

erections, especially considering there was no pretence to the "penny wise" about them.

Where walls are already built of course hot-houses may be built against them, but if a complete and separate erection has to be put up, then dispense with bricks except for the foundations. In forming a new garden, my idea of a glazed promenade might be carried into execution; indeed, were I charged to form a new kitchen garden I should not hesitate for a moment. I should, however, form it much smaller than is generally considered necessary; I would, indeed, make only a receptacle for the finer kinds of fruit and vegetables, and would leave the coarser things to be grown, as they always can be best, in the open field. If we need any testimony of this, we need only look to our market gardens, and we all know how superior both in quality and quantity root crops are grown in the open field to those grown in a highly enriched kitchen garden. Thus arranged, from 1 to 3 or 4 acres would be sufficient space to enclose for the largest establishment, and the expense would not be more than what is frequently expended on garden walls. A promenade could be divided into as many separate houses as might be thought proper; some could be occupied with fruit, others with flowers; some might be heated for tropical plants, others kept cool for common fruits; in fact, all classes of vegetation could be represented and be properly cultivated. Such a garden as this might be properly considered a part of the dressed ground; indeed, it might occupy a prominent position in the pleasure-ground, and by judicious planting around the promenade it could be appropriately blended with the surrounding scenery. Of course the design of such a promenade might be much varied; it might be a plain span-roof, tarred over like Mr. Warner's, or it might call into requisition the skill of a first-rate designer to render it externally attractive; but be that as it may, there can be no question but that a house or series of houses thus arranged would be exceedingly attractive and interesting, and, as I have said before, superior to any possible adaptation of brick walls. *A. P. W., Orchardleigh Park, Frome.*

ON THE STRAWBERRY.

AMONGST the authors who towards the middle of the last century wrote upon the Strawberry, its species and their culture, the instructions of Philip Miller in his Dictionary of Gardening are the most perfect. At that period there were in cultivation several varieties obtained from seed of the species which were considered as original types. In Lindley's Guide to the Orchard and Kitchen Garden, translated in 1837 by A. Poiteau, of Paris, there is a complete recapitulation of the progress made up to that time. In that work Strawberries are divided into seven classes, according to the habits of the plants and the fruit.

During the 20 years which have elapsed since the publication of the above work, seed has continued to be sown and varieties, more or less improved, of the different types and their variations have been obtained. Whether these types are indigenous to the localities assigned to them, which is doubtful, or that they are the product of a single type, the Alpine or Wood Strawberry, which is most probable, it is nevertheless true that the essential botanical characters are applicable to all the species. Whatever may be the character of the fruit, that of the seed, placed in cavities more or less deep, when observed through the microscope is absolutely the same; it pushes and grows in the same manner. Whether the leaf-stalk has its hairs horizontal or ascending, whether it be nearly naked, long or short; whether the leaves are glabrous or not, of a darker or lighter green, round or oval, toothed or serrated—what is it that is required at the present day of the Strawberry, no matter to what type it may belong by its external character, to render it worthy of cultivation? This is the practical question which occupies our attention, putting aside all other considerations except that of the amateur's Strawberry in the open ground. Having cultivated the principal varieties for upwards of 20 years in different soils and situations, we have studied them under these different conditions. Here the success was satisfactory, there something was desirable, elsewhere certain varieties proved of indifferent quality, unproductive or bad. It requires several years before definite conclusions can be arrived at as regards the real merit of a variety.

From our experience we have come to the conviction that the first requisite in a new variety is undoubted hardiness, and without being particular as to soil. Next, a fine habit of growth in the leaf stalks, and, above all, excellence of flavour. Each of these conditions comprises several other shades of difference, but they include all. Nevertheless, these conditions ought to be imperatively demanded of a variety, when, in situation of soil and aspect suitable to its nature. The plants must have been made on good principles, and must be two years old, and to have received the necessary culture. It must be understood that the application of principles may be modified according to the skill of the cultivator.

Of all existing varieties, what Strawberry unites every desirable point of excellence? Who can name it with certainty? for attempting to do so it would be necessary to hear its character from many witnesses.

When a new variety is sent out, from the advertise-

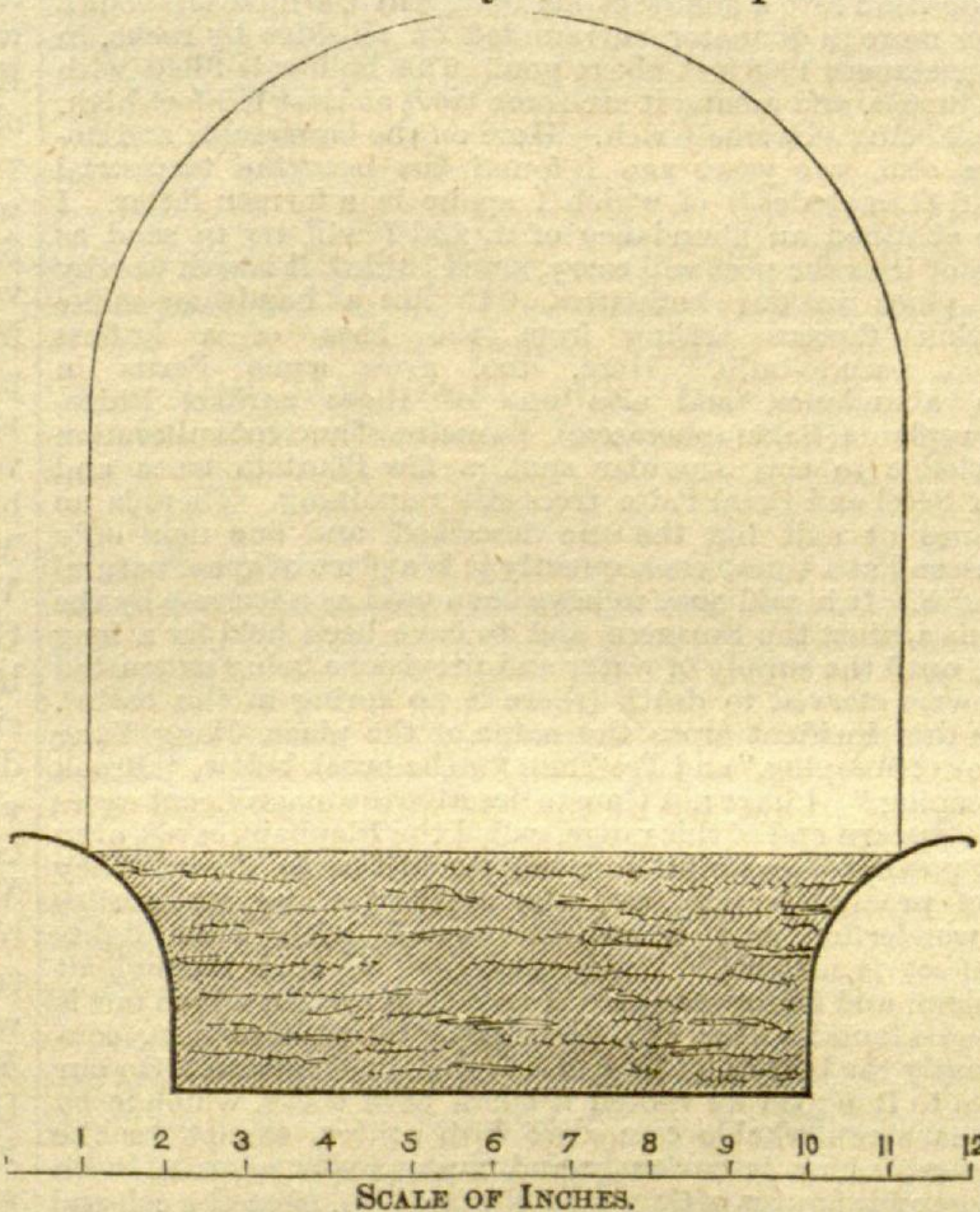
ments one would be led to believe that the philosopher's stone had been found! Under cultivation these varieties occasionally present some points of improvement when compared with well cultivated plants in bearing. Nevertheless we have seen none up to the present day, which in strict justice can be said to combine every point of excellence. I believe that I may be permitted to use this decisive language, because for 20 years I have successively tried in my grounds all the best varieties, and out of 100 of these not more than a score remain that can be considered as meritorious in certain respects. On commencing to raise seedling Strawberries we know the principles admitted in pomology for the choice of seeds. According to these principles we take our seeds from the more improved varieties, or those obtained in other latitudes. It was the varieties raised by Hooper and Hovey that gave us a first result. The second was afforded by seedlings from the varieties raised by Pelvilain, Wilmot, and Keens. Then we had recourse to the Bicton White and Prince Arthur, the former differing most from its original type; the latter presenting in its habit of growth, the beauty and the flavour of its fruit the most marked characters, and in our opinion, I may say the most improved. On this point I appeal to the testimony of experienced amateurs, capable of judging on the subject. By isolating the seed-bearing plants we believe that we have obtained from these varieties a number of good ones; and one more especially so, to which we have given the name of *La Constante*, will long remain in collections. The plant is hardier than its parent and less particular as to the kind of soil where it succeeds. It is from this peculiarity that it derives its name. It is of a stocky growth; the peduncles are very strong; its productiveness is great; and its fruit is of a handsome conical form, of a rich delicious flavour, surpassing that of its parent. Have we, then, found the philosopher's stone? We do not think so.

In fact, *La Constante* has produced seedlings presenting other characters, and among these seedlings we have remarked two varieties of which the sepals (divisions of the calyx) are reflexed, that is to say, having the base of the fruit wholly uncovered. I doubt whether this peculiarity has been remarked up to the present time; at least we have not seen it. Is this a step in advance, a new condition of excellence?

In every branch of horticulture the progress made in our time is incessant; this is undeniable; but at the same time, it must not be concealed, we are far from the extreme limits at which we may arrive. This work requires time, space, and a perseverance, which leaves nothing to chance. It is not impossible that at last may be obtained a handsome and good Strawberry which is freely double-bearing. There are certain principles which must be known and acted upon with discretion, and upon which all success depends. As regards the raising of Strawberries from seed they constitute a whole theory. *J. De Jonghe, Brussels, February 1858.*

Home Correspondence.

Wardian Cases.—The ugliness of the accompaniments of horticulture deter many from the enjoyment of it, and in no case is this more strikingly exemplified than in the various glass structures erected for the culture of exotics, from the clumsy Melon frame mounted on a heap of manure to the Wardian case for Ferns, &c. Large sums of money are laid out, and wooden boxes more or less glazed, with sloping roofs like miniature hothouses are erected, and seem quite out of all keeping with everything around them, so that however beautiful the Ferns or other inmates may be the accompaniments are



not to be borne with, and thus the whole affair gets into disrepute merely because we seem riveted to the same idea for our in-doors gardening that we practise outside. Double windows with Ferns between have been tried, and are really beautiful, but who would face an angry landlord with such a state of damp between his windows? and how would air and ventilation be admitted? Glass milk pans have been filled with soil and a glass

shade put over them, and Ferns, &c., grown very nicely in them, but this seems to be jumping from one extreme to the other, for the earth seen through the milk pan is so thoroughly ridiculous that it looks as if we had made a window in the earth, and the soil seems quite ashamed of itself. Some time ago I had rustic tubs made for glass shades, and lined the tubs with sheet lead to prevent the water from getting to the tables on which these flower shades were placed, but I found that the plumber's bill was quite a barrier from going any further in that direction. I have now succeeded in getting over that difficulty by using another metal made of an elegant shape for the earth and requiring no paint or other ornamentation, thereby diminishing the cost to the actual necessities. I found that a round zinc plate, when properly heated, would press into a soup-plate shaped dish, and this without any soldering or joining, but merely by pressure, and the accompanying working drawing to a scale will enable any one to see accurately the size and shape of a perfect little greenhouse with a first-rate glass shade 10 inches in diameter and 10 inches deep, and a zinc pan 12 inches wide at top and 3 inches deep; the cost of the glass shade was 4s. 6d., and that of the zinc pan 1s. 6d. Skill to grow the Ferns, and keep them warm and shady is all that is now wanted to make many a home lively at little cost, and to let invalids enjoy in their rooms the beauties of the field and garden, for these dishes of living plants can be removed like any other set of dishes, and ought never to be encumbered with boxes or stands of any kind, save only some handsome worsted mats to prevent the zinc pan from scratching polished tables, &c. I have aimed at simplicity and cheapness, and if any one is overcharged I shall be happy to give them the address of the party who has the zinc dishes now in stock in this city; and as for the glass shades there can be no difficulty with them, as there is a regular tariff of prices for them in the trade. *Alex. Forsyth, 100, Quay Street, Manchester.*

Remedy for Insects in Herbaria.—I received some days since a letter from a friend, informing me of a very expeditious and sure mode of destroying, by wholesale, the larvæ that infest herbaria. For this he has a large wooden box capable of holding a dozen parcels of plants, as they are taken from the herbarium, leaving place for a small saucer in which is poured a little sulphuret of carbon. The box being then shut hermetically is left to itself for 24 hours, after which time the subtle vapour having penetrated to the heart of all the sheets every insect is found dead. This sulphuret of carbon has been employed, I am told, for some time by entomologists for the same purpose, but I do not know whether it has been equally so by botanists. I am aware too that it is being very successfully used by corn dealers to destroy the weevil. The effects of this poison cannot of course be expected to be so durable as those of corrosive sublimate, but if they are in reality as sure as I am led to understand they are, large herbaria, that have not been previously treated by the latter, may derive considerable advantage from the discovery (if it be one) that I allude to. *W.*

Fruit Baskets.—Surely the baskets placed in the room of the Horticultural Society are not intended for recommendation to exhibitors. We are told in the schedule that we are in future to use for fruit baskets and not dishes (a very good plan), and we are also informed that "patterns of baskets are in preparation for our guidance." I for one expected that something tasteful and novel was to come out; and when I could not hear of them at the meeting in February I was satisfied with being told that they were not ready. But the things that were shown on Tuesday were not new, nor yet of good shape. I think I could have bought better in the nearest basketmaker's shop. To be sure the secretary took no notice of them in his lecture, and therefore I hope they were not recommended by the Society. Can you tell me what is really to be used by me who am *A Fruit Exhibitor*. [We are unable to give the information. Our correspondent should apply to Mr. M'Ewen, to whom all details of the kind have been intrusted.]

Rose Stocks.—Standard Roses budded on the common Dog Rose are in many instances mismanaged by nurserymen. A writer on Standard Roses recommends that they should be budded on stems like gun barrels. I have no objection to gun barrel kind of stems for *Chénédolé*, *Blairi No. 2*, &c., but for *Prince Léon*, *General Castellane*, and all the weakly growing sorts of Hybrid Perpetuals, such stocks are ill adapted; they are unable to draw sufficient sap from such a stem. All the delicate growing varieties, as *General Castellane*, &c., should be on stocks like stout writing pencils; they would then have some chance of nourishing themselves, but with the others no coaxing with liquid or other manure will prolong their day. They may make a shoot the first year before the stock gets hardened and bark bound, but in the second or third year they cease to exist. Many hundreds of thousands of Roses are annually sent out in this way only to bloom and die; of this I have had some experience. *Paul Ricaut, Falkirk.*

Crickets.—I have unfortunately erected several ranges of Pine and Melon pits on the site where formerly stood a lot of old cottages, which were infested with crickets. After being annoyed with them for 12 months they have increased to such an extraordinary extent that I have been compelled to empty the pits and burn all the plunging materials. I should be much obliged if the experience of any of your readers could inform me of a remedy to eradicate them. *W. J. Ward,*