EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CULTURE OF SMALL FRUITS.

BY A. M. PURDY, SOUTH BEND, IND.

To those who have enjoyed the luxury of "small fruits," for even a single season, it seems unaccountably strange that more do not plant of these delicious and healthy fruits. First in the season, and long before any other fruits come in, we have the luscious and melting strawberry, either fresh from the vines or "smothered" in sugar and cream. Next, follows the sprightly raspberry, with its many beautiful colors and flavors; after which, come the magnificent and glossy blackberries, hanging like so many sparkling jets on the overloaded bushes; also the grapes, rich in their many favorite localities. These with the currant and gooseberry mixed in at their proper season, make a paradise of one's home, and add to it an interest which attract the love and attachment of the children, who may be growing up around the dear old hearth-stone, with an ardor too strong to be broken.

* * * I find, in my observations, the almost universal objection to growing these luxuries is, that "it is too much labor; too much attention is required," &c. Such complaints are generally raised by those who have never had success in growing them; and the reason is that they were neglected from the hour they were set out. If a small share of the useless avocations are devoted to giving the proper and ample care required to grow these luxuries, a bountiful harvest would repay them for it and they would not fail ever afterwards to keep them in good order; thereby insuring a certain crop every season.

Again, many are deterred from setting them out after reading a long and elaborate work, from some theorizing author, giving directions that would puzzle any common brain, and deter most people from setting such fruit. For instance, one writer will take strong ground, that a certain amount of a certain kind of fertilizers must be put on the ground at a certain season; and it must be "trenched" in to a certain depth. A certain variety must be planted, and must be set in "hills," and not a runner allowed to grow. They must be mulched just so, in the fall, and with just such kind of litter. In fact, if the directions of some of these writers on grape culture and other
fruits were fully carried out by the new beginners, they would not only become discouraged themselves, but would naturally discourage others from going into it.

After over fifteen years' experience in growing fruits, I can say to all persons, that it is no more trouble to grow grapes, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, &c., than Indian corn and cabbage. For most of fruits, there is more danger of high manuring than too little. This is especially the case with grapes. An amateur neighbor of mine, who has as fine an assortment of grapes as any need desire, has been in the habit of high manuring and has never succeeded in getting as fine crops of fruit, as since his change to high manuring; and what is more noticeable, since his change in this respect he has no mildew on his fruit. I have observed that grapes grown on ordinary soil, are less liable to rot and mildew, than those which are forced into an unnatural growth, by high stimulating fertilizers. The best flavored Concord or Isabellas I ever saw, and which were free from mildew or rot, were grown on an inferior, light, sandy soil. My advice is, to get the ground in about the condition required to grow good crops of corn, and my word for it no disappointment will follow.

In setting strawberries for garden culture, set the plants one foot apart; keep clean and as they commence to throw out runners, train them along the rows. By fall they will form thick matted rows, about one foot in width. Mulch these lightly with any barnyard litter, or saw dust or tan bark. The next spring, work among them with a fork-hoe, and prick out all weeds. Immediately after they are through fruiting, spade the ground between the rows, spading under all the vines except a strip three or four inches wide. Scatter among these a liberal supply of rotted manure after making the ground loose among them with the fork-hoe and picking out all weeds. Keep clean and take the same care as during the previous year. Many growers recommend the "hill" system. My objections to it, are that they are apt to be killed out by "cut worms," and in many cases, with our most popular sort, (the Wilson's Albany,) the vines so exhaust themselves in bearing, that they are apt to be thrown out, or "heave" through the winter, on account of not forming new roots enough to sustain them, and when a plant is thus destroyed a vacancy is left; while, if they were allowed to form thick matted rows, they would be better protected from being thrown out, and if a few were destroyed it does not leave an entire vacancy in the row; while at the same time new plants fill up the rows every year, and these from such strong fibrous roots, that they are sure proof against our changeable winters, and certain to bear, as the new roots give more nourishment than an old exhausted plant. Some growers allow the vines to cover the ground. My objection to this method is, that they cannot be properly cultivated and consequently suffer from the least drought. I have found after practical experience that when vines are thoroughly cultivated in the spring and well worked with the fork-hoe, they do not suffer in comparison from the drought, with those which are not so cultivated, while those which were allowed to
run broadcast over the ground, and consequently could not be worked among, proved almost an entire failure. Another great objection to allowing them to grow in this way, is, that it is impossible to go among them to pick the crops, without destroying a large share of the vines and fruit. To grow them for market, we set the plants, one foot apart in the row, and rows four feet apart; keep clean with the cultivator and fork-hoe; train the runners along as before described; mulch in the fall with plenty of rotted manure or straw and work among them thoroughly in the spring. After they are through fruiting, plow the ground deep between the rows, plowing the rows down to a narrow strip from four to six inches in width, manuring them well and train the runners and take the same care as the year previous.

Set blackberries and raspberries from two to three feet apart in the row, and rows of raspberries six feet, and blackberries eight feet apart; keep clean, and in August and September cut back the top and long side branches, so that blackberries shall stand about five feet high; and raspberries four feet, mulch heavily in the fall with tan bark, saw dust, old straw, manure, or chip dirt. This not only acts as a mulch, causing the crop to be double, but keeps the weeds down, thereby saving a great amount of labor.

As to grapes there are numerous ways and instructions for the setting. My advice is to set them in a warm sunny place, where the ground is naturally warm and dry. Cut back two or three eyes, the first year, allowing two or three branches to grow. In the fall, cut those back about four feet in length, and lay them down, covering them slightly with dirt or litter of any kind. By the way, there is a great amount of discussion as to which is the most hardy and will stand the most severe winters. I believe there is no good variety in cultivation that will pass through our severe and changeable winters unprotected without being injured somewhat; and so long as it is so little trouble to lay them down and take them up in the spring, I think it useless discussion. A man that is too lazy to spare the little time and labor required to do this is unworthy to have this luxury. Each year I should cut out the wood, and have two or three branches of the new growth. Cut those back to six or eight feet; cutting off all side branches to within two or three eyes of the main branch. Set the roots eight feet apart in the row and rows twelve to sixteen feet. Use either trellis or stakes to train the vines on.

By observing these simple instructions these luxuries may be enjoyed the year round. * * * *

I think most of our societies are apt to spend too much of their discussions on some new varieties, and leave in the back ground the old, well proved successful sorts. It should be remembered that the great mass of people have not the means to spare for these high priced sorts; while older varieties will give better satisfaction, and prove more successful in the end. My advice to the common people is, to wait until your wealthy neighbor has tried these new mushroom roots, and if they prove a success try accordingly. I would not have it understood that I discountenance or discourage the
FRUITS, &c., IN TREMPEALEAU CO.

FRUITS, &c., IN TREMPEALEAU COUNTY.

BY E. WILCOX, TREMPEALEAU, WIS.

* * * This county extends from township 18 to 24 north, and a few miles back from the Mississippi river. The south part of the county is thought to be well adapted to many kinds of fruit. Here the wild plum, crab apple, grapes, raspberries, &c., grow. The people, not satisfied with these, have, with commendable zeal undertaken to raise nearly all kinds of cultivated fruits, thought to be adapted to this latitude. Here can be found fruited the apple, plum, cherry, pear, grape and small fruits. The soil varies near the village. To the north is a sand prairie, while east and back from the river a mile or more, on the second table, is a strip from one-half to a mile in width of good soil, with a subsoil of gravel. This is thought to be one of the best fruit localities in our county or in the northwest part of our state. Here the grape, the pear, the plum, the apple, &c., are being cultivated to some extent, and with good prospects of success. The grapes were mostly killed to the ground last winter; this was thought to be occasioned rather by a hard frost in the fall on the immature vines than by the cold of winter, extreme as it was. The most careful cultivators mulch their trees, and throw earth about them in the fall, and cultivate the land in some hoed crop. It is difficult to report the kinds of apples and other fruits which promise best as the names are lost, and until they are in bearing it is not known what we have got. * * * Back of the before mentioned section, much of the country is rough and broken, with rich and fertile valleys. At Galesville, the county seat, and eight miles from the river, the soil is good. Here also much is being done in fruit growing, and the trees in the gardens look very promising.

Whortleberries.—A few miles north of this place, you come to the "huckleberry" region. And right here let me say that some who are not posted may be disposed to doubt what I may say; nevertheless, I will try to keep in the bounds of truth. In the northern part of this county, Jackson, &c.
hundreds of bushels are, and thousands may be, gathered annually. The crop too is a sure one, as they grow mostly on the ridges, they are not subject to frosts, which in the valleys would be destructive to them as well as the fruits. Here is a useful lesson from nature. Here it is, that from the tenth of July until the last of August, the settler's family large and small may be found on the ridges, with baskets, pails, tubs, &c.; and when the male members, who accompanied them in the morning on their way to some adjacent slough to cut hay, return with the team, the women and children, baskets, pails, &c., filled with bushels of berries are taken home. After two or three days of such work the man starts with perhaps ten, fifteen or twenty bushels of his own and enough for some neighbors to make perhaps thirty bushels, for some market, perhaps fifty or sixty miles off, where they are sold for from $1.25 to $1.50 per bushel. When he gets back some other one in the neighborhood takes his team with a load. In the mean time the picking at home goes on, and hundreds of bushels are dried for family use, and for sale.

I tell you this "huckleberry" business, is a great thing. They are good in milk, in sugar and cream—good for pies, short cakes, pudding. Well, here is a reason why small fruits are not much sought after in this section. Every family can, or do have plenty of this kind of fruit the year round. It takes but very little sugar, in fact, will do very well without any.

January 12, 1865.

FRUITS IN RICHLAND COUNTY.

BY ALBERT S. NEFF, OF WOODSTOCK.

** I will try to give you what information I can in regard to the fruits of Richland county and our experience.

First. It is unfavorable so far as I can ascertain. There is scarcely anything in the shape of cultivated fruit grown in this county. I know of but little and what is growing is close to the Wisconsin river. Back from the river the trees seem to live for a year or two, and then commence to die. The tops commence first, and about the next year after they are dead. I know of some orchards that have been set out four or five years. They were set out say seventy-five trees in the first place, and now there is not one single healthy looking tree in the orchard; but there are some trees that do live.

Second. The orchards are all differently located. On a soil of clay and loam, timber lands, they are productive, and make a heavy growth of wood each year. I put out an orchard two years ago last spring, nearly all lived until this present year, and seemed to be living thriftily this spring; but I washed them rather early with too strong ley, and it hurt a good many of them; but
the largest of them lived and are doing well yet. Those trees were from
the Janesville nursery. The varieties are not known.

Third. The leaves commence to curl and twist during the hot weather,
and have lots of large and small ants on them during the summer months.

Fourth. The trees turn black, with white spots on the bodies, and finally
die.

But this county is very productive of the best of wild fruit; the woods are
full of wild plums, grapes, cherries and crab apples, all the finest of the kind
I ever saw; and it seems strange that tame fruits do no better than they do.
Thousands of dollars have been paid out to get fruits into this county, mostly
to nurseries out of this state. Apple tree pedlers have canvassed every part
of the county, and trees have been set out and died.

FRUITS IN PIERCE COUNTY.

BY M. D. PROCTOR, FALL RIVER.

* * * Agreeably to request, I give a statement of my experiment
in fruit raising. In the spring of 1863, I bought of O. Salisbury fifty stand-
ard apple trees, three years old, set them the first of May in a wheat field,
twenty-five feet apart; the soil, a sandy loam, rolling enough to carry off
the surface water. I dug the holes about three feet square and one and a
half deep, and set them as near as they stood in the nursery as I could. I
then mulched them with straw and corn-fodder from the barnyard, and kept
the weeds and wheat hoed up for three feet around them. Although the
season was very dry they all lived with one exception, and made a fair
growth, and were not watered at all. I set fifty more last may, which are
doing well; and now have twenty-seven varieties.

The location is midway between the valley and hill top, with a northern
and western exposure, where the north-west and south winds had a fair
swEEP on the east there; was a mound that broke the force of the east wind
somewhat, but no timber. The land was prairie, broken in 1857, and had
been cropped with oats, corn and wheat, and bore good crops.

I set the following varieties: Perry Russet, Winter Wine Sap, Jefferson
County, Sweet June, Bailey's Sweet, Astrachan, Washington, Duchess of Ol-
denburg, Seek-no-further, Snow, Yellow Bellefleur, Rawle's Janett, St. Law-
rence, Sweet Pear, and Tallman's Sweeeting. They had no protection in the
winter, except the mulch that was applied at planting, and came out all
right, with the exception of the Washington, Bellefleur and St. Lawrence.
They were injured in the limbs some, but have made a fair growth. The rest
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came through, to all appearance as well as my crabs, by their side, and have done well through the summer. I cannot see but what the bark looks as bright as it does on the crabs. This year I plowed as near as I could, then forked around the trees and mulched again with old straw from the barnyard, and planted the ground to potatoes. I have given them no protection this winter. Our climate here is different from what it is farther east. The winters are cold and dry with but little snow or rain. The summers are very warm. The thermometer ranges from 40 ° below to 100 ° above, with a very dry atmosphere.

There are no apples raised here of any consequence. The most of the trees set in this vicinity came from New York, and have died out, until people have despaired, and given up in disgust; still, when they see trees bidding fair, they take courage, but they take hold carefully. Crab apples do finely, so do small fruits; and wild plums are in abundance.

SEPTEMBER 7, 1863.

FRUITS IN WAUSHARA COUNTY.

BY HENRY FLOYD.

* * * I came to my farm on the north bank of the Fox River, in the south-east corner of this county, fifteen years ago. I have on forty acres, eight or ten different kinds of soil, varying from a very light sand, with a clay subsoil, five feet below the surface, to stiff clay at the surface. I have a sandy loam, with clay subsoil from six to eighteen inches below the surface; also a rich marni quite sticky, with a subsoil of the same, from one to three feet deep, except being filled with gravel stones, this resting on a bed of pure gravel, and being the highest ground I have. The aspect is south-east and south-west. I have fruit trees on all the above varieties of soil, and find the English Golden Russett better adapted to light sandy soil than any other variety tried. I have but few varieties hardy enough to stand our coldest or harshest winters, without injury.

The following lists are hardy enough to live, and have proved profitable with me. I name them in the order of their hardiness—all root grafted: Duchess of Oldenburg, Perry Russet, Red Astrachan, Snow, Talman’s Sweet, Pomme Gris, Fall Orange, Lowell, St. Lawrence, Autumn Strawberry and Sops of Wine. The following are worked on the tops of hardy stocks: Westfield Seek-no-further, Yellow Bellflower, Calville Russet, Vandevere Pippin, Keswick Codling, Red Astrachan, Golden Sweet, Peck’s Pleasant, Summer Queen, Colvert, Mother, Ramsdell’s Sweet, Dominie, Primate, White Winter Pearman, Canada, Beauty of Kent and Baldwin.
My time of planting is the early spring. I set two rods each way and a tree in the centre of each square thus formed; keep the land in hoed crops from five to seven years, then cultivate with a large cultivator, keeping the ground clean in the fore part of the season, and letting the weeds grow in the latter part; for winter protection I have also found it a good plan to mulch late in the fall and early winter with coarse manure, remembering always to keep plenty of hungry cats—a perfect and practical remedy for the mice.

A thorough application of kerosene oil is a sure remedy for the bark louse, and can be easily and rapidly applied to trees from three to seven years old, with a paint brush. The oil will clean the tree of lice, dead bark, moss, &c., without injury to the tree. I have known trees crusted with the bark lice and stunted and dwarfed by them, cleared of their monster scabs and make a fine growth the first year after the application of this oil.

On the high land, and red marl soil, previously spoken of, I have planted the Flemish Beauty and other pears. With my limited experience with that fruit, the Flemish Beauty is almost the only variety worthy of cultivation in this latitude. Last winter, 1864, injured this variety, as will all very hard winters, depending on the ripeness of the growth. [Mr. F. here enumerates 12 other varieties, with which he has experimented, and lost them both as standards and dwarfs, and proceeds.] I think my experience in pear culture appears rather mournful, but, I assure you it is no less so, than my neighbors, I have not a doubt, but that some of them, have bought, set and lost the Vicar of Wakefield, Swan's Orange and Louis Bonne de Jersey, from three to five times, in the last ten years. The people rely upon the recommendations of tree pedlers, and give their orders for what they recommend; while he recommends all he has to sell, which is a general stock. I should like to know how many hundred thousand dollars have been paid to eastern nursery-men for tender pears and apples, or even the famous King of Tompkins County. I think all that have tried the dwarf pear culture, in this section of country, will agree with me in calling it a perfect failure.

Plums are grown to some extent in this locality. Duane's Purple is much the best variety for this latitude; it is not only the most hardy, but most productive. The Imperial Gage stands next in popularity. All should be grown on the wild plum stock. *

I am growing some grapes, have the Delaware, Concord, Diana and Isabella. The last is too late for this latitude, except in favorable seasons. I cover all vines in winter.

February 4, 1865.
FRUITS IN SHEBOYGAN COUNTY.

BY J. B. RICHARDSON, SHEBOYGAN FALLS.

* * * I have been engaged in the nursery business in this county since the year 1853. In the spring of 1855, I planted a stock of some seven acres, mostly eastern varieties, brought here from eastern New York. You undoubtedly know the result. I have found that eastern nurserymen’s experience is of but little value here, except the system of propagation. We now have an entire new list of varieties, with a few exceptions. The eastern tree trade is about played out in this locality. The agents they send here have very poor instructions, in regard to varieties, and we have been imposed upon in that particular. Not that alone, but they deliver their trees too late in autumn, and too late in spring. Another of their impositions has been in sending such varieties as are not adapted to this soil and climate; and many of them worthless. They generally send us their surplus kinds, such as do not sell readily in the eastern market.

In every orchard that I have visited, this and other seasons, I find some few varieties of the eastern trees, that are doing well, that is they look healthy, but do not fruit early. I find the Golden Russet, Northern Spy, Tallman’s Sweet, Rawles’ Janet and Red Astrachan. These varieties are landmarks in most of the faded out orchards, whether cultivated or not. They stand, saying to their owner, “if you will use us well, we will produce fruit.” But the worst feature is, the farmer does not know what they are. Not one in fifty has a record of his planting, so he cannot profit by his experience. They seem to think, or do not know but that all varieties are equally good, if they are procured and planted in good order. Most of the farmers when they come to us for trees, will say, “we want good sized healthy trees;” but do not mention a word as to what varieties they want; hence the failure in a great degree has been through the agents selling them the kinds that they most wished to get rid of, and paying no regard to varieties suited to this country. They are both to blame, for not knowing or doing better. Still these same farmers, who have been duped for the eleventh time, say “we are to spend our days in Wisconsin, and we must raise fruit, and think we can, if we get it right; and we are willing to try again, if you will furnish us good trees raised at home, but will not spend another dollar for that eastern trash.” Then he will say, “I have paid out $70 or $100 for them, and now see what I have left. There are only three or four trees.”

If one should go to these men and ascertain the names of the kinds that
FRUITS IN MINNESOTA.

have withstood this fiery trial, behold there is a Russet, there a Spy and there a Tallman Sweet. If you go into the garden, you will find a strong cherry, perhaps, if he has planted a dozen kinds; but the only variety that has any promise is the Kentish, or some other of the Morello class. All others have failed because they are out of their latitude.

Plums—we have very little trouble with, when grafted on the wild stock. The Lombard and Yellow Egg seem to stand the best, but the Imperial and Bleeker's gapes and the Orange do well. Pears seem very fickle. *

I find a great error exists in choosing proper sites for orchards. Most of our German people plant on too low and wet land, at the foot of a hill or rise of land. They do so because they did so in Germany, and have not learned as yet the differences in climate. They say the hill is too poor, consequently their trees freeze out. Our Yankees take the other extreme, being quicker to learn the causes of trees failing on low land, but do not as yet learn that our hills are too bleak, without some protection. And just how much protection is needed is hard to determine. I find, too, by close observations of our native trees, that the hardy varieties of grafts, are much harder than seedlings growing in the same grounds, as a general rule. I also find by months' travel and daily observation of trees, that those with very short stems, and low spreading tops are much the healthiest and bearing the most fruit. This shows that if we want to assist nature we must not clip her wings. Never trim up Rather trim down. We find that with draining or subsolling our clay lands, and with good culture, together with home raised trees no difficulty exists in raising a good orchard.

FRUITS IN MINNESOTA.

BY A. S. STEWART, LA SŒUR.

* * * I have made the raising of fruit and fruit trees, my business in Minnesota for the last nine years. I find the small fruits, such as currants, gooseberries and strawberries, do well on almost all kinds of good soil. The early varieties of the grapes do well here if planted on good soil, where it is free from early and late frosts. Among the best are the Delaware and Clinton. The hardy varieties of the apple have done well on the right soil and situation. Among the best are the Red Astrachan and Tallman's sweet. There are several other very choice varieties in bearing, but I have not been able to learn their names. I have several varieties from seeds that promise well. The orchards that are doing the best stand on soil composed of a good share of clay, and where they are not exposed to late and early frosts.
STATE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

We want more light on the subject of fruit growing in the north-west; and I am pleased to learn that Wisconsin has started the wheel in the right direction to gather information. Let us have the experience of every fruit grower in the North-west, and it will be the means of saving thousands of dollars by enabling us to purchase trees of the right kind, so that we will be able to enjoy the luxury of fruit of our own growing.

September 11, 1865.

FRUITS IN NORTHERN IOWA.

BY E. R. HEISS, ROCK GROVE, FLOYD COUNTY.

* * * I would say that the soil of our orchard is a sandy loam, but not very sandy; subsoil is clay. The face gradually slopes to the south, the south end being almost level. I would prefer a northern or western slope. It is partially sheltered on the west by a grove. Our trees are generally root grafted (I prefer that mode to any other, where the variety is known to be hardy) and were planted eleven years ago. The general causes of failure here have been in planting tender varieties; in planting on low wet soil; in using stimulating manures before the trees have borne three or four crops; in heavy pruning in the spring, when the sap is in full flow, also in severe pruning after the beginning of the second growth, which gives the tree a check in growth, followed by an over vigorous and late growth, and unfit it to stand our hard winters. As I have said trees are sometimes killed by pruning, so they sometimes perish for want of pruning. During the growing season our prevailing winds are from the south-west. This causes the tree to grow to the north-east, and the north-east branches take the lead, and rob the south-west ones of their due proportion of sap: This not only enfeebles the branches, but the trunk on the south-west side of the tree. Then it does not take much sun or freezing to kill the side of a tree which is about dead with starvation. The remedy is to cut back the north-east side branches to an inside bud, until a proper vigor and growth is forced on the other side. Something can be done in setting the tree, by setting so that it shall lean to the south-west, or toward the sun at one o'clock p. m.

September 7, 1865.

[Mr. F. gives a list of fruits as hardy, about the same as the Society have recommended.]
* * *

I send some items of my experience in fruit growing in this northeastern county of Iowa. My grounds are dry rolling prairie, fully exposed to all winds and situated eighteen miles from and 650 feet above the Mississippi river, in latitude 43° 20'. The soil is a friable black loam, about twenty inches deep, resting on a well drained yellow, sandy, dry subsoil, underlaid with limestone. I have had most experience with apples, and my collection embraces one hundred varieties. (Here Mr. Adams gives his list, divided into five classes, among his list of hardy are those of this Society.)

My plan of setting is on top of the ground, twenty-two feet apart, and ridge the land until the roots are covered four inches deeper than in the nursery, then cultivate with corn. I have 1400 trees growing under this treatment and they leave me nothing more to ask in the way of health, beauty and vigor. All are branched about twelve or sixteen inches high, and have been planted five years. They commenced bearing last year. With pears, my experience has been disastrous. Forty varieties have had their day on my premises. A few arrived at bearing size, and gave some fruit, and then they succumbed to the rigors of our winters. I have not now a single healthy pear tree. I have never been troubled with blight. The Great Dispenser of events did not find it necessary to add that to winter desolations in order to thoroughly accomplish the destruction of my pear trees.

With grapes my success is all that I can ask. I have the following varieties, and esteem them in the following order: Delaware, Concord, Diana, Rogers No. 3, Creveling, Hartford, Clinton, Catawba, Rogers No. 19, Connecticut, Tokalon, Northern Museadine, Union Village, Rebecca and Isabella. Small fruits succeed well. Of strawberries, Wilson's I rely on for a main crop, though I cultivate others. Houghton is the only sure gooseberry. The Cherry, Victoria, and White Grape are by far the best three currants, being thrifty, productive and large.

January 15, 1866.