

The season for seed sowing is now so far advanced that the chief gardening duties of the present month will be the care rather of those crops we have sown, than of the few we can still successfully commit to the ground; for, although such as peas and beans may be sown, yet the crops they are likely to produce will not be quite equal to those sown last and previous months; and, although they produce equally well, yet a considerable portion of the pods are liable to be destroyed by a caterpillar abounding at this season.

French beans and scarlet runners may be planted, and additional sowings of radishes, lettuces, cress and mustard, may be continued; but the chief crops which claim attention this month are turnips, a large breadth of which should now be sown for winter use. The yellow swede, for use as a vegetable, should be sown as early as possible in December, and the yellow and white garden varieties about the end of the present and beginning of the ensuing month.

The earlier part of the present month is usually characterised by frequent showers, of which advantage should be taken to plant out cabbages, cauliflowers, savoy, Brussels sprouts, and flowering broccolis, all of which ought now to be extensively planted; for upon the exertions made at this season the limited or plentiful supply of winter vegetables will entirely depend.

Flower borders should now be exhibiting a profusion of roses, fuchsias, geraniums, pinks, carnations, stocks, and sweet-williams, with many sorts of flowering bulbs and numerous varieties of lovely annuals; and though at Christmas we can neither suspend "mistletoe boughs" from the ceilings of our dwellings, nor display bunches of holly-berries, yet by the time of its arrival we shall be able to pile our tables with delicious strawberries, and revel amid the fragrance and beauty of wreaths of blooming roses—luxuries which the noblest and wealthiest of England's aristocracy cannot at this season obtain.

Greenhouse plants which have done blooming may now be removed to a cold frame, or placed under the shade of a wall or fence having a southerly aspect. The removal of these from the shelves of the house will afford room for the introduction, from the melon and cucumber frame, of such handsome flowering tender and other annuals, in pots, as balsams, cockscombs, globe amaranths, white and purple egg plants, phlox drummondii, humea elegans, gallardia picta, blue nemophila, coreopsis drummondii, sensitive plant, and other similarly ornamental and interesting varieties, all of which will add greatly to the attractions of the greenhouse, and aid materially in maintaining its continued gaiety throughout the whole of the summer and some of the months of autumn.

Vineries in which the grapes are fully set may now receive air much more freely, and fire heat ought to be entirely suspended, unless early grapes are desired, for the fruit, from this stage of its growth, will swell to a larger size under the genial influences of a well-regulated temperature produced by sun-heat only. Air freely, therefore, every fine morning as soon as the sunshine sensibly raises the temperature of the house; scorched foliage—a too frequent defect—will thus be avoided, which results only from neglected morning ventilation.

As soon as the grapes have attained to a size similar to very small peas, commence slightly raising and supporting the shoulders of the bunches; after which thin out with a pair of grape-thinning scissors a full two-thirds of the unequal sized berries, thus leaving those which remain full room to swell to a large size; for the free use of the thinning-scissors is an inevitable necessity when large well-coloured fruit is desired.

Close in the vinery early every afternoon, syringing freely over head, thus securing a warm humid atmosphere, highly favourable to the health of the vines, and very largely conducive to the production of fine fruit.

Ornamental hedges bounding grass lawns and shrubberies will now have made growth sufficiently long to require close trimming in, for all such screens, which are intended not merely for shelter but also for ornament, ought to be neatly trimmed at least twice every year. The hedge will thus very soon acquire a desirable density and neatness of appearance, thereby blending both the advantages of improved shelter and greater ornament; two very desirable acquisitions, both of which tend greatly to increase the enjoyment derivable from ornamental gardening.

THE INTRODUCTION OF TREES, FLOWERS, AND FRUITS, INTO CANTERBURY.

The following passages from a lecture delivered by Mr. William Wilson, on "The Early History of Gardening in Canterbury," on the 10th of October, 1864, contain many valuable facts:—

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First amongst English trees, in point of beauty as well as in point of time, with reference to the period of its introduction, I shall give you the history of the weeping willow, or true *Salix Babylonica*, first introduced into New Zealand, in 1840, by the French settlers of Akaroa, who, upon their way from France, put into the island of St. Helena for the purpose of testifying their veneration for the memory of Napoleon Bonaparte; and, desirous of possessing some memento of a name affectionately engraven on the heart of every Frenchman, they brought with them cuttings of some of the weeping willows which they found growing in pendent beauty around Napoleon's sacred tomb. This circumstance has created a slight confusion between the names of the true Babylonish weeping willow, which is the one that we possess in Canterbury, and the *Salix Napoleona*, or true Napoleon's willow, which is an evergreen shrub indigenous to St. Helena, and first sent home to England in 1823, where it is only occasionally seen as a cool greenhouse or conservatory evergreen, incapable of enduring the frosts of an English winter; whilst the common weeping willow is indigenous to the banks of the Euphrates, and is unquestionably the same willow referred to in the 137th Psalm, in the following affecting lines:—

By Babel's streams we sat and wept,
When Zion we thought on,
In midst thereof we hanged our harps
The willow trees upon.

The weeping willow, therefore, which we possess was first sent from the Euphrates by Lady Mary W. Montague, the wife of the English Ambassador at Constantinople, who sent some cuttings to Pope, the poet, who planted one of them in his garden at Twickenham, which was the parent tree of all the weeping willows now in England. Plants from this tree were introduced into St. Helena from England by General Beatson in 1810, five years before the Battle of Waterloo, five and a half years before Napoleon's captivity, and eleven years before his death, on the 5th of May, 1821. It was first planted in St. Helena, among other trees, on the side of a valley near a spring, and having attracted the notice of Napoleon, he had a seat placed under it and used to go and sit there and have water brought to him from the adjoining fountain. About the time of Napoleon's death, in 1821, a storm shattered the willow in pieces, and after the interment of the Emperor, Madame Bertrand planted several cuttings from it on the outside of the railing which surrounded the grave; and from one of the finest of these was brought the cutting by the French settlers, which has since grown into a noble tree, and is still standing in German Bay at Akaroa; and this is the true parent of all our handsome weeping willows.

Three of the very finest in the province are growing in the beautiful grounds of Mr. Watson, the Resident Magistrate at Akaroa. They each stand about 25 feet in height, from the very summit of which their graceful pendent branches descend to the ground in beautiful festoons.

The merit of introducing walnut trees into the province was equally due to M. Beligny, the agent of the French settlers in Akaroa, in whose garden, at German Bay, the original two trees are still standing, and producing annually large crops of nuts. Some seven years ago I gave £33 for the one season's crop of the two trees, from which I raised some 7000 young walnut trees, most of which I sent to the other settlements of New Zealand, where they sold readily at £12 10s. per hundred; and so largely are the trees now distributed throughout the colony, that walnuts are not unlikely to become, in a few years, an important article of export.

We are also indebted to the French settlers for the first introduction of the grape vine. They brought with them a large number of varieties, some of which are late in ripening, and less adapted for the climate of Akaroa than such as the early white sweet-water grape which covers the end and verandah of M. Breitmeyer's house, a German settler in German Bay. This grape bears abundantly, and ripens early and well every season; the wonder is, that it has not long since superseded the late ripening and inferior varieties, for this and the well known black Hamburg grape would be by far the best sorts for a climate like Akaroa.

There is also an olive tree in the German Bay garden which has not yet borne fruit—although brought along with the walnuts and vines, thereby proving conclusively that the French expected, as we did, to find New Zealand a warmer climate than it is.

The first fruit trees planted on the Plains were brought from Nelson by the late Messrs. Deans, in 1845. These were planted in the garden at Riccarton, and consisted of three leather-coat or russeting apples, one green-gage, one yellow gage, one purple Orleans, and one Damson plum, with two of Knight's monarch pears. This very good selection are the parents of a large number of the fruit trees in Canterbury. The varieties have, however, since been largely added to by importations from the other settlements and from England.