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HORTICULTURE

Covering Strawberry Beds.
 Material should be laid aside for the covering of the strawberry bed, which work should be accomplished as soon as the ground is frozen hard enough to hold a wagon. Care should be taken against covering too early. Some seem to have the impression that strawberries are covered to protect them from the cold. This is a mistake; they must be covered to every one that six inches of straw or cornstalks will keep out very much cold. If a thermometer were placed above the straw and below it on a winter day the two would be found to register about or exactly the same. The covering is put on to keep out the heat in late fall and winter when the plants are not covered with snow. The freezing and thawing of the ground is the thing to be guarded against.

If the covering is put on too early the plants may be smothered and killed, for growth is still going on and evaporation is taking place from the leaves. While this is the case, covering would kill the leaves in some cases and in others would increase the growing on them of mildew. When the leaves are frozen later on is the time to cover. Then all growth is arrested and the covering does not smother them. For the same reason the straw must be removed quite early in the spring before growth has set in. It is not desirable to use for covering any kind of material that packs very closely. The keeping out of the air is not desirable, but the protection of the ground from the direct rays of the sun. Coarse straw held down by boards is good, and corn stalks are also used. Sometimes it is found advisable to use a little straw below and cornstalks above, the latter holding the straw from blowing.

As to the advisability of covering there is a dispute, but it is doubtless true that the man that covers his strawberries is sure of a crop of berries the coming year, while the man that does not cover is not sure of one. We know of people in the latitude of Northern Illinois who never cover their vines at all and usually have small crops, but we also know that on occasional years their beds in the spring are very sickly looking and the resultant crop is small.

Further north in the latitude of Wisconsin, there can be no question of the advisability of covering if a crop is to be expected every year. The Detroit growers there declare that they would not try to grow strawberries without covering. In fact, a good many people in past years gave up strawberry growing there because they so frequently lost their beds in winter. But since covering has become the result has been far otherwise.

As we go south the need for covering decreases but the practice in each locality will have to depend on experience. The locality that has for a long time grown strawberries without winter protection will continue to grow them that way. But there are always localities where the vines are not covered but should be. It is some work to do the covering, and for this reason the growers are likely to run the risk of not covering if that risk is not too great. Where protection is needed it pays to cover.

The Maturity of the Apple.
 Some of our horticulturists are making a difference between the mature apple and the ripe apple, though the general public recognizes no such distinction. We will let our horticultural friends have their way, however. The apple is mature when it has attained its full growth. It is not ripe until it has become mellow with the operations of sunlight, heat and time. The mature apple is in the best shape for picking. If it is left on the tree until it is fully ripe it will be a short keeper, while if it is picked at the time of maturity it will keep for a long time even under usual farm conditions. As different varieties of apples mature at different times it will easily be seen that the mellow condition is hard to keep track of. The only way of harvesting was to begin to pick the apples on a certain date and then take all as they came, the long keepers and the short keepers, the mature apples and the immature apples.

The mature apple is a thing we have to get acquainted with if we are to know when it is mature. If it is a Ben Davis, it is mature very late, so late indeed that in the vicinity of Wisconsin it generally has to be picked before it is mature. This is the reason the Ben Davis has lost its reputation with many people. Having been picked before it was mature it could not follow on the usual process of ripening, and was always a hard poor flavored apple. In regions where it has had time to mature before being picked it develops into a fruit of good flavor and texture, ripening naturally.

It takes a study of fruits to know when each one matures, and this is a subject that has up to the present time received little attention. Men have grown apples of certain varieties for a long time and have never given a question any consideration. The maturity of the apple is at last coming in for its share of discussion, and the light is beginning to shine in a dark place.

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WILL PRESERVE FOOD LONG.
 New Method That Promises to Give the Best Results.

An ingenious method of preserving food has recently been devised which is based on the fact that powdered gelatin, in thin sheets of the same material, not only do not spoil, but are capable of protecting incorporated substances from bacteria, moisture, and other agencies which bring about decomposition. Thus to make a concentrated leaf extract, tea or coffee, extract, soup, etc., the liquid is mixed with 1 per cent of primary gelatin, which differs from the commercial article in not having the gummy taste of the latter.

After cooling a jelly is formed, and this is cut into thin films and dried by a current of cold air until it becomes brittle. When this condition is reached the sheets are then reduced to a fine powder, which will keep indefinitely. While it will absorb moisture, it does not do so to a degree to occasion decomposition, and the moisture is subsequently given off in dry air. The result is a powder which forms a brittle case, not interfering with its use, while it is too hard for bacteria. When placed in warm water it dissolves immediately, and is then ready for use. If heated above the temperature of boiling water before packing all disease or other germs will be killed, and to secure the best results the powder should be packed airtight. Such a concentrated food possesses many advantages, and is susceptible of wide application, as upon explorations—Harpers Weekly.

BRINGING UP A PRESIDENT.

Pointer for Ambitious Mothers of the Coming Generation.
 It is a fortunate thing to be tall and straight and of a Viking's shoulders where one strives for political popularity, since the hopeless per cent of people come by their opinions through the eye. It is what they see rather than what they hear that turns to be impressive.

Washington was equal to a running broad jump of 22 feet. Jefferson Hise 1900 pounds with his bare hands, and was known as the Strong Man of America.

The world has had its Casars and Napoleons, but it adopted these little people slowly and after trial.
 The first thing to remember in bringing up a president is to have his stomach should be thought of as often as his head. A dyspeptic would find the road to the white house full of deep difficulties, but he would make a dangerous president—may, he might even invite impeachment.

A good stomach and a good brain to put in raw material in the construction of a best man. They are the head-plates for that engine called the mind.—Alfred Henry Lewis in Good House-keeping.

Fads of Wealthy Women.
 Some of the smart New York women have a "cool" in their heads, and their favorite recipes. Mrs. Peter Martin, formerly Miss Lillian Ostrich, is a devotee of the chafin dish, and invites her friends to the luncheon where she presides over the chafin dish with great skill. She has a recipe for cooking roed birds and potato balls that cannot be excelled. Mrs. John Jacob Astor loves salads and desserts and has discovered many new combinations, the secrets of which she will not disclose. Her pride is macaroni basket, for that the ingredients are prunes, macarons, whipped cream and sherry. Mrs. Payne Whitney, formerly Miss Helen Hay, adds to her literary ability a fruit salad that is pronounced delicious. This she makes of Malaga grapes, banana orange juice and shredded endive and serves it in banana skins, with a mixture of French dressing and mayonnaise. Mrs. George B. De Forest loves baked things, vegetables or fruits. One of her luncheon dishes is original and delicious. This is nothing more than less than large Bartlett pear stuffed and baked until brown.

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Church Notes.

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL—Rev. Mr. Watson, Rector. Sunday services at 10:30 a. m. All are cordially invited.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL—Rev. Mr. Barratt, Pastor. Sabbath services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Prayer meeting on Thursday evening at 7:30 p. m. All are cordially invited.

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN—Mr. Maxwell, Pastor. Sabbath school at 9 p. m. Public worship and sermon at 10:30 a. m. Sabbath services at 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Prayer meeting on Thursday evening at 7:30 p. m. All are cordially invited.

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