, the weeds will soon take possession and store up trouble for the gardener against another season.

As a general rule lawns will bear cutting about twice a week and should have that much to keep them looking nice, except when the weather is exceedingly dry, and from all appearances that is not likely to occur this year. The clipped grass should never be removed, but allowed to lie to serve as a mulch.

DON'T be afraid to cut your flowers. They bear all the better from having the clusters removed, and not allowed to seed. It is surprising how much longer and stronger the bloom will be if this is attended to.

THERE is considerable difference of opinion about growing tomatoes. My plan has always been to trellis them in one way or another, and to prune moderately. A neighbour of mine, a professional gardener, who is very successful, allows the vines to grow on the ground, placing shingles under the clusters of fruit

to preserve them from the dirt. He prunes excessively, leaving one would hardly think foliage enough to keep the plants alive. The other day I was talking to a market man, one of the largest and most successful tomato growers in this section, and who has originated several valuable varieties, and he told me his practice was to force the vines to spread on the ground, even if the stems had to be split. The knife was never allowed to touch them and the fruit lay on the earth, which he said was several degrees warmer than a shingle, and hastened the ripening. I shall try the three plans, and tell you later about it.

THE tomato rot has bothered us a good deal these few years. The diseased fruit should be removed and buried deep or burned as soon as the rot shows. The big green caterpillars should be destroyed, as they will soon strip off the leaves.

I ALWAYS put bags on open clusters of grapes, that is, when the frost spares any, which it doesn't every year. They are about four by six inches, and are slipped over the bunches and tied, as soon as the fruit is the size of peas. It is often possible to ripen the late varieties in this way, which would otherwise be cut off by the late frosts, which as well as the early ones, render grape culture anything but a sure thing where I live.

THERE isn't a handier thing about the place than a bottle of shellac varnish and a brush. If a tree is wounded in any way a coating of the varnish will close it air-tight in a minute, and prevent any serious injury; where large branches are cut off it will answer the same purpose; when the black knot is cut off plum trees, as it always should be, a coating of varnish will be found very useful.

It is not too late yet to plant corn, peas and beans for use in the fall, but the earliest kinds only must be used. The constant succession of vegetables is one of the pleasures of having a private garden which can never be enjoyed by those depending on a market supply. Green peas and green beans are generally considered out of season in September and afterwards, but those who once grow them for use at that time will always do it, and perhaps thank me for the hint. X.

THE WHITE GRUB AND MILK-WEED.

MR. EDITOR,—I noticed an article some time ago in one of our Canadian publications as to the best way to get rid of white grubs which were destroying strawberry plants, and it stated that the best thing to do was to dig up the plants which were wilted and try to find the grubs and kill them, that there was no danger of any more grubs getting into the patch until fresh eggs were laid by the June bugs, or something to that effect. It gave the idea that white grubs (such as eat the potatoes while growing) were the same as the big black bugs commonly known as June bugs, only that they were in a different stage of growth. After I read the article I wrote the editor of the Montreal Witness and asked for some scientific light to be thrown on the subject, as I doubted the statement, and I am still of the opinion that the common white grub and June bug or beetle are not the same species, from the fact that they can be found at any and all seasons of the year when the ground can be worked, and of all sizes at the same season. I have found them in large numbers in the month of May when they were not larger than a grain of wheat, and again in September, the same way. I shall be pleased to have someone explain it.

I also noticed an article in the same paper

stating that the common milkweed was an annual and that if it was cut down before going to seed that was the end of it. Now, Mr. Editor, I was surprised to see such an article in one of our leading papers, as there are thousands of people in Canada who know better and the person who wrote that the plant known as milk-weed was an annual knew nothing whatever about it, for it is just as hard to destroy it as the Canada thistle, and of the two I would rather undertake to kill the latter. I have seen milk-weeds push through four feet of heavy, fresh soil thrown up from ditching. I have cut the stems off four inches under ground and in ten days half-a-dozen would shoot up from the old one. It is almost impossible to destroy them, a piece of the root buried four feet deep will grow and if left on top of the ground when there is a reasonable amount of moisture it will thrive first rate. However, it is not inclined to spread very rapidly, and as the seed comes to maturity later than most of our grain, there is not much danger from seed. I have known little patches of milk-weed in certain fields for over thirty years and where it is cut annually either with the grain or specially when pastured, and it does not spread much but is very hard to destroy. I believe the best way to get rid of it is to use a spud and go over the ground once a week and just as soon as it appears cut it off four inches below the surface. The same rule may be applied to Canada thistle. Yours truly,

G. E. PERKINS.

Ingersoll, Ont., June 22, 1885.

ORCHARD PRUNING.

A late English horticulturist says that after trying all sorts of plans, he is thoroughly convinced that there is nothing equal to the little-and-often system of pruning, or rather pinching. The soft young shoots can be readily removed by the finger and thumb, which is the easiest way. To which we may add that any owner who is really interested in his garden will be likely to pass among his trees and shrubs quite often, and if he sees any want or defect, he will at once supply or remove it. With this view a well-known cultivator recently remarked that his season for pruning is all the season through.

SOME time between now and next spring every owner of a plum orchard should insert in the trunk, or if the tree is large, into each main limb, an iron plug to strike on with a heavy hammer for jarring down the curculios. The plugs may be easily and cheaply made by a blacksmith, by chopping up a round iron rod, say three-eighths of an inch diameter and three inches long; and then set in holes bored in the tree an inch or two deep. A blow on one of these plugs will bring down every curculio upon the sheets to be spread under the trees.

CALIFORNIANS claim that they have found a complete remedy for the phylloxera so destructive to grape vines, in the application to the roots of each vine of a half-ounce of quicksilver mixed with clay, so that the globules of quicksilver are not perceivable to the naked eye. Vines suffering badly from the insect pest when treated with quicksilver in this manner, entirely recovered their vigour and productiveness. The theory is that the quicksilver destroys the parasite without injuring the roots of the vine. The cost of the application is but little more than one cent per vine.

A GEORGIA man has paid for a farm with the melons off it, to say nothing of the struggling young doctors he has firmly established in business.