

NEW METHOD OF PERPETUATING THE PLUM.

BY ISAAC REAGLES.

NURSERYMEN are generally very unsuccessful in propagating the plum on an extensive scale. The great difficulty consists in the buds refusing to take, with sufficient tenacity, to become a component of the stock. Sometimes in budding plums, a portion of the wood or bark will attach itself permanently to the stock; but this portion, in most cases, is not the part which contains the bud. As the season for budding the plum tree is quite short, the only remedy remaining for stock, on which the buds have failed, is to engraft the ensuing spring; but engrafting the plum is an equally unsuccessful operation, hence the difficulty that is experienced in getting a saleable stock of plum-trees.

Having devoted special attention to raising plum-trees, for the wholesale trade, for the last ten years, it became necessary for me to devise some method that would facilitate the increase of stock. I had often observed that the buds invariably grew better on wood of the current season's formation, than that of the previous year. Taking advantage of this fact, I subsequently sought the new wood, when practicable, in which to insert the buds; the only fault with this method was, that the trees were worked so high on the body of the stock, that in the case of rapid growing kinds, the scion outgrew the bottom, thus making unsightly and rather unsaleable trees.

I have practiced a method with great success for several years, by which I secure the principle of budding in new wood, and at the same time, work the stocks within an inch of the ground.

In the first place, care must be observed to procure none but sound, fresh seed. In the month of November, the ground must be prepared for the reception of the pits. This is performed by plowing a deep trench. (The soil should be a rather stiff loam, which may be afterwards deepened to eighteen inches with a spade. This trench must be partially filled with a compost made from exciting manures, and before using should be thoroughly decayed and frequently turned over in the heap, so as to be well incorporated. On this compost an inch or two of earth may be thrown, after which scatter the seed thinly, but let it compass the entire width of the trench. On the top of the seed, I throw coarse gray sand, such as is used in making mortar. Sand remains perfectly friable,

and does not oppose the shooting stem of the young plants, when vegetation takes place in the ensuing spring, and it also prevents for a time the growth of weeds, thereby permitting the seedlings to get the start of foul stuff, which, with a little attention, they will maintain throughout the season. The object of this peculiar cultivation, is to force the seedlings into an average growth of two feet the first summer, and by the first of August, they are all in fine budding condition, still growing rapidly; the bark springs from the knife, and affords ready admission to the bud, which if carefully inserted will not lose five per cent. I have a field of plum seedlings budded the past season, which will average two and a half feet in height, and scarcely a bud exhibits symptoms of decay. The subsequent culture is exceedingly simple. The budded trees are permitted to form their first seasons growth in the seed bed. Many of them will attain the altitude of six and seven feet. They are then transplanted into the nursery rows, where they may remain one or two years; all will, by the expiration of that time, be fit for sale. If it were not for adopting this plan, my trees would cost half a dollar each, to grow for market.

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A Georgia horticulturist writes us, that he has a new seedling strawberry, which he intends sending out the ensuing season, that will create considerable sensation among the consumers of strawberries, *au lait*. He says it is a cross between Ross's Phoenix and a native of Alabama.

"This new strawberry is of the hautboy order, immensely large, flesh very firm, and of more exquisite flavor than Burr's new pine, and with my culture is a continuous bearer. I believe it the finest strawberry ever produced. * * * The plant is hermaphrodite in its character, fruit stalks very tall and erect, with fruit stems from three to five inches in length, being highly ornamental as well as delicious. As soon as the fruit ripens I will send you some, per express, and although you may not get it in its freshness, you will be enabled to judge something of its quality."

In the letter containing the extract as above, we received a blossom of the plant. Although but a skeleton of what it had been, it abundantly verified the statement of extraordinary size, being much the largest strawberry blossom we have ever seen. We intend, at an early day, to give a representation of the berry and foliage, also an accurate description of the plant. We forbear doing so until we shall have realized our correspondent's promise of specimens, when we shall take pleasure in informing our readers of every particular.