

Agricultural.

THE CULTIVATION OF FRUIT TREES.

In looking over a file of letters containing queries upon fruit culture, we find that the majority of them may be summed up in the questions: "What will make my pear trees bear?" "What shall I do with my old apple orchard?" The greater part of these numerous inquiries may be answered by commending the writers to the experience of two correspondents whose letters are found in the same file. As the communications are rather long, we extract their essential points. Mr. D. W. M., of Adrian, Michigan, planted some years ago a number of pear trees along his garden fence, where the ground soon became covered with a tough sod, and those trees which survived this treatment at the end of eight or ten years were not worth as much as when first taken from the nursery. Having occasion to move the fence, it became necessary, in order to bring the ground into better shape, to plow around the pear trees, and the space near them was devoted to a hoed garden crop. This treatment caused such a marked improvement in the trees that Mr. M. was encouraged to further efforts. Accordingly, in the autumn he dug a trench around each tree, about two feet from the trunk, and 15 to 18 inches wide and deep. These trenches were filled with scrapings of the barn-yard, and as a consequence, the trees were thrown into vigorous growth. Ever since, the space around the trees has been manured and occupied by some light garden crop that needed frequent hoeing, and the trees now bear an abundance of fruit. A good share of the unsatisfactory pear trees are just in the condition of those above cited—that of starvation and neglect. Surface manuring and mulching would have produced the same effect, and it is not too late to apply this remedy now. Another matter of complaint is, that dwarf pear trees are disposed to make a too vigorous growth of wood, grow out of bounds, and cease to be dwarfs, while they bear little or no fruit. In many instances this rampant growth arises from the fact that the tree is set below the junction of the quince and pear; as the roots strike from the latter, the early bearing quality induced by growing solely on quince roots, is lost. If trees are wanted in miniature, they must be kept dwarf by a persistent course of summer pinching, and to this may be added root pruning as described on pages 17 and 18, (Jan.) of the current volume. Mr. L. B., of West Nottingham, Md., some ten years ago came into possession of an old and partly neglected orchard. Since taking the trees, which were from 20 to 25 years old, under his care, each one has received a load of manure yearly. Some rows of potatoes or other crop demanding care are planted between the trees, not for the sake of profit, but to ensure the cultivation of the ground. The result is, from three to seven barrels of marketable apples from each tree, and a large quantity of the less handsome fruit is made into cider. While all through his section of country a good crop of apples is the exception, his crop is generally abundant, and last autumn, which was not generally a good fruit season, he gathered about 1500 bushels of fruit from four acres of orchard, the trees of which were mostly planted 40 feet apart. The necessity for manuring trees which afford a crop year after year, would seem to be so obvious that it is unnecessary to insist upon it; yet a well cultivated orchard of any kind is the exception, and not the rule throughout the country.—[*American Agriculturist*.]

SHORT DIRECTIONS FOR VINE PLANTERS.

It is presumed that every one who is not a vine but has room to put it, will plant one this spring—and more if space and means allow. The following brief hints will answer for a single vine or for an acre: Having determined on the varieties, procure them from some grower who has a reputation for quality of stock and correctness as to varieties. The soil must be drained, if at all disposed to be wet. More failures result from the neglect of this than from any other cause. The soil must be enriched and well worked to the depth of 20 inches or two feet. If sandy, the character of the soil must be amended by the addition of leaf mould, or other vegetable material. Do not overmanure, but enrich the ground with well decomposed manure to give the vines a good start. Vines of the age of two years

from the bud or cutting, are old enough, and of the quick growing sorts, those one year old will answer. Vines are sent out with as long roots as possible. These are to be cut back to about 18 inches before planting, and the top is cut back to three buds, if the nurseryman has not already saved the trouble. Dig a circular hole large enough to allow the roots, after pruning, to extend in every direction, making the surface of the earth in the hole convex, so that the ends of the roots will be from six to ten inches below the surface, while the point from which they start will be from four to six inches below. Set a stout 6 or 8 foot stake in the center of the hole, then place the vine beside it, spreading out the roots equally in every direction, as in the figure. Cover the roots carefully with fine soil, and then fill up the hole and press down the earth with the foot. In spring planting, it is well to leave a depression around the vine to allow the rains to sink into the soil. When the buds start, rub off all but the strongest one, and afterward keep the shoot from this tied up to the stake.—[*American Agriculturist*.]

GARDENS FOR CHILDREN.—A Michigan lady thus pleads the cause of the young people: "A great deal can be done to encourage horticultural tastes and industrious habits in children. Why don't farmers fence off little gardens for their larger boys and girls, and allow them to have all they can raise from them? Put agricultural papers in their hands, and encourage them to try experiments in wheat growing, cultivating seedling fruits, etc. Put a good magnifying glass in their hands, that they may become acquainted with their insect friends and enemies. To those old enough to appreciate and take care of them, give choice plants to cultivate, or what would perhaps sometimes be better, let them earn money in some way and purchase for themselves. Don't turn them off with an Isabella grape when it will not ripen for you; let them have a Delaware or a Concord, that they may be more sure of a return for their labors. So of the strawberries and other things. Excite in them a desire for excelling in raising fine fruits and vegetables. Let them get up children's agricultural fairs, and horticultural societies for discussions, etc. Don't you think the agricultural papers will be studied if you do this? and don't you think you will raise a family of intelligent and well informed men and women? So of domestic animals. If you have a boy a dozen years old, give him a yoke of calves to train; give the girls lambs, and let them have the fleeces as a reward for good care, or allow them to raise some fine cows for themselves. Children need objects to learn to love, and incentives to faithful labor, and they will love home all the more if you attach them to it by pleasant memories, and good kind instruction."

Varieties.

—There are about 330,000 muskets at Springfield Armory ready for use.

—Truthfulness is a corner stone in character, and if it be not firmly laid in youth, there will ever after be a weak spot in the foundation.

—It is an easy and vulgar thing to please the mob, and a very arduous task to astonish them; but essentially to benefit and to improve them is a work fraught with difficulty, and teeming with danger.

—The sweetest of all pleasures, and one that will never decay is to cherish the heart that loves you.—[*Irving*]

—In North England, a laborer rescued a child that was drowning in the Teviot, and after hours of exertion brought it safe to the shore. The boss of the laborer deducted the time lost in performing this act from the poor man's earnings.

—Sir James Mackintosh invited Dr. Parr to take a drive in his gig. The horse became restive. "Gently, Jemmy," says the doctor, "don't irritate him; always soothe your horse, Jemmy. You'll do better without me. Let me down, Jemmy." Once on terra firma, the doctor's view of the case was changed. "Now, Jemmy, touch him up. Never let a horse get the better of you. Touch him up, conquer him, don't spare him; and now I'll leave you to manage him—I'll walk back!"

—Do all in your power to teach your children self-government. If a child is passionate, teach him by patient and gentle means to curb his temper. If he is greedy, cultivate liberality in him. If he is selfish, promote generosity.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN TURKEY.—CONSTANTINOPLE, 1864.—An accidental fire which took place here a few weeks since has led to a rather interesting antiquarian discovery, by clearing away a mass of houses which had concealed an important monument of Byzantine history hitherto but little observed—the coronation hall of the emperors from the time of Heraclius downward. It stands at the north-west angle of the city, near the so-called Adrianople Gate, and on the spot where the wall of Heraclius (with which this building was plainly cotemporary) joins that of Theodosius. For this interesting discovery we are indebted to Dr. Dethier, director of the Austrian school, a gentleman already favorably known to scholars by many interesting publications on Byzantine antiquities. He has prepared careful drawings of this relic of the old city, which will probably be published before long, and he is not without hopes that the Sultan, to whom representations have been made, may be induced to have the building judiciously restored and converted into a museum for the reception of the very many valuable antiquities which lie scattered about, without arrangement and without care, in this singular city, where the old and the new, the mean and the magnificent, jostle each other in every quarter in strange and often amusing disorder.

The gentleman to whom I have alluded, Dr. Dethier, has just brought to a close a long and careful investigation of a question which for several years has been looked to with much interest by scholars throughout Europe, and especially by the academicians of Pesth, the fate of the once famous but long lost library of Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary. For more than 200 years all trace of this library had disappeared, but a few years since a hope was confidently suggested that a considerable portion of it would be found in the library of the old Seraglio at Constantinople, which was believed to contain spoils of more than one library of the West.

Without entering into the details of this interesting report, it will be enough to state that Dr. Dethier finds the total number of Greek and Latin MSS. in the Sultan's Library to be 96. Of these only 16 can with certainty be pronounced, from intrinsic evidence, to be Corvinian. Of the remaining 80, some (although without any external marks of the Corvinian Library) may possibly have belonged to it. But the larger proportion appear certainly not to be Corvinian, and may fairly be believed to have come from the spoil of Trebizonde, or even of the later Turkish forays in Italy and elsewhere. One MS. bears the name and arms of the celebrated Lodovico Sforza, Duke of Milan.—[*London Times*.]

[CONCLUDED.]

DOUBTFUL JOSHUA.

BY EZRA OLIVER WENDELL.

While the two sullen sisters were picking beans and paring apples that evening, at opposite ends of the kitchen, Joshua suddenly stopped whittling, shut up his jack-knife, and told them he had been experimenting with both, and what was on his mind.

"Now, which," said he, stretching out his boots towards them, with his hands in his pockets, "which of you two girls can honestly say that she loves me the best?"

Here was a proposition for a lover; but they felt that Joshua was honest and answered with equal bluntness:

"I don't care that for you!" declared Lena, independently, flinging an apple-paring at him.

"And I think about as much of you as that!" exclaimed Fatima, snapping a bean at his face.

Joshua was so amazed at this double-breasted surprise, that he drew in his legs with a sudden jerk that upset his chair and rising from the floor with thoughts unutterable, he went off to bed, to escape their laughter, and train his thoughts to some reasonable bearing.

"Wonders of Jerusalem and a sick boss to let! Did they mean that? I don't believe it. Can't be. They are afraid to tell the truth. I ought to have gone at them singly. Lucky I didn't say I loved them, or they'd been pulling hair afore this. I'll bet a bushel of beans to a barrel of apples, that neither of them girls will sleep a wink to-night, for thinking of me, and how nigh I came to the pint. It must be very aggravating to their feelings. But so much the better. They'll be getting more jealous, and all they want is to catch me alone."

What Joshua was not able to do for himself, the two sisters now did for him, as they went on with their beans and apples. Self-esteem was wounded, and each wished to escape ridicule from the other.

"The awkward fool!" said Lena, "to think that I cared for him."

"You love him quite as well as I do."

"I don't."

"You needn't peh at me—or at him either. For he's good enough for you, if he is awkward."

"That shows you love him. But he wouldn't have you at any rate."

"He wouldn't take up with you, and I could have him if I said the word."

"You couldn't."

"I could. I'm four years younger than you, and you're too old."

"Don't you call me old, you jade! I'll pull your hair! You're dying to get married!"

The arrival of their parents, just then, put an end to the threatening aspect of things; but the sisters slept apart that night, and each resolved the next day she should do all she could to get Joshua to pop the question, just to spite her sister. And accordingly they detected each other in such affectionate conversation with Joshua in the course of the day that a fierce quarrel ensued, and Joshua finally stood up straight and declared if they didn't let him alone he could 'nt weed his onions.

"All I wanted to say is, that you'll never be happy with her."

"As happy as he would be with you, I'll be bound."

Joshua now had a happy thought.

"I'll tell you what I'll do with you two girls. To stop the quarrel, I'll turn up a cent—heads for Lena, tails for Fatima. Best two in three. Will that satisfy?"

"Well—yes."

He tossed, and Lena won the prize.

"I don't believe she would agree to it," said the disappointed Fatima.

"Yes she would, too."

"You know she wouldn't! He is too young."

"I knew she would," said the confident Lena, "that I'll agree to what she says, and go this minute."

And both went to the house to ask ma, leaving Joshua in a state of great excitement.

"I'm in doubt if this is right," he mused aloud. "Suppose ma makes a choice. I might be dissatisfied. I don't want to be compelled. The cent says Lena. Suppose ma says Fatty. That's pulling both ways. The cent might be in the right; but the cent would have no voice. Suppose ma agrees with the cent, even I might be on the wrong scent; for Lena might not be the right one for me to have, though it would look as if it was ordered. I am in a very great doubt! Now, suppose the cent—"

"You needn't suppose any more, Josh! here," said Farmer Daisy, who had just stepped from behind a barn and overheard his agitated soliloquy.

"You can't have either of my darters, for at present you're as shifty as a weathercock. You'll have to wait a spell of years fust, that's sartin!"

This was a view of the case which the mortified Joshua had never included in his list of doubts, and it gave him no relief when the two girls came running to him to say that though ma wouldn't have her daughters tossed up for, she didn't care which he married.

"Makes no odds now," said Joshua, gloomily, "since the old man says I can't have either. But one thing I'm in doubt about. I leave off work here this day, and mean to go to sea. I may take into my head to be gone two years. But keep up a good heart girls, till I come back to take my pick."

The girls expressed much groaning grief at parting with Joshua, and this cheered his heart during his whaling voyage with Capt. Surge, who took him to his house on his return, and offered him a cottage and his blooming daughter Petrelina—cottage and daughter to go together. But Joshua was in doubt till he could see Lena and Fatima, and if they had worn well. So he paid them a visit.

"You can't have Fatty Josh," said Lena, "she's engaged."

"Then, as you are true blue, I'll take you."

"Can't that neither, for I'm married."

"Then you may both go to thunder, and I'll go to the Captain's daughter. She's a clean gift, with a cottage too."

Joshua now hastened back to Capt. Surge and said he guessed he would accept Petrelina. But Petrelina had been married three days before, and the angry old tar now kicked him out for a doubtful son of a seacock.

This effectually removed Joshua and his doubts.