

## GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

FOR THE RURAL CANADIAN.

## WALKS IN THE GARDEN.—V.

THE present season is the most backward of any in my experience. I have never failed of getting the seed of early vegetables sown in the first week of April, but at the present writing, the middle of the month, the snow still lies to some depth on the soil, which is frozen for several inches down. It may be that there will be a compensation in the more rapid growth of vegetation when it does start, but as gardeners are notoriously good grumblers, it is only natural that a little of it should be indulged. By the way, a friend of mine tells me that in 1856 he teamed a quantity of goods from Woodstock on sleighs on the 21th April, while a Galt paper notes that in 1845 there was good sleighing during the entire month.

ONE of the results of the late spring will be that all the work will come together, and those who have been forehanded in trenching their ground in the fall will find more than the usual advantage in having so much less labour to prepare the soil for seeds. When nothing else can be done it is well to look after the mouths of the drains, and see that they are free for the water to make its exit. No matter how thoroughly land is drained, it is useless unless the water can get away, and from observation I take it that this very simple precaution is often neglected—that a good many people think their whole duty is done when the tiles are laid down. Autumn leaves and other rubbish very often get into the drain mouths and prevent them from working.

TO those who have only a small plot of ground at their command it is of great importance to make the best use of it, and where possible to grow several crops on the same space. This is easy enough, but takes lots of fertilizing material, for it is an axiom in gardening, that to make the land produce you must feed it well. The land on which early peas are sown is the place for celery when the straw is removed, which is plenty early enough to plant it. Tomatoes can be planted in rows five feet apart between the rows, and will be out of the way before the earth is needed to hill up the celery. The same idea followed out with other vegetables will accomplish the end aimed at. Another advantage of double or treble cropping is that the weeds have no chance. If the ground where early vegetables are grown is left after they are taken off, it quickly grows up with weeds, and becomes a nuisance instead of a benefit as it might be.

MOST people who grow strawberries to any extent plant out a new bed every year so as to always be sure of a supply—the profitable bearing season not extending over two or three years. The best crop to precede strawberries is potatoes, on account of the thorough cultivation they require which makes the land clean, a prime necessity for successful berry-growing. Where the strawberries are going to be planted there is the best place for early potatoes, and there is no better time for setting out strawberry plants than just when the potatoes come off. With potted plants set out towards the end of July or beginning of August, a very fair crop can be had the next year, which is out of the question if the planting is left till late in fall or next spring. Life is too short and land too valuable to allow it to remain unproductive for a whole year for want of a little knowledge or forethought.

Potted strawberry plants have come greatly into

fashion of late years, and they deserve it. The plan is to sink two or three inch pots, filled with rich, mellow earth between the rows, and place a runner on each, anchoring it with a small stone. The runner will take root, and in a few weeks fill the pot with a net-work of fibres, being nourished by the parent plant, and can be planted out without going back a day. The potting is best done about the time the berries are over—say the last week in June, or first in July. There is no work done in a garden that pays better for the small time it takes.

THE soil for strawberries should be as light and as rich as it is possible to make it. A sandy loam is the natural habitat of the strawberry, and clay ground should be brought as near that as possible. Wood ashes are invaluable, not only lightening the soil, but supplying it with potash in an easily assimilated form. Not a particle of ashes, leached or unleached, should be wasted. Well-rotted manure should be dug in with a liberal hand. The strawberry is a very gross feeder, and responds promptly to the generous use of fertilizers.

CABBAGES and cauliflowers have three or four very active enemies—one or the other of which has caused a great many to give up growing them altogether. One of these is the maggot which burrows in the root, and is not discovered till the mischief is done and the plant is killed. One remedy is when taking the plants out of the hot-bed or cold frame, to have a dish of water near by, and wash the roots before setting out—thus killing the eggs if they have already been deposited, and then to put a roll of stout paper about the stem when planting out. Both of these are of advantage. The fly is a great nuisance, but may be prevented from doing any mischief by shading the plant with two shingles on the south and east sides. The flies never work in the shade. The green worm eats the cabbage after it is formed, and is a disgusting pest. Emulsion of kerosene soap, diluted with water and sprayed on, will kill the worms, but many people are afraid of flavouring the vegetable. Road dust is good, but if there are only a few plants perhaps hand picking is the most satisfactory. In wet seasons the slug is always busy, but salt is sure death to him, dissolving him into slime instantaneously.

A GOOD authority says that as between wood ashes and salt for asparagus beds it would prefer the former. This tallies with my experience. I never could see that salt did any good except to kill the weeds, and that is a slovenly reason for using it. The fact is, there has been a great deal of humbug about growing asparagus, which has prevented a good many people from enjoying this most delicious of all vegetables. A good asparagus bed ought to be as common as a rhubarb patch, and everybody has that.

THOSE who have not used the kerosene emulsion as an insecticide should do so this season. It is the most valuable insecticide I know of. With it and Bubach or California pyrethrum, any and all of the insect pests can be defied. The emulsion is made by putting a couple of pounds of hard or soft soap into a kettle and heating to a boiling point, then stirring in a pint of common kerosene, mixing them thoroughly. They will stay mixed and can be kept any time. This mixture can be applied with a syringe or force pump, and will kill rose bugs, which are proof against almost everything else. Bubach is applied with a small bellows, sold for the purpose, and will kill any insect it touches while comparatively harmless to animals or human beings. It is much safer than hellebore for currants or gooseberries.

TOMATOES are probably the best appreciated vegetable in the garden, but the only drawback is that they come too late in the season. If one will only take the trouble, it is easy enough to anticipate the season by two or three weeks at least, and to have the luscious fruit when the price is too high in the market for ordinary purses. The plants should be forced in the hot-bed, and transplanted into a warm border sheltered from the north and west winds—a west wall or fence is the best. A miniature cold-frame—a soap-box will do very well—should be put around each plant, and covered with a sash to keep out the cold at night and intensify the sun's rays in the day time. When all danger of frost is over the boxes are dispensed with and the vines trained to the wall as espaliers. The trouble will be rewarded with rich clusters of ripe red fruit, while the vines treated in the ordinary way will hardly be more than in blossom. Y.

FOR THE RURAL CANADIAN.

## STRAWBERRIES.

BY W. H. HILBORN, ARKONA.

THE cultivation of strawberries as a market crop is receiving more attention every year, and will continue to do so, as there are but few of our markets well supplied with good fruit, well grown, and put up in the right shape.

IT has been the custom with fruit growers to plant only one or two varieties, nearly always the Wilson, for main crop. I admit the Wilson is a splendid market sort, but it is a great mistake to depend on any one or two kinds. The Wilson has some very serious defects; the greatest is that it blooms very early in spring, and the blossoms reach up above the leaves, hence are more apt to be injured by spring frosts than many other varieties. So many people grow the Wilson, that the strawberry crop mostly goes to market with a rush, and runs the prices down.

THE aim of the most successful growers is to extend the fruit season over as great a length of time as possible, as the strawberry is a fruit that is mostly used in its fresh state. The greater length of time given consumers, the more fruit can be sold, and fewer crates, boxes, pickers, etc., are required to market a crop, thus reducing the expenses.

IT is impossible to give a list of varieties that will suit in all localities, on all soils, and with every mode of culture. The only sure way to find out the kinds best suited to your own individual wants is to try a number of the best well-tested sorts.

THE following varieties will be the best selection I could make out of over sixty kinds I have fruited, and there are but few places in the Dominion where they will not succeed.

EARLY CANADA is the earliest variety, where it escapes the spring frosts. It blooms first of any; hence it is not safe to plant largely of this variety, as it frequently gets caught by spring frosts; whenever you can get a crop, it is very profitable. When the first blossoms do get killed by frost, those coming out later will not be as early as *Crescent Seedling*. This plant is a good grower, and productive.

CRESCENT SEEDLING is the most profitable early strawberry yet introduced. It is also one of the safest to plant, as it blooms a little later than the Wilson, and the blossoms are well protected by the leaves. It will mature its fruit in less time, after blooming, than any other well-tested variety; it ripens several days ahead of the Wilson, and will yield more fruit.

NEXT in order of ripening are the *Wilson* and *Daniel Boone*. Both are very profitable for their season.