



VOL. XX. HANDBOOKS OF
PRACTICAL GARDENING

THE BOOK OF
RARER
VEGETABLES

BY

GEORGE WYTHES, V.M.H.
& HARRY ROBERTS.

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HANDBOOKS OF PRACTICAL GARDENING
EDITED BY HARRY ROBERTS

THE BOOK OF RARER VEGETABLES



CORN COBS

THE BOOK OF RARER VEGETABLES

BY

GEORGE WYTHES, V.M.H.
HEAD GARDENER TO THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND

AND

HARRY ROBERTS

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INTRODUCTORY

THE vegetables, the culture and cooking of which are discussed in this volume are not all "rare" in the collector's sense of the word. Rather are they for the most part vegetables which we in this country undervalue and under-use for the simple reason that we are ignorant of the art of raising and preparing them. A few vegetables are dealt with in this volume for no better reason than that they have not been dealt with in any other volumes of the present series of handbooks—which series, it is hoped, will, as a whole, form a fairly complete library of practical gardening. For the cultural instructions in the present volume, Mr Wythes is alone responsible.

The majority of the better known vegetables have been discussed in Mr Wythes' "Book of Vegetables," whilst Asparagus, Seakale, Salsify, Scorzonera, and Celery were treated of in our first volume.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to those very eminent seedsmen and horticulturists, Messieurs Vilmorin, Andrieux et Cie. of Paris, for the loan of numerous blocks used to illustrate this volume. I may add that if readers of this book find any difficulty in purchasing in this country the seeds of the lesser grown vegetables, Messrs Vilmorin will generally be able to solve their difficulty.

The photographs here reproduced are by Mr Charles Thonger.

HARRY ROBERTS.

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THE BOOK OF RARER VEGETABLES

THE COOKERY OF VEGETABLES

VEGETABLES, at any rate so far as private houses are concerned, are rarely cooked even tolerably in this country. Yet a very little knowledge and skill, and merely reasonable care, are all that is required in order to achieve success. The following few general instructions may be helpful to the novice. All vegetables should be carefully cleaned, though unnecessary washing should be avoided. Potatoes and earthy roots should be well scrubbed and rinsed in cold water before being peeled. All dead leaves, or discoloured parts, should be removed from vegetables before being cooked. Cabbages and other vegetables likely to contain slugs or other creatures should be soaked for some time in cold water containing a tablespoonful of vinegar to the quart. Vegetables should not be bruised or squeezed before being cooked, or their qualities will largely be lost. The sooner vegetables are cooked after being removed from the garden, the finer will be their flavour and texture. With the exception of old potatoes and dried vegetables, such as lentils, all vegetables should be placed in boiling water containing a tablespoonful of salt to the gallon. Green vegetables should be boiled in abundance of water, with the lid of the pan off, whereas roots should be boiled with the lid on. All vegetables should be drained directly they are cooked.

The recipes which follow are merely a selected few, and are in no sense meant to be complete. Those interested should consult also "The Book of Asparagus" and "The Book of Vegetables" in the present series;

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a popular vegetable, and in some parts of the country the plant winters badly. In my opinion damp is a greater evil than frost, as in the northern part of the country, on the Scottish border, we rarely lost a plant in winter, whereas here in the south plants die in a wholesale manner, new plantations being needed annually. The plant is a hardy perennial, a native of the southern parts of Europe; and there are not many varieties in this country, though in France, where this vegetable is a greater favourite, there are at least half a dozen named kinds. The large Purple and the Green are the best known, and the round-headed types are much the best, those with prickly pointed scales having less substance and being less valuable though the growths are doubtless tender. The plant is easily raised from seed; but no dependence can be placed upon plants thus raised, as though a few may by chance be good, the greater portion will be poor spiny things that have small heads with little substance. It is best therefore to rely upon the smaller growths—at the base these are produced freely—and to make a new quarter every three years. In Italy the plants are often made to produce what are termed Chards; that is, the plants are not only grown for their flower heads but the leaf or stalk is used after blanching in the same way as Cardoons. The plants are cut over early and the new leaf growths that form are tied together, blanched and used like a Cardoon. This may with advantage be followed out in this country when the plants begin to fail through age. Previous to their being destroyed, they may be made serviceable by giving a crop of chards. In Paris the large Green Artichoke is the greater favourite. This is called the de Laon, and grown beside the ordinary green type it has several points in its favour, the one most notable being its succulent scales. This variety is a great favourite in the Paris markets, and early in the season there are consider-



GLOBE ARTICHOKE

able quantities imported into this country. There is a Purple variety that does well in this country, having much the same character as the large Green and only differing in colour; and there is a smaller form that is largely grown abroad called the Perpetual, and this differs from the Globe or large round headed, the scales being more curved inwards at the tops. The plants produce freely till cut down by frost when grown in this country. In France the Perpetual is much liked when cooked before it is full grown, and in sheltered positions may be had nearly the whole year. It is of a purplish gray colour.

As regards cultural details, they may be described as simple, providing deeply dug land not too heavy is given, and well enriched with manure. The plant being a gross feeder needs ample food. An open position should be selected, and in clayey soils I have seen burnt refuse or old leaf soil used to advantage. I have previously noted that it is well to plant every three years; indeed where there is a large demand for fine heads I would prefer making a new quarter yearly, as by so doing the plants produce finer heads and continue to form them much later in the season. The plant in light or gravelly soils is soon affected by drought, and in such soils there should always be liberal top dressings in the way of mulching, the latter given just as the plants commence to form heads, and copious supplies of liquid manure will be beneficial. The plant also enjoys occasional dressing of salt, and in gardens where liquid manure is unobtainable I would advise a liberal dressing of fertiliser of a quick acting nature. Doubtless the most important point is to get a good variety and keep it by root division early in the spring, the land having been previously prepared; indeed it is well to dig and manure the land some weeks in advance of planting if the soil is not of a clayey nature, as then it is in better condition for the plant. The suckers are taken from the parent plant

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when about 8 to 10 inches long, or less would suffice, but each one should be taken with a heel; that is, a small portion of the stem of the old plant is slipped off, and often with this will be some small roots attached, the stools or old plants being carefully uncovered to get at the young sucked growth. In planting there are two ways: either in straight rows 18 inches apart, 3 feet between the rows, or three suckers in a clump 9 to 12 inches apart and 4 feet between the rows in places where plants winter well. I prefer the last named; and in other places the single plant system, as I find the plants can be more readily protected. In planting make each sucker firm and water thoroughly, and mulch over in dry seasons. In heavy land I would advise making raised mounds for each lot of plants by liberal additions to the soil of lighter materials; and by raising and using rotten manure freely, the plants do much better than on the surface if the soil is clayey or at all wet. The plants will give a few heads the first season, but later than the older ones; but they will give a much later crop, and often, say in October or early November, there will be no lack of good heads from the young plants, and these, if cut with a few inches of stalk and placed in water, may be kept for weeks in a cool root store. At the approach of frost the plants should have all the old stalks removed, the long leaf foliage also being reduced to about 18 inches, and yellow leaves entirely cut away, and a good thickness of dry bracken or litter placed over the roots, closely packing round the stems of the plants, as from this portion next season's suckers will be obtained. In gardens where these plants winter badly I have found it advantageous to lift a few young stools, and to divide and plant them in a cold frame; or they may be potted if a special variety. In March the protecting material is removed, and after a little exposure the new planting, if needed, is done, the old

plants are liberally manured, and the plants will soon begin to form heads. In some parts of the kingdom protection is not necessary; and here growth is earlier, so that the plant in open quarters may be divided earlier than April, but the growers must be governed by the locality, soil, and surroundings. If the suckers are obtained from any distance they should be packed in wet moss, and in all cases there should be ample supplies of moisture when required during the growing season. The season for gathering of the heads is important, as if too large they are dry and flavourless, and though they may be used in a small state they are lacking the flavour of a quickly grown large succulent head. The heads are best just before the centre scales begin to unfold and whilst the outer ones are quite plump and fresh. The crop early in the spring may be hastened by covering the new growths at night by mats over stakes, also by giving food in the shape of nitrates and fish manure, the latter well washed down to the roots.

TO BOIL GLOBE ARTICHOKE

Having cut off the stem level with the leaves, and having cut an inch or so from the top leaves, and removed the harder of the bottom leaves, clean and wash the Artichokes and plunge them into boiling salted water. Boil for half an hour or so, till the leaves are easily removed. Dish on a folded napkin, and serve with oil and vinegar, Sauce Hollandais, or melted butter.

A FRENCH METHOD OF COOKING ARTICHOKE

A French method of cooking Artichokes is the following, given by M. Urbain-Dubois: Trim the vegetable as before, then quarter it, scoop out the "choke" (*i.e.*, the undeveloped flower), rub the inside well with lemon juice, and three parts boil in acidulated slated water; then drain well, place in a buttered

stewpan, season with salt and white pepper, put little morsels of butter over them, and stew gently over a slow fire till cooked, when they may be served with a *maitre d'hôtel* sauce (to half a pint of rich bechamel or good brown sauce—if you wish it brown—add the strained juice of a lemon, a dust of cayenne, a teaspoonful of minced parsley, and, worked in at the last, $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces to 2 ounces of butter broken up small, working one piece well in before adding the next), or any other sauce to taste.

The two following recipes are given by Mrs de Salis in her useful little book called “Dressed Vegetables à la Mode.”

ARTICHOKE BOTTOMS A LA CARÈME

Fonds d'Artichauts à la Carème

Wash the Artichokes thoroughly. Boil them till they are nearly tender; drain them, remove the middle leaves and the Chokes, and lay in each a little of a forcemeat composed of six oysters, one sardine, two anchovies, and a few shrimps or prawns or pieces of lobster, all minced finely together, and put into a sauce made of a grated tablespoonful of horse radish, half a teaspoonful of lemon juice, a tablespoonful of vinegar, half a teaspoonful of capers, and one gill of white sauce. Let this boil up, then stir in the fish mixture, fill the Artichokes, and bake in the oven till tender and done. Scatter lobster coral on the top of each before serving, or alternately lobster coral and grated fried parsley.

ARTICHOKE BOTTOMS À LA KAISER

Fonds d'Artichauts à la Kaiser

Cook some Artichoke bottoms; season them with a little grated Parmesan cheese. Take some plain round

glossy tomatoes and place one on each Artichoke; lay some mushroom purée on the top of each, taking care to smooth it well; place each Artichoke on a fried croûton masked with the tomato purée, and put them in a deep tin dish, and bake them in the oven (which must not be a fierce one) for about ten minutes. Just before serving, sprinkle a little fine-chopped parsley over, and curl an anchovy on the top of each round a sprig of parsley that has been heated in the oven.

CHINESE ARTICHOKE

THE Chinese Artichoke—or *Stachys tuberifera*—is a hardy tuberous-rooted perennial, and though a small root is a welcome addition to the winter vegetables. It is not always well grown; and on this account is not always made the best use of, as unless given good culture the plant gives much smaller tubers and is of much less value. The culture is most simple. The plant, though small, should not be crowded, and it does best in a well-drained, well-enriched free working soil, and the plant to get large tubers should never be allowed to suffer from drought in the growing season. It differs much from the older forms of Artichoke, as the plant rarely exceeds 18 inches in height; and this shows that a wide space is not needed between the rows—18 inches will suffice, and 6 to 9 inches in the row; the growth being weakly a well-worked or fine surface soil is necessary. In heavy clay soils I have made such soil suitable by having raised beds, making the top soil lighter by liberal additions of burnt garden refuse, old fine mortar rubble, and any old potting or leaf soil, the tubers when planted being covered with the light material. Planting is done early in the spring just before growth commences, and it is a good plan to draw drills 6 inches deep and place the small tubers in position at the distances advised above. When the tubers are forming freely, say in July and August, it will be found of great advantage to give liquid manure or flood the quarter, using a quick acting fertiliser if liquid manure is not at hand. Another important point is to

plant good seed. It should be borne in mind that a small weak tuber cannot possibly yield equal produce to a well-nourished one, as though there may be no question as to its growing freely a goodly portion of the season is taken up in building up a plant before it can pro-



CHINESE ARTICHOKE

duce tubers. This plant has a tendency to make small growths, and we have obtained the best results from a strong seed tuber by keeping the plants free from the small shoots, only allowing the strong ones. In dry gravelly soils there is a great gain by giving a rich surface mulch, to retain moisture. The plant is very hardy, and in well-drained soil, after the tops die down,

the tubers may remain in their growing quarters. In other cases it may be necessary to lift in November and store in fine soil or sand in a cool shed. The quality of the tubers suffers greatly if they become dried or shrivel, which frequently happens if lifted too early or given warm storage. So that whenever possible it is advisable to winter the tubers where grown, and lift as required for use. The plant left to chance soon becomes a nuisance, as it runs wild and is of little value, but given good cultivation may be made a valuable winter vegetable. In no case should the tubers be exposed to the light, as they quickly lose their ivory white colour and assume a dirty yellowish cast. In most gardens it would be found a good plan to give this vegetable change of quarters every other season, taking care that the smallest tubers are removed from the soil, otherwise there will be a difficulty in getting rid of small useless growths. In no case should the plants have a shaded position, but an open one, and a rich root run with ample moisture. The tubers are at their best as a vegetable from November to April, and many persons like them mixed with salads when cooked, and they impart a peculiar flavour in a raw state. They more resemble a large Radish.

TO BOIL CHINESE ARTICHOKE

Wash and plunge the Artichokes into boiling salted water. Boil them for from fifteen to twenty minutes, and serve with melted butter or sauce Hollandaise.

TO FRY CHINESE ARTICHOKE

Chinese Artichokes are delicious when washed as above and merely dried and then fried in boiling oil or butter. When browned, serve hot on buttered toast. They may also be covered with egg and bread crumbs and cooked whole, being fried as above.

CAPSICUM

THE Capsicum (*Capsicum annum*) is not largely cultivated in this country. Owing to our short seasons, it can never be much of a favourite. The small varieties are mostly grown for decoration, but my note more refers to their use as a vegetable in a green state; and in the United States and parts of the continent the large kinds are grown for that purpose. There are a large number of varieties grown in the countries named, but it would serve no useful purpose to enumerate them. Some of the huge growers more resemble Tomatoes, as regards size, than the ordinary pepper. Some of the kinds, again, are small and more useful for salads. Others, when dried, are largely used to flavour Pickles, and these are mostly small with a very pungent flavour. The culture is simple if a glass protection can be given at the start. Indeed, I would, to get the best results,



SPANISH MAMMOTH CAPSICUMS

(One-third natural size)

advise frame culture. Seeds are best sown in February or March in pots or pans, in light rich soil in a warm bed, and, when large enough, packed off into small pots, again placing under glass; and they may be grown in pots to fruit, being shifted on into 6 or 7-inch pots and grown on shelves near the light, or what is better, grown in frames near the glass. A frame that has grown Potatoes or early vegetables will grow excellent Capsicums if the soil is kept and there is warmth. Planted out there are much finer and heavier crops, and the plants continue to fruit if the green ones are gathered as required. A portion may be planted out on a warm border, but care must be taken to keep down red spider by damping overhead in the afternoon; and they will, both in frames and in the open ground, take liberal supplies of food in the shape of liquid manure.

CAPSICUMS

The dried fruits may be ground as required to furnish cayenne pepper, or the green Capsicums may be cooked as suggested in "Leaves from our Tuscan Kitchen."

CAPSICUMS "FARCITI." No. I

Select large green sweet Capsicums, and for each one take half a pound of minced roast or boiled fowl, half a pound of grated bread-crumbs, a little salt and pepper, and some chopped parsley, and mix; add two ounces of melted butter and mix again. Meanwhile cut off one end of the Capsicums (remove the seeds), and put the Capsicums into a saucepan of boiling water; cover the pan and let it boil for about a quarter of an hour. Then drain the Capsicums well, fill them with the forcemeat, and sprinkle them over with bread-crumbs. Put some butter in an earthen pan and cook the Capsicums in a moderate oven for a quarter of an hour.



CAUSICUMS

CAPSICUMS "FARCITI." No. 2

Fry six medium-sized green sweet Capsicums for one minute in boiling fat, drain, peel, and cut off the ends, keeping them to use as covers. Remove the insides, and fill them with forcemeat made of minced fresh pork, a spoonful of salt, a salt-spoonful of pepper, half a salt-spoonful of grated nutmeg, and the same of powdered thyme. Put on the ends, lay the Capsicums in a well-oiled baking-dish, add a little pure olive oil, and put them in a moderate oven to bake for a quarter of an hour. Turn them on to a hot dish, and serve with a quarter of a pint of Vellutata sauce with a little Marsala added.

CAPSICUMS "AL FORNO"

Cut two or more green Capsicums in two lengthwise, remove the seeds and filaments, and parboil them in boiling water for five minutes. Fill each half with an equal quantity of softened bread-crumbs and minced meat, seasoned with butter, salt, and a squeeze of lemon. Then put them into a baking-dish in half an inch of good stock (or water), and bake. Serve in the baking-dish hot.

CARDOON

THE Cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus*) is by no means a common vegetable, but is one well worth extended cultivation, being distinct from other vegetables. It is a perennial belonging to the southern parts of Europe. This plant is closely related to the artichoke; indeed it may be thought that the Globe variety and the Cardoon are one, but with the latter plant it is the fleshy leaf-stalk that is edible, and in this the plant more resembles Celery. The stalks or ribs of the plants are blanched like Celery, and may be cooked in a variety of ways, and when well served they constitute a tender and good dish, but I fear the cooking of this vegetable in this country is not well known. On the continent the Cardoon is much esteemed, and considered a choice dish. There are some half-dozen varieties under cultivation. I am aware that nominally there are more, but they vary mostly in name and in the size of the plant. The commoner form has spineless leaves, the leaf-stalk is solid, but mere size does not in this vegetable like others denote quality, as I have found that the larger growers are different in flavour and less tender or succulent. This should be borne in mind, as in all vegetables, common or otherwise, it is important to grow those that give the best quality. The Spanish Cardoon is the variety mostly grown in this country, and the kind that nursery and seedsmen usually send if the Cardoon is asked for, and no specific variety stated, but it is by no means the best, and is a large grower having spineless leaves, and like the

common it is apt to run to seed. This latter is a great fault, as the culture entails considerable expense of labour and space, and when this is lost by premature seeding it is most annoying. The Tours Cardoon is a variety much liked in France, and unfortunately this is



PRICKLY TOURS CARDOON
(One-fifteenth natural size)

excessively spiny and most difficult to work amongst or handle as the long sharp spines are most disagreeable. On the other hand, this variety produces a better stalk than the others noted above, the stalk or leaf being thicker, more solid, and when cooked of superior quality, and this variety is less subject to run to seed, and may therefore be classed as one of the most suitable in

every way. Some varieties are not nearly as hardy as others, but the Tours is one of the best in this respect. The best Cardoon I ever grew was from some seed given me by a celebrated traveller. It was a reddish stem or leaf-stalk not unlike the Marseilles, but much smaller, and of such a tender nature it was soon injured by cold. I was unable afterwards to get it true from home-grown seed, as it produced inferior stock. The Marseilles is a red stemmed Cardoon, having large leaves and smooth, and a solid stalk of good quality. The Puvis is a very large grower, having a thick leaf-stalk, very solid, and a thick or close leaf growth with very few spines; it is also a free grower that does not soon run to seed, and when cooked it is considered one of the best. This I consider one of the best for ordinary garden culture, as, owing to the spineless or nearly spineless nature, it is much better and more readily handled. The above comprise the best known kinds, and the selection will be considered quite large enough for ordinary purposes.

The plant needs more space than many other vegetables. Its culture is not well known, and the plant is much better when raised under glass and planted out, getting a longer season's growth if this is done. A warm, well-drained soil, well enriched with manure, in an open position, is the best. Doubtless, in this country, the trench system in the same way as Asparagus is grown is the most reliable. Seed may be sown in pots under glass for an early supply in March, or early in April to plant out the end of May. Many good cultivators sow in heat, but I do not advise it, as given merely glass or cold frame shelter at the start, a sturdier plant is obtained and there is less risk at the planting out. At the start very little moisture is required till the seedlings have germinated, and it is well to sow these seeds in small pots; and when these are well above

the soil, thin to the largest and grow near the glass, and give the seedlings ample ventilation as growth increases. For the planting out, the ground or trenches should be prepared in advance, and even when the plants are grown in the open from the start this advice still applies. The trenches should be at least 4 feet apart, and 12 inches deep, not taking into account the manure which is placed in the bottom of the trench, of which there should be at least 6 inches. This is dug in, and the plants placed at 18 inches apart in the trench. For the large growers more room is advantageous. To get the plants for the first supply—I mean those raised under glass, and when this plant is liked two or three lots may be grown, thus forming a succession—the same routine may be followed as concerns the land and spaces, but the seed may be sown in the trench, a few seeds dropped in at intervals of 18 inches lightly covered with soil, and when large enough thinned to the strongest. Doubtless this is the best system, for medium-sized produce, when only one lot of plants is grown, as should the least check occur to the plants raised in heat they invariably bolt or run to seed. If a late lot of plants should be required, seed may be sown in June, but the end of April or early in May is the best time for the open ground plants. All varieties are obtained from seed, and at the start the growth is slow in comparison with the after-growth as the plant will make rapid progress after midsummer providing there is no lack of moisture.

The after-management of the plants is simple. It may be summed up as plenty of food in the shape of moisture and liquid manure, and attention to moulding up, that is, blanching and protection from frost and rain. As regards the blanching, the plants should be full grown or nearly so before this is attempted; I do not advise doing the work before October, and it should

be done in fine weather. Any of the lower small or yellow leaves should be cleaned away, and those that are to be blanched should be secured in an upright position; if they are at all spiny this needs care, as they break readily, and I find it best to give several loose ties. These can be removed as the work proceeds. To cover the lower portion of the stalks many persons use haybands. These are wound round from the base and a good body of soil pressed close against the haybands to exclude air and moisture, the upper portion for 12 inches only being drawn together, not moulded. There are other methods. Large drain pipes may be used. These drawn over the plant and then filled in with fine soil or sand answer well. I have also seen stout brown paper or coarse canvas bands used in the place of haybands, but whatever is used must be sufficient to effect the blanching and exclude air. If the plants are moulded up early in October, they will be fit for use in a month's time. The later plants should be left growing as long as possible before covering. The plant is tender, but it may be kept good for some time if lifted before being frozen, preserving the root, and placing in a dry place. I have lifted and placed them in sand in a root store, getting a good ball of earth, and kept them sound till March. The later and medium-sized plants winter well grown from seed, as they are smaller and lift well. If it is desired to save any good kind, the plant is easily produced from suckers, but then there must be no blanching, and it will be necessary in most places to protect from frost or, what is better, to place stools in frames, or pot up and plant out in the spring; but I think this plant quickly degenerates if grown in the same soil for years, and as good material can be obtained from seed, I do not advise growing plants for general use. The Cardoon is in season from October till March.

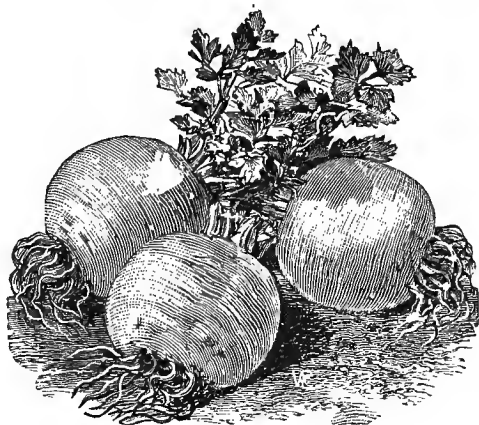
TO COOK CARDOONS

The best way to cook Cardoons is to follow Mrs Roundell's advice and to cut them into four or five inch lengths, and throw them into boiling water into which a little lemon-juice has been squeezed. Keep the Cardoons boiling till their outer woolly skin will rub off in a cloth. Drain them, and throw them into cold water. When the Cardoons have cooled, scrape them, and pull off the stringy skin. Fill a crockery stewpan with boiling water flavoured with pepper and salt, lay a good-sized piece of raw bacon at the bottom, cutting the rind in strips, add a bunch of herbs, and then the Cardoons. Simmer gently till the Cardoons are tender, which may take two hours or more, according to their age and size. Drain the Cardoons and warm them up in good brown sauce. Or they can be served with white sauce. *Wyvern* advises that Cardoons should be placed on slices of fat bacon at the bottom of a stewpan, with more bacon above them, and only just enough *blanc* to cover all. Then add slices of lemon, a little mignonette, pepper, and salt, cover the pan, and let the Cardoons simmer very gently till done. The *blanc* is a sort of stock which is used in boiling celery or any white vegetable to preserve the colour. To make *blanc*, cut up as small as possible a quarter of a pound of beef suet, and put it with a tablespoonful of flour into three and a half pints of cold water in a stewpan. Boil up and add eight ounces of onion cut up small, a bunch of curly parsley, a tablespoonful of dried thyme or marjoram, the rind of a lemon, a teaspoonful of sugar and one of salt. Stir well over a brisk fire for half an hour, strain, but do not take off the fat as the *blanc* cooks. When the Cardoons or other vegetables are cooked in *blanc*, put in with them two or three slices of lemon freed from pips, to improve the colour.

CELERIAC

CELERIAC, or Turnip-rooted Celery, is a great favourite in cold countries, and is more largely grown than Celery. It differs in shape, and its season is from October to April. It is described as Turnip rooted, but this is scarcely a good description, as it widens at the base and is of a more rugged build than a Turnip. It is harder than Celery, and can be made a valuable substitute when cooked and sliced with salads. There are very few kinds grown. If the best is required, it is well to get a continental variety. Our seedsmen do not often get called upon to furnish the seed of this vegetable: whereas quite half a dozen are catalogued by the Messrs Vilmorin of Paris. A few years ago I made a trial of the best kinds, and they were worth special notice as the quality was splendid. The culture differs from Celery, as here the root is the edible portion, not the stalk, and there is no blanching. And what makes Celeriac so useful is that it keeps sound for quite six months after being full grown. Large quantities of well-grown roots are imported into this country, but there is no difficulty in growing the best produce at home if seed is sown in heat or under glass in the same way as Celery, the seedlings being picked out when large enough, and finally planted out in rows, 2 feet apart and 12 inches between the plants. A rich root run is necessary, and ample food in the shape of liquid manure is well repaid as the plant is a gross feeder. I have in light land planted in rather deep drills, as grown thus it is an easy matter to feed and give moisture. The planting

out should be done in May or June, and the after-management is simple, merely hoeing between the plants and keeping the ground clean. In October the bulbs are ready for use, and they may be lifted, the tops twisted off, and then stored in fine ashes or soil in a cool store. I have in the southern part of the kingdom left the roots in their growing quarters and covered with



CELERIAC

litter or dry Bracken in severe weather. This is an advantage in some respects, as in the soil the roots keep much firmer and are sweeter or of a more nutty flavour. In planting it is well to remove all side growths, restricting to the one central growth. This must also be done occasionally in the summer months, and it may be necessary to remove a small portion of the top soil to get at the side or split growths. A few weeks before the plants are lifted it is a good plan to draw a little soil well into the foliage. This will cause the upper part of the root to get better coloured or partially

blanched. I have referred to varieties, and there are three well worth naming. The Giant Prague, a large root, and one that is much grown in Germany. It is of good quality, being solid and a good keeper. The smaller Erfurt Celeriac, a most useful garden variety and of splendid quality. This is a favourite in the London market, and one of the varieties much imported. The Paris Ameliore, a variety much grown for the Paris markets, is also very good. There are several others, but those named are enough for all purposes, as they are the best.

TO COOK CELERIAC

To cook Celeriac, peel the roots, quarter them, and plunge them into plenty of boiling salted water and boil them till tender, either in the water used to blanch them, or else in weak stock. They are then served with a sauce according to taste. Celeriac, in the form of a purée, makes a useful garnish for poultry or cutlets.

It is also delicious when cooked and served in the same way as Beetroot, being sliced and placed in vinegar; or it may be sliced in a raw state and fried in butter till nearly brown.

CHERVIL

THE ordinary garden Chervil (*Chaerophyllum bulbosum*) is more often grown than the bulbous-rooted form, or what is commonly called the vegetable Chervil. The latter is a hardy biennial and a native of Southern Europe, and in shape not unlike a Parsnip, or as regards size resembles an ordinary Short-Horn Carrot. I need not touch the fine leaved variety; doubtless this will be described in the work on salads or herbs. It is used for soups, salads, and garnishing. The flavour of the bulbous-rooted form is very distinct from most other vegetables; the flesh is a yellowish white, rather sweet but not unpleasant, and more floury than the Parsnip. As an article of food it is well worth a trial in all gardens where variety in vegetables is valued, but the seed requires more time to germinate than many of our common vegetables, and therefore cannot be termed profitable, though the produce from a small piece of land often repays the grower. The best mode of culture, that is to get roots in one season, is to place the seed in the autumn in sand or fine soil in boxes. This placed in a frame or any frost proof position will cause the seeds to germinate quickly when sown in February or March the next season, as it is an easy matter to sow the seed mixed with the soil in drills 15 inches apart, thinning the plants to half that distance in the row. The plant thrives in any ordinary garden soil, and when in full growth soon forms a bulb and is fit for use. The older plan of sowing early in the autumn on an open quarter may be carried out in the southern parts of the country in well-drained soil. It

is best to sow in September ; and grown thus the roots will be of good quality and ready to lift at the end of the summer, as they will show their maturity by the leaves colouring and decaying. It is well to store the roots when growth ceases in a cool root store or cellar, and not exposed to the light. They remain good a considerable time, and the roots should be kept free of moisture.

TO BOIL CHERVIL

Wash and brush the roots, but do not cut them. Place them in a pan, pour over them sufficient boiling water to cover them, and let them simmer for about an hour and a half.

TO FRY CHERVIL

Cook the roots as above for about an hour, then cut into long shreds and fry in butter.

CHICK-PEA

THE Chick-pea (*Cicer arietinum*), commonly called the Egyptian Pea, and more largely used on the continent than in this country, is an annual plant, a native of South Europe, and it is there largely cultivated for its seeds, though in this country we rarely have warm or dry enough summers to ripen the seeds. There are several varieties, but as they only differ in the colour of the seeds I need not enumerate them; still the various colours are valued for cooking purposes, and they are mostly employed in soups or purees, and though somewhat firm in texture they are much liked. Belonging to the Pea family the plant needs similar treatment as regards its culture. Sown in drills 3 feet apart, the seed in the drill being placed thinly, and the plants given good soil, they produce their small pods in abundance. These should be gathered before the seeds are quite ripe and given cool storage. They keep a long time, and the best pods are produced from spring-sown plants on an open sunny border. In the United States the plant does very well, and is more grown than in this country.

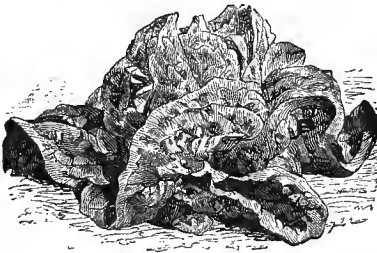
TO COOK CHICK-PEAS

The dried seeds of the Chick-pea may be cooked in any of the ways usually employed to cook dry Peas. Excellent chick-pea soup and chick-pease-pudding can be made. Rarely, the seeds are roasted and used as a very vile substitute for coffee.

CHICORY

CHICORY is a plant largely used for salad purposes, but it is also valuable as a vegetable when well served, as it possesses properties that are rare in other vegetables. Upon its use as a salad I do not intend to dwell as this will be described elsewhere. For vegetable uses it needs much the same culture, but a better plant is required to secure fine growth.

Those persons who have an opportunity of seeing our large markets in towns may have observed neat bundles or baskets of Chicory imported from the continent, the blanched growths being somewhat like Seakale, and that is the edible portion used as a vegetable. The green leaves not



BROAD-LEAVED CHICORY
(One-eighth natural size)

forced may also be used like Spinach, and they produce so freely in the spring, when ordinary Spinach is scarce, that they may be termed a good substitute. To get forced material the seeds are sown in April or May in deeply dug land, in rows 15 to 18 inches apart and the seedlings thinned to 9 inches in the row. In the late autumn the roots are lifted as required and placed in a dark place or mushroom house, and the growths



CHICORY ROOTS

are cut when from 4 to 6 inches long. It is the large or crown growth that is most valuable; for salad purposes the smaller leafage is best. As regards varieties a large grower is most suitable, and doubtless the Whitloof, a variety much grown on the continent, is the best. This gives a larger growth than the common Barbe de Capucin. There are not many kinds of the rooting varieties, but numerous ones of the leaf or salad or French Chicory, as under this name the Endives are grown in great variety.

TO COOK CHICORY

The green leaves of Chicory may be cooked in spring by scalding them for five or six minutes in boiling salted water, draining through a colander, throwing the leaves into cold water, again draining, and then cutting up the leaves. The chopped leaves should next be placed in a saucepan containing (for each pound of fresh Chicory leaves) half an ounce of flour, a quarter of an ounce of butter, and a little pepper and salt, which has been heated over the fire for three or four minutes. Stir all together over a gentle fire for five minutes, and then add a teacupful of milk or broth, and stir over the fire till nearly dry. Take the pan from the fire and add about an ounce of butter, stir, and serve on a hot dish. Always use plenty of water in blanching the leaves.

The blanched stems are cooked like Seakale.

CHOU DE BURGHELEY

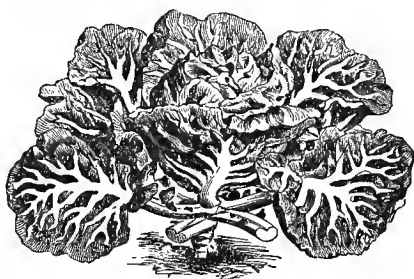
THIS plant belongs to the Brassicas, and is part cabbage and part Brocoli, and is doubtless the result of a cross, but all the same is really a very excellent vegetable for autumn and winter supplies. This was raised by the late Mr Gilbert, a good grower of vegetables, and is well worth room in all gardens. As regards its quality few persons could find a more delicious vegetable, as the small hearts or Brocoli portion of the plant is really first rate, and if used as a cabbage it is excellent. It needs similar culture to the early Brocoli. Sown in March, and planted out in May, 2 feet apart, in good land deeply dug and manured it does well. It is very hardy, and grows freely in the northern or exposed portions of the country. I have had two lots of plants, an early and later one; and grown thus there is a long supply.

COCO

THE Coco (*Colocasia esculenta*) as an article of food would not be popular in this country, but in the tropics it is grown as a field plant under the name of Coco, and the tuberous root is used as food, being used much in the same way as the Sweet Potato, boiled, roasted, or baked, and at times the leaves in a young state are used as a vegetable. This plant in this country is mostly known as *Caladium esculenta*, and is not hardy though it does well planted out in the summer. Very good tubers of this variety were sent a few years ago to the Royal Horticultural Society to show its value as a vegetable.

COUVE TRONCHUDA

COUVE TRONCHUDA, or Seakale Cabbage (*Brassica oleracea costata*), is by no means a popular vegetable or one much known or grown, and on this account it is given a place as it is useful for autumn supplies. It may



BRAGANZA, PORTUGAL OR SEA-KALE CABBAGE
(One-twelfth natural size)

be described as useful, as the heads make an excellent dish in the autumn, and it grows well in a good soil. It is an excellent cabbage if not grown in a cold or exposed situation, and one that gives a good return. The large

full grown leaves are used in the same way as Seakale; that is, the fleshy rind ribs of the plants may be cooked thus, and they make a really good vegetable if well cooked.

The culture is the same as for the ordinary Brassica; that is, seed is sown in the early spring and the seedlings transplanted when large enough, 2 feet apart each way. Grown in an open position they do well.

DANDELION

DANDELION (*Taraxacum officinale*) is not often used as a vegetable in this country, but is well worth cultivating for that purpose. For salad purposes it is equally valuable, but my note concerns its uses in vegetable form, and grown for this purpose for use from March



THICK-LEAVED, OR CABBAGING, DANDELION

(*One-fifth natural size*)

till June it is not at all bad. If the roots are lifted in November and stored in soil or sand they may be placed in a mushroom house or any dark place and the new growths are by many persons much liked as a vegetable; but as grown thus much heat must not be employed, as the warmth causes a thickened leaf stalk, and it is the green leaf that is best for boiling. The common Dandelion is not recommended; the large leaved French variety is far superior and this is very

easily grown. There is also a very good variety, the improved broad-leaved; this is even better than the French, as it does not run to seed so quickly, but as the plant for use as a vegetable is not needed for summer supplies its seeding is not important. The plants are best raised from seed sown in April in rows 18 inches apart, 9 inches between the plants in the row. It likes a moist soil and should be sown very thinly and thinned early. The plants left in their growing quarters will last for years, but much finer leafage is secured by sowing annually, not allowing the old plants to seed.

TO COOK DANDELION LEAVES

An excellent dish may be made by taking equal quantities of young Dandelion leaves and Sorrel leaves, cutting them into slices, placing the Dandelion leaves in a stewpan with a minimum of boiling water and stewing them till tender, then adding the Sorrel leaves and boiling till the whole of the water is absorbed or evaporated, the vegetables being quite soft, stirring in some butter, pepper and salt, mixing all well together, and serving it either alone or with poached eggs.

Or the Dandelion leaves, having been boiled for about half an hour, may be lifted out in a strainer, plunged into cold water, gently pressed till fairly dry, and then chopped fine. The chopped leaves should next be placed in a pan containing an ounce of butter, a dessert-spoonful of flour, a tablespoonful of stock, and a little pepper and salt, well blended together. This mixture should be heated and stirred for about ten minutes, when a table-spoonful of cream or rich sauce should be added and the whole served.

EGG PLANT

THE Aubergine or Egg Plant (*Solanum melongena*) is an annual half hardy plant, a native of South America and the tropical parts of Asia and Africa. It is widely distributed, and it has been known in this country for over three hundred years; but we have not made much headway as regards its culture or its cooking. There are a goodly number of varieties, but very few are grown in this country. The Messrs Vilmorin, Paris, catalogue nearly a dozen. All are not egg shaped, some more resemble a Cucumber or miniature long Marrow. Others are round and really very handsome when grown as decorative plants; and their varied colours, white, cream, and purple, and other shades, are very telling when grown in pots. The American kinds are larger than others. One, the New York Giant or Purple, is a very fine fruit, round and purplish in colour. This variety grows freely, and the quality is very fine. This is a standard dish in the country named, and given frame culture is one of the largest. It is well worth growing in this country. The Chinese Brinjal, or as it is better known the Aubergine blanche longue de la Chine of the French, is a very distinct fruit, a long white, and of more substance than some others. There is the ronde de Chine or Noire de Peking, a nice-shaped fruit of a dark violet colour. This sets readily, and is a very good fruiter. The de Madras also is a variety well worth attention. This is an oblong fruit, violet coloured and of excellent table quality. The long Violet and the Black Peking, a very dark purple fruit, are well-known

kinds. The Black variety is one of the darkest colours grown, but the colour does not affect the quality. The small *Violette naine* is a pretty fruit, excellent for pot culture, and there are several white or cream coloured varieties. These vary in shape, and I have seen a



LONG PURPLE EGG PLANT

(One-fifth natural size)

reddish fruit but not grown it.

They are certainly a most interesting class of plants, and well deserving of attention. At one time they were only considered novelties, but there is no doubt whatever but that they are valuable for food, being a wholesome and delicious vegetable, and certainly worth extended cultivation. I have seen them grown for

decorative purposes in anything but a happy condition. The plants, once they receive a check, are very subject to red spiders. This points to the need of ample moisture in the house, as the pest will not thrive under this condition. Another evil is allowing the plants to be starved or pot bound. The best results are secured from plants grown in frames in rich soil planted out. In the Paris market gardens a great deal of attention is given to these plants; and

so many fruits are secured from plants grown in a small space, that they are really profitable. As a vegetable those who have lived in foreign parts are most partial to them, and they make a nice break in the ordinary supply of green foods; and during the summer months many persons who have spare frames or pots could grow the Aubergine to advantage, and once grown they would, I feel sure, become favourites and always find a place.

To get strong plants early it is well to sow seed in January or February in a warm house, giving the seeds bottom heat to cause rapid germination. In all cases at this time of year the plants should have a temperature of 65 to 70 degrees, and if bottom heat is not given there must be careful watering till the seedlings are through the soil. As soon as the plants have made two leaves they should be transferred to small pots, one in each, and grown near the light. In a short time, say three weeks or so, the plants will be ready for another shift, and may then be placed in 6-inch pots and grown on as before, finally potting into 8 or 9-inch pots. These latter are for fruiting in. The soil should be fairly rich; that is, a good loam, to which should be added fertilisers or well-decayed manure, and this applies more to the later pottings than to the early. It is also important to keep the plants moving; that is, at no time during their early stages of growth should they be allowed to get pot bound as this would cause a few stray fruits to set, and loss of crop. During the time the plants are maturing their fruits there should be liberal supplies of liquid manure, but this should be discontinued as soon as the fruits have attained their full size, or show signs of colouring. The plants should always be grown on a single leg or stem at the start, and when strong enough they should have the points taken out to cause a branched

growth and show fruit. Four to six fruits are ample. After these are secured, later fruits and lateral growth should be stopped, the plants syringed overhead twice daily and kept free of insect pests.

The above-described culture is for pot plants, but I think the best results are obtained from plants planted out in beds, not unlike Capsicums, or treated like Vegetable Marrows given frame culture. By planting out, a greater number of fruits are secured from the plants, as they begin to fruit in June and continue bearing till late in the summer. Some growers sow their seed in the hot bed and thin out others in pots, and plant out when the bed is at the right temperature. In all cases there must be a warm bed to get the best results; not too hot, but made so that the fermenting materials retain the heat as long as possible. In this country I have seen excellent results by growing in frames. A bed is prepared in March and on this is placed a frame, with from 4 to 6 inches of good soil. When this latter is warmed through, the seedlings should be planted, having previously been raised in small pots. Each plant is made firm and may be allowed 2 feet space and the sashes kept closed for a few days, shading the plants, giving ventilation carefully as the plants increase in growth, damping overhead freely late in the afternoon, and stopping shoots and thinning the plants later on. At midsummer the sashes may be removed entirely, but there must be no lack of water or food, as red spider generally attacks the plants if at all dry, and if this is allowed to spread the fruits fail to set or swell. Scale also attacks the plants if they are in any way neglected during growth. In cold or exposed places I would advise sowing early and giving frame culture from start to finish. On the other hand, in the southern part of the country the plants will fruit in the open ground if planted out in rich soil.



AUBERGINE, OR EGG PLANT

TO COOK AUBERGINES OR EGG PLANTS

According to Wyvern, the ordinary method of preparing this vegetable (*brinjal*) in India is as follows:—The pods are cut in halves lengthways, the fleshy part scooped out, put on a plate, and mashed up with butter, seasoned with salt and pepper and minced hard-boiled egg added; the hollowed half pods are then filled with this mixture, laid out upon a baking sheet, brushed over with melted butter, and baked in a moderate oven with heat above and below them; then lifted with a slice, laid in a *légumière* and served—the *farce* being altered at discretion, grated cheese used for the surface, etc.

Another excellent recipe of Wyvern's is for

AUBERGINES SAUTÉES

For this little brinjals as used for curry, whole, are the best—gathered before the seeds have developed. Blanch for five minutes and then simmer gently in milk and water till tender; lift, drain, lay them in a buttered *sautoir*, and turn them about over low fire like *haricots verts sautés* to expel moisture, set them in a hot *légumière*, sprinkle with parsley and melted butter, and serve. For this the butters may be varied—*maître d'hôtel ravigote*, etc.

The following recipe is borrowed from *The Queen*:—

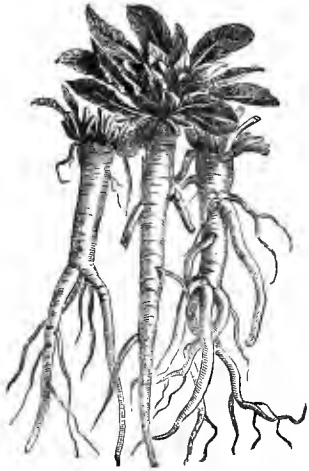
AUBERGINES À LA TURQUE

Cut the ends from the egg plant, and remove the centre of the fruit with a teaspoon, replacing this with a mixture of equal parts of cold cooked rice and minced cooked meat, seasoning with blanched and finely minced onion, freshly ground black pepper, and salt; now fry the fruit with a bouquet (thyme, parsley, bay leaf, etc.) in oil, butter, or clarified dripping, for two or three

minutes, then drain it, lay in a stewpan with sufficient thin tomato sauce to cover it and the bunch of herbs, and stew gently till tender; then remove the herbs and dish the vegetable on a hot dish with the tomato sauce over and round it.

EVENING PRIMROSE

THE Evening Primrose (*Enothera biennis*) is a plant more commonly considered as a flowering plant than as a vegetable, and is but rarely grown for eating; as such indeed I have never seen it grown in this country. On the continent, especially in Germany, it is cultivated for its roots, which are cooked in a variety of ways. The roots are fleshy, and are used much in the same way as Salsify; and I have heard that they are valuable on account of their easy digestibility, and that they are nourishing also. They are mostly boiled, and when cold may be mixed with salad like Celeriac or Beetroot. Doubtless there are many parts that are edible among the large



EVENING PRIMROSE
(One-fifth natural size)

flowering plants. Take the Helianthus, for instance. The seeds have been used for food; they also yield oil that promises to be valuable as an article of commerce, and the large leafy kinds have been used for cattle. The Evening Primrose, if grown for its roots,

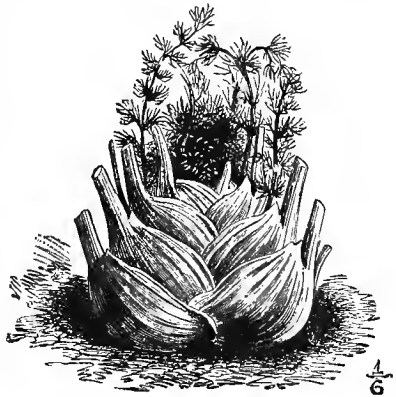
may be sown in the spring on land well prepared, and the seedlings when large enough transplanted in rows 2 feet apart, and kept free of weeds, and not allowed to suffer in their early stages of growth for lack of moisture. The plants, I am told by a grower on the continent, should not be taken up but lifted as required for use in the autumn, covering over with litter in severe weather; if stored in a warm store the roots are much inferior in flavour. They remain good from October till March, and make a distinct vegetable at the season named, and they are liked in soups and stews or made dishes. They are certainly worth a trial, as they are easily grown in this country.

TO COOK EVENING PRIMROSE ROOTS

These roots may be cooked in any of the ways advised for Chervil. Also see the various recipes for cooking Salsify in "The Book of Asparagus."

FENNEL

FENNEL (*Fœniculum finocchio*) is a perennial plant, a native of Southern Europe, not much grown in this country, but a favourite in Italy. The above variety must not be confounded with the Aromatic Fennel, a plant largely used for fish sauces and garnishing and for flavouring, the seeds being used largely for the last named purpose. The Finocchio variety is distinct from the common variety, its leaf stalks are thicker and round, and it is used both in a raw state somewhat like blanched celery or boiled with meat and also is eaten with macaroni.



FINOCHIO, OR FLORENCE FENNEL
(One-fifth natural size)

It requires a deep soil and is best sown in drills 18 inches apart and the seedlings thinned to half that distance in the row. It likes a fairly rich moist soil, as in dry or poor soil the growths are firmer and less palatable. The leaf stalks are moulded up a month before using. This blanches the lower part and makes a most serviceable and distinct vegetable. It grows very

quickly and there may be three or four sowings from April to July or August, and by these means a succession of plants will be secured. The plants will be fit for use in three months from time of sowing the seed if the land is well done and ample moisture given in dry weather. There may be supplies well into December if autumn plants are desired, as by sowing in August, the plants may be protected in November if the weather is severe by covering with bracken or by lifting and placing in a cool root store.

TO COOK FENNEL

Fennel is now chiefly used for garnishing mackerel and certain other fish, or is minced and added to melted butter as a sauce for these fish. Its dried seeds are also used in the preparation of a liqueur known as *fenouillette*. The leaf-stalks—especially of the *Finochio* variety—may be used either raw, after the manner of Celery, or as a cooked vegetable, being placed in boiling water and boiled for about half an hour, or until tender.

GOOD KING HENRY

GOOD KING HENRY (*Chenopodium bonus Henricus*) is better known as Mercury, and is probably one of the easiest grown vegetables we have, but not well known or much grown, though in a few counties on the eastern coast it is a great favourite; indeed, in Lincolnshire there are few gardens of any size but grow a bed of King Henry, and I have heard it called Lincolnshire Asparagus. The plant is perennial, a native of Britain, and is found in many parts of Europe, and is a very wholesome vegetable, and later on when the top growth of the plants has become large the young leaves if gathered make a very good dish and is often used in place of Spinach. The plant well repays good cultivation, though I have seen it growing in the same spot for years, and of course grown thus the leafage is small. The plant grown in good soil produces shoots; these, cut in a young state and tied up in bunches, somewhat resemble Asparagus. If at all old, the skin toughens quickly and it is then necessary to remove the skin before cooking. It is in season from April till June, and should be grown in a warm position, doing best in well drained soil. Seeds may be sown in a bed in spring and the seedlings planted out in rows 2 feet apart and 18 inches between the plants, the quarter having been deeply dug and manured the previous winter. I have also divided plants from old beds or roots, selecting the best roots, and these given new soil soon make headway and give a large quantity of shoots. It should be more grown for

its value as a spring vegetable, as it comes in at a time of year when there is a scarcity.

TO COOK GOOD KING HENRY

The leaves should be well washed, placed in a stewpan with a minimum of water, and boiled for a quarter of an hour. A little salt should then be added, and the boiling continued for another five minutes. It should then be carefully drained and chopped fine. A little butter, a little less flour, a pinch of pepper, and a pinch of salt should then be placed in a stewpan and heated for a few minutes. Add the chopped vegetables and boil for five minutes longer. The young shoots of the Good King Henry may be cut from April to June, tied in bunches, and boiled like asparagus, which they somewhat resemble in taste.

HOP

THE ordinary Hop plant (*Humulus lupulus*) is not much used as a vegetable, but it is not an inferior dish if used in a young state. The shoots when from 4 to 5 inches long are the parts used, and these are boiled and eaten like Asparagus. As an article of commerce the dried Hop is most valuable, and its use in brewing is well known. It is a perennial plant and indigenous to this country, and not only valuable in its dried state but often used in gardens as a screen to hide buildings or unsightly objects. I need not go into its cultivation as it is grown on a large scale in the south and western counties of England.

TO BOIL HOPS

The tender young shoots are to be tied into bundles, placed into boiling salted water and gently boiled for about twenty minutes. They may be served after the manner of Asparagus into *beurre fondu* or other simple sauce. The cold boiled Hops may be used as a salad.

TO FRY HOPS

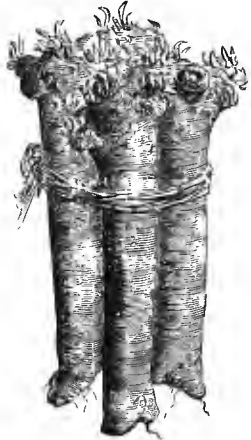
Prepare as above, and boil for twelve minutes. Drain, and allow to cool. Then flour them, dip in egg and bread crumb, and fry in boiling oil. Serve with salt.

HORSE RADISH

HORSE RADISH (*Cochlearia armoracia*). A hardy perennial naturalised in this country, largely used more as an addition or flavouring for cooked meat than in any other form; and though exception may be taken to it as a vegetable, it is largely used as an article of food, both raw and in a prepared condition. It is of much value owing to its good keeping properties, as roots lifted and stored in sand will keep a long time. Another point not to be overlooked is that it is anti-scorbutic and much valued by mariners, as it keeps good a long time when on long voyages, and it is found to be of great value. As regards its growth, it will grow when other things fail, indeed in old gardens it is most difficult to get rid of it if allowed to remain a number of years in one place. On the other hand, the roots grown thus, as regards quality cannot compare with those given what may be termed proper culture. Properly grown, the roots are long, thick, straight, and of much better flavour, being less stringy and more tender. The plant is much better when grown for a short time in one place, and to do it justice it likes ample depth and food also. It is often left to chance, to grow anyhow in one corner of the garden and dug up as required; it is far better to plant a small quarter yearly, destroying the oldest and laying in for use the best roots. There are great quantities of these roots imported from abroad. This is not at all necessary, as I have seen as good results in the Thames Valley as the best imported roots from Holland, from whence the London markets receive large consignments. The plant

does best in a rather moist soil, deep and not too heavy.

The culture for home supplies requires but small space, and early in the spring is best to make new beds. The land should be trenched, liberal layers of manure being placed under the second spit; cow manure is excellent for light land. The work of trenching or manuring is best done some time in advance of planting. One year's growth will produce good roots, but by extending the time, allowing another season, much finer roots are obtained, but more astringent. The best time for planting is early in the spring, and if the land has been prepared some time, it is best to use a dibble, making the holes much deeper than the set. In selecting the latter, care should be taken to have clean growths free of eyes or offsets, as these



HORSE RADISH

(One-fifth natural size)

cause a forked growth and are not liked. I have also seen good crops from the crown growth: that is, the tops are cut with a bit of root attached a few inches long, all side shoots carefully removed, and they certainly made a good plant grown thus. When root cuttings are used, these should be clean, straight pieces, 9 to 12 inches long, and these may be prepared in the autumn and tied in small bundles, and laid in sand till planting time. I find this preferable to lifting roots direct out of the soil and planting. A bed will last for years, but much better results will follow annual planting if only on a small scale, and in no case should a bed be left

longer than three years, as the root growth after that time does not thicken, but divides and gets harder and less valuable.

TO MAKE HORSE RADISH SAUCE

Simmer a small teacupful of finely rasped Horse Radish in half a pint of broth. Then thicken, by adding the yolks of two eggs beaten up with a dessert-spoonful of tarragon vinegar. Add a little pepper and salt and serve. To make cold Horse Radish sauce, add to a small teacupful of gratings, half a pint of mayonnaise. Serve as cold as possible.

LENTILS

THE Lentil (*Ervum lens*) is an annual plant, a native of southern Europe, largely cultivated in the warmer countries and certainly a most valuable vegetable in a dried state, being exceedingly nutritious and one that can be eaten by invalids. It is not much cultivated in this country, at least in private gardens, and though by many persons the seeds are considered indigestible, a great deal depends upon the cooking; indeed this plant supplies the valuable *Revalenta arabica* of commerce, a food of great value. The plant is also much grown near Paris and the large towns of France, and in that country is largely used as food. The outer skin is very hard, and this got rid of, there is no question of its value as food, as then it is nutritious and may be used for soups and is cooked in various ways. In habit it somewhat resembles the Pea, to which it is closely allied, and has the same nourishing properties when the seeds are ripe and fit for use. I have no knowledge of this plant being grown for use when in the green state. I have seen it used in a partially ripe state for soups, I mean before the pod hardened, but I should prefer Marrow Peas to Lentils, and doubtless its value is in its dried state and its long keeping properties. I have kept seed for three years after gathering. By hanging up the haulm in a cool, dry shed, the seeds keep well in the husk or pod. The pod is much shorter than the ordinary Pea, having a blunt end. The plant thrives best in a light, warm, or well drained soil, not too rich, as in the latter it makes a straggling growth and

fails to pod freely. There can be no doubt but that the best produce is secured from plants given field culture, as here in an open position the growth is firmer and



LARGE YELLOW LENTIL

*(One-tenth natural size; detached branch,
natural size)*

a better bloom secured. In a close garden with a rich root run I do not advise their culture, though I have seen good results on sloping banks, the seeds being sown so that the plants had free exposure. As regards the culture for seeds in a dried state on a very small scale, seed is best sown in the spring, March or April is the most suitable month, and the seed is best sown in drills 2 feet apart and not sown thickly. The stalks will change colour as the seeds or pods reach maturity; the latter change to a dark colour and may then be pulled up and dried in the sun for a few days, turning over daily to get rid of any moisture, taking care to give the haulm a dry, cool place free of drip when storing. The Lentils may be thrashed out later when required for use.

TO COOK LENTILS

Having been soaked in cold water for eight or ten hours, Lentils are cooked by placing in cold water and

boiling for two or three hours till tender. For the two following recipes, readers are indebted to that excellent book, "Leaves from our Tuscan Kitchen."

LENTILS "ALLA CORONA"

After boiling one pint of Lentils with a bouquet of sweet herbs, strain them. Meanwhile, mince some ham with a very little onion and put it to brown with some butter; then add one or two ladlefuls of good stock, boil, and strain. Pour this sauce over the Lentils with a good piece of butter, salt and pepper to taste, heat them, and garnish boiled beef or pork with them.

LENTILS "IN ISTUFATO"

Put an earthen pot on the fire, and just before the water boils throw in one pint of Lentils. As it boils skim off the Lentils which float to the surface, and continue to do this until all are taken out; the few which remain at the bottom of the pot must be strained through a sieve. Chop up two anchovies, place them in a saucepan with some pure oil and butter and a little minced shallot, brown them well, put in the Lentils, and then add some good stock or soup. When cooked, serve up hot.

TO STEW LENTILS

Wash quarter of a pound of Lentils well in several waters, then put them into a basin with a pint of fresh cold water. Cover the basin with a plate or piece of paper and stand overnight. Next day put them into a saucepan with the water in which they were soaked and one onion very finely chopped. Cook slowly from one to one and a half hours or until the Lentils are quite soft, stirring frequently with a spoon. When ready, take the lid off the pan and boil for a few minutes, stirring constantly until the mixture is quite thick. Add one ounce of butter, and season to taste with pepper and salt. Serve very hot. (Miss Florence Jack's recipe.)

MAIZE

MAIZE—or Indian Corn (*Zea mays*)—is a favourite vegetable in America, and can be cultivated in this country with great success if the seeds are sown under glass and planted out in rich soil. It is cultivated in all parts of the world, but less in Europe than in others; doubtless in this country our short summers are not favourable, but when it is considered what a number of vegetables we raise under glass, there is no difficulty in growing very fine cobs of this useful cereal. Some of the dwarfer varieties are more suitable in this country than the very large ones, which need a much longer summer season to mature the growth. By this I do not mean that the corn must be ripe, as in this state it is not used as a vegetable, but the grains in the stalk must be fully developed, though used in a green state. Of late years our home seedsmen have turned their attention to the Maize, offering some of the best or most suitable kinds for culture in this country, and I will note a few of them. In addition there is the Japanese striped variety, valuable as a decorative plant, and much used on the continent, indeed there are few plants that are more beautiful. A few seasons ago I had twelve distinct varieties of the vegetable forms sent me from the States and they were very good indeed, not one failed to make cobs and some grew very quickly, but I failed to ripen seed; our summers do not permit this. The earliest variety I have grown is the Early Yellow or Six Weeks, grown in the States under the name of Quarantain; this is a 3 feet variety and ripens well in this country.

Another very fine early corn is one that the Messrs Sutton of Reading have imported into this country. This is hardier and known as Sutton's Early Dwarf; it is a very full flavoured corn and makes a delicious vegetable. The White Pyrenean is also early and a 3 feet variety, having whitish brown seeds, and is a very compact grower. I omitted to state that I have without difficulty ripened seeds of the Sutton Early Dwarf. This is a great gain, as it shows its early maturity and its great value for private gardens in this country. Other early kinds are Adam's Early, a 3 feet, thick, short cob, and of good quality. Crosby's Early Sugar, Early Dwarf Sugar, and Early Tom Thumb are good; the latter is a dwarf splendid variety. There are many others well worth growing, such as Triumphant, Minnesota, Metropolitan, and More's Concord and Country Gentleman; these latter are favourites in the United States.



MAIZE

All are of very simple culture, but they need a rich soil, sun, and abundance of moisture when in active growth. Seeds sown in March or April will be ready to plant out the end of May. It is best to sow three seeds or more in small pots and thin to the strongest. Sown in frames under glass they soon germinate and are ready to plant out when large enough. If desired, three plants may be raised in larger pots and planted in clumps of three, a yard apart. I prefer single plants and 2 feet apart all ways. Seed may also be sown in prepared trenches in the open ground early in May and they will do well in a favourable season. The plants should have a sunny position and get ample supplies of water.

TO COOK MAIZE

Strip off the husk and stalk, and put the Maize into boiling water without salt. Boil for ten minutes or a little more, and serve with butter, salt, and pepper.

Or the Maize may be separated from the cob, boiled and drained, and then tossed in melted butter with a little salt and pepper. Chopped parsley or grated cheese may be added just before serving.

MOUNTAIN SPINACH

BRACH atriplex hortensis, commonly called Mountain Spinach, a hardy annual, a native of Tartary. The leaves are used like Spinach, but it is not equal in flavour and soon runs to seed, so that frequent sowings are necessary. This plant will grow in any soil, but the leaves are much better, being more succulent, when grown in a good soil. There are four varieties in cultivation, the white, the green, and a pale and a dark red. The varieties do not differ much in quality, but I think the green varieties the best for garden uses. Seed sown in February will give leaves in May, or monthly sowings may be made of a succession if desired. The seed should be sown in drills 2 feet apart and thinned to 18 inches in the row. It is best kept free from seeding by picking off the flower spikes.

TO STEW SPINACH

Spinach having been washed in cold water and dried by swinging the leaves round in the air, may be stewed in the following way:—

Place it in a pan of boiling water, whence remove it at the end of four minutes. Throw the Spinach next into cold water and well dry it in the colander. Chop it up moderately finely, and place in a stewpan with salt, pepper, and butter (half an ounce to the pound). Place over the fire and stir till the butter is melted. Add a little stock (a teacupful to the pound), and allow to simmer for ten minutes. Add a little lemon juice and

serve. Spinach cooked in this way may be spread on toast and surmounted by poached eggs.

Spinach may be served whole by placing it, without water, in a vessel surrounded by boiling water for about twenty minutes. Dry with a warm cloth and serve.

NASTURTIUM

NASTURTIUM (*Tropæolum, majus, minus* and *tuberosum*). There are two varieties of the ordinary Nasturtium used as vegetables, the large form of *Majus* and the smaller kind *Minus*: the one is more common than the other, indeed the larger variety may be seen in most gardens being grown for ornament or for use in salads and pickles. Both kinds, *Majus* and *Minus*, are natives of Peru, and are perennial, but here they are treated as annuals, and some of the more recently introduced varieties, which are doubtless selections from the older forms, are really very beautiful garden plants. My note more concerns their value as vegetables than as salad plants. For the latter purpose, leaves and flowers are used, but it is the fruits which are doubtless more useful, and these are largely used when pickled in vinegar and by many persons are preferred to Capers, which they very much resemble. In their native regions, where the plants grow very quickly, the green portion of the plants is at times used as a vegetable and the points of the shoots eaten for salads. Their culture is most simple, but the plant does best in a light soil with a warm aspect, and though they may be grown in almost any corner of the garden, they well repay good culture if grown for their fruit. Seed is best sown in the spring, and if grown to stakes like Peas they bear heavy crops and flower and continue to form fruits till cut down by frost. Grown in rows, at least 4 feet should be allowed between the rows for the first named *Majus*, as it obtains a height of 8 feet or more, and the plants delight in

abundant supplies of water in dry weather. The tuberous variety is very distinct and but little grown in this country. The edible portion is the tuber that forms at the root, not the fruit, as in the first named varieties. I have seen this variety grown in a few gardens, but it has a very peculiar flavour when cooked; indeed some may



TUBEROUS-ROOTED NASTURTIUM
(Tubers, half natural size)

and do like them who have travelled abroad, but they certainly will never become common in our gardens, as the weight of crop does not make them profitable. This plant is a perennial and a native of Peru and the tubers produced are showy, being yellow and red and not unlike a Potato, but usually smaller at one end. In South America this is a favourite dish, but I think much care must be expended upon their cooking, and in the countries referred to they are frozen after being cooked and are then a favourite dish, indeed they are a standing dish in hot weather and much sought

after as a light refreshment. The culture is simple. The plant is a climber and requires support. It is best grown from eyes like the Potato, as one good-sized tuber will make several sets. In dry soils it may be allowed to grow on the soil, but in others, stakes should be given. It requires a fairly light, rich soil, and it is best planted in the spring, the sets being placed 4 feet apart, and it is fit for use in October, as at that time the leaves will begin to turn colour. I have seen this

variety grown well in pots and frames, in cold wet situation, and grown thus it is an easy matter to feed. The tubers keep for some time when quite ripe if lifted and given cool storage in sand or fibre, and may be had in season from October till March, and for seed purposes it is well to keep them on shelves, but frost proof.

TO PICKLE NASTURTIUM SEEDS

Gather the seeds whilst green, wash them, dry them, and put them in bottles. Boil together a pint of vinegar, teaspoonful of salt, a teaspoonful of peppercorns, and two chillies. When cold, pour it over the seeds, and cork and seal. This is fit for use in six weeks.

NETTLE

THE common Nettle is not often used as a vegetable in this country, but it is not at all bad if gathered in a young state—I mean



CHINA-GRASS SILVERY NETTLE

before the growths get hardened and become harsh and flavourless. The plant is more used in country places than in towns; indeed I fear many town-dwellers would hesitate to collect or cook the plant, but it would not be refused as a vegetable by many who did not know what it was. It is also largely employed in making a wholesome drink, known as nettle tea or beer. As regards its culture, unfortunately it is

too common and difficult to get rid of when thoroughly established, and therefore cultivation is out of the question.

TO COOK NETTLES

The young tender shoots should be well washed, dried, and tied in neat bundles. They should then be steamed till tender—generally for about twenty minutes—and then served with *beurre fondu* or other simple sauce.

NEW ZEALAND SPINACH

NEW ZEALAND SPINACH (*Tetragona expansa*) is quite distinct from the ordinary Spinach, but so valuable a summer vegetable that I have included it in this book. I noted



NEW ZEALAND SPINACH

(*One-twelfth natural size; detached branch, one-fourth natural size*)

its value in vol. vii. to extend the season when other kinds fail, but I did not go into cultural details, and these I will make as brief as possible. This, as its name implies, is a native of New Zealand and was brought into cultivation by Sir I. Banks, and is valuable in hot summer

or in dry hot soils where the ordinary plants fail. It is useful as a vegetable in a boiled state and valuable for colouring purposes. It likes a light, rich soil, and ample space, 3 feet between the plants. We sow under glass in small pots and plant out early in June. It may also be sown in the open the middle of May, but sown under glass the plant gives earlier produce and at a time it is more valuable. It is best grown on the flat on a south border, and grown thus will give a supply till cut down by frost.

SOME ONIONS

THE Potato Onion is not largely cultivated in some parts of the kingdom; in others it is a great favourite, especially in small gardens, and more so in the southern part of the kingdom. It is called the Underground Onion also, and as regards culture it somewhat resembles the Shallot, but is distinct. All the three varieties here described are different from the ordinary kinds, and they are useful as they rarely fail. The small bulbs of the Potato variety are planted singly, and in warm situations, such as Devon or Cornwall, it is usually the rule to plant on the shortest day and take up the crop on the longest; but this rule does not hold good in heavy land or cold situations, as March would be early enough to plant and August to lift. The bulbs are planted in well-manured land, in rows 18 inches apart and half that distance between the plants; the soil is made fairly firm previous to planting, and the bulbs are pressed down in the soil and made firm. The plant or old bulb forms clusters of young bulbs round the old one, and when extra fine roots are desired, it is a good plan to place spent manure between the rows or feed with liquid manure or a quick acting fertiliser. By mulching or earthing up when the growths are a good size, the plant is induced to form better clusters, and at that time there should be no lack of moisture till the young bulbs are full sized, and only withheld as they begin to ripen. When stored they will remain sound a long time if placed in a cool airy store. This variety is not raised from seed, and it is more valuable for early supplies than later, as the other varieties are then more plentiful.

The Egyptian or Tree Onion, often called the Garden Rocambole, throws up stems from the bulb which is planted, and on this is produced a number of small bulbs at the top of the main stem; these being in a cluster, they are much liked for pickling. The plant often produces nearly a dozen small onions at the top of the stems when well grown. These when ripe keep for months if suspended from a roof in a cool place. The cultivation is simple. The plants may be propagated from the bulbs formed in the soil or from those on the stem placed in shallow drills early in the spring, as advised for the Potato Onion, but less room will suffice for the bulbs planted from the stem, 6 inches apart being sufficient. The growths need supports as the Onions form, and the plant matures its growth much better when supported. They like a rich, light soil, and at the planting it is necessary to make them firm in the soil as often birds pull up the loose bulbs.

The Welsh Onion is the *Allium pistulosum*, a herbaceous perennial, a native of Siberia, and very hardy. There are two distinct varieties, the red and white, and it differs from the common Onion as it never bulbs; the roots are long and tapering, with strong fibres, and its stems and leaves are hollow. Its value in the garden is mostly to furnish young growths for salads in the spring, and for stews and soups in a green state. Used in this way it is liked for its mild flavour, and as it starts into growth much earlier than our garden varieties, being so much hardier, it is useful. Sown in July or August it will give a spring supply; sown broadcast a small bed will suffice. We grow it near the herbs; it makes a good border plant.

TO BAKE ONIONS

Take any of the milder flavoured Onions of good size and, having removed the outer coats, boil them for about

forty-five minutes in water. Dry the Onions with a cloth, place them on a baking dish, surmount each with a small piece of butter, cover with buttered paper, and bake for an hour. Serve with *beurre fondu*, or plain butter. Season with salt and pepper.

TO STEW ONIONS

Peel them and place them in stock (two quarts to six large Onions) seasoned with salt and pepper. Allow to simmer until they are quite tender. Reduce the stock, pour it over the Onions, and serve.

ONIONS AND CHEESE

Take some large Spanish Onions, skin them, and boil them until they are quite soft. Drain them in a colander, and then pass them through a sieve. Place the mashed Onions in a pan together with (to each Onion) an ounce of butter, an ounce of grated cheese, and a little pepper and salt. Allow the mixture to simmer for a few minutes, stirring the while, and then serve.

Instead of placing the pulped Onions in a stewpan, they may be placed with the butter, pepper, and salt, and a little stock or milk (two tablespoonfuls to each Onion) in a pie-dish, the cheese being grated over the surface, and place in the oven till baked a nice brown.

STUFFED ONIONS

This is a recipe given by Mrs de Salis.

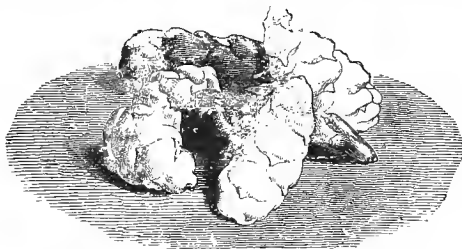
Peel a couple of fair-sized Portugal Onions, parboil and drain them; scoop out the centre, but keeping the Onions whole. Chop up the inside of the Onion with a little meat and a little fat bacon; add some bread-crumbs, a sprig of parsley, and a small piece of lemon peel, chopped fine; add pepper and salt to taste; then

beat it all up to a paste with a well-beaten egg and stuff the Onions with it, dredge them with flour, and fry them a nice brown; then place them in a stewpan with a rich brown gravy to cover them, and let them stew gently for two hours.

OXALIS CRENATA

THERE are two distinct forms of *Oxalis* used for vegetable purposes; the one named above is a tuberous rooted plant, a native of Peru, but introduced into this country in 1829. There are several varieties of the *Oxalis* grown in the country named under the name of Oka and some of these are not of much value here, requiring warmer soils than ours. Deppi, the other variety, I will describe later on; it is not so much liked as *Crenata*. Many persons would not consider these vegetables equal to our own; others, who have lived in the countries named, have a better opinion of their merits. They possess a peculiar acid taste, but the acidity is removed by care in cooking; indeed many of our own vegetables which are strongly flavoured would be much better if the water in which they are boiled were changed when about three parts boiled. The tubers of the *Oxalis* are produced freely and are, when well grown, of the size of a large walnut, having a smooth skin and eyes in profusion, and a yellow skin in one case and a dull reddish one in the other. The tubers are long and pointed, somewhat like the Chinese Artichoke. The plant is extensively cultivated in the temperate parts of Bolivia and at times is exported to this country, but I fear the sale is not a large one, and our cooking deters many buying them, as they need more than ordinary care. In the countries named they are cooked by steam, being placed on straw beds, which keeps the tubers from contact with the water. In Bolivia they are exposed to the sun for some days. By exposure, much of the acidity is removed, the

tuber being much sweeter and more floury, like Potatoes. The tubers command a much better price than the Potato, and at La Pax are largely cultivated; the soil being most fertile, they grow freely. At Lima the leaves and tops of the plant are used as a salad, and even in this country I have seen it used in the same way as Spinach or Sorrel; indeed it somewhat resembles the last named plant, as it contains a considerable quantity of oxalic acid. The young stems of this plant, also others of the species,



TUBERS OF OKA-PLANT, *OXALIS CRENATA*

(One-third natural size)

have been used in tarts; but I should add, used thus the tarts would need a lot of sweetening or flavouring. The culture is peculiar; the aim is to get as many tubers as possible from the stems. The soil must be light, rich, and warm, and the tuber is propagated like the Potato, leaving an eye to each tuber. Cuttings also take root freely if placed in a warm bed in March or April and planted out in May and June in rows 3 feet apart and 2 feet between the plants. The shoots are best earthed up as growth is made, and this is continued several times till the early autumn—September—when the tubers begin to form. They will be ready for use in November and may be kept good for months if taken up and stored in sand in a cool place, kept quite dry, as damp or frost soon decays the tubers. The plant does not thrive in wet or

heavy soil ; and though the plant in good soil grows freely, I mean the top growth is ample, the tubers are not numerous unless the position is favourable and the summer most favourable. The best position should be given the plants, and at the start much time is gained by potting up the tuber and starting under glass.

I have referred to the other variety, *Deppi*, a perennial plant and a native of Mexico introduced much at the same time as the first named variety, but this species is more used in a green state than the other, the young leaves being dressed like *Sorrel*. They are also used in soups and boiled as a vegetable with lamb or veal. The roots of this variety are fleshy, tapering, white, and clear, and the crowns or tops of the roots have a number of small scaly bulbs from which the plants are produced in abundance. This variety by many persons is preferred to the former as it is less acid, and when properly served makes a tender, succulent dish, easy to digest and a good dish for invalids. The roots when full grown are 3 to 4 inches long and 1 to 2 inches in thickness, and the plant needs a rich root run, indeed any old spent manure or decayed vegetable mould will grow it well, but it needs much moisture and prefers a southern aspect. In a heavy clay soil it makes poor progress ; grown thus it runs along the surface and does not form its elongated or bulbous root. It comes freely from seed, but it is best grown from the off-sets or bulbs, these planted late in April. Twelve inches between the rows and half that distance in the row will be sufficient, as it will be seen. This variety is very different in growth from *Crenata*. The bulbs at planting should be made firm and only lightly covered with soil, and they do well if given a mulch of decayed manure in dry summer. The plants grow till cut down by frost, when they should be lifted, stored in sand, the crown growths removed and the bulbs stored till planting time.

TO COOK OXALIS TUBERS

The tubers should be exposed to the sun for a few days, and may then be boiled after the manner of Chinese Artichokes. If sun-dried for some weeks, the tubers may be eaten uncooked. The leaves of this plant may be cooked after the manner of Sorrel.

HAMBURG PARSLEY

THE top growth of this plant is much like the ordinary garnishing Parsley, not much curled, but the edible part of the root is like a small or blunt Parsnip. The roots are very fleshy and of a peculiar flavour, and well worth culture in gardens where variety is liked, as this root is in season from November to April. As with most roots the land should not have been recently manured, as this causes a rank growth and splitting up of the roots into sections.



EARLY HAMBURG PARSLEY

(One-fifth natural size)

What is required is land deeply dug which was well manured for a previous crop. For roots of any kind that go down into the earth deep cultivation is a necessity. The best roots I ever grew of this plant was in land that had just been cleared of Celery, the last-named plant having been highly fed, and the trenching and moulding up just suited the Parsley roots. Seeds should be sown in March in drills 18 inches apart and the plants thinned to half that distance. The after-culture is simple, merely

keeping the crop free of weeds. The roots will be ready for use in November, as then they will be full grown, but they make a nice vegetable if used in September before they are at their full size. The bulk of the roots are best lifted and stored in November in a cool store in the same way as Beetroots, and will remain good till the spring. Mere size should not be aimed at, but fleshy medium-sized roots, and these will have superior flavour to the large coarser ones.

TO COOK HAMBURG PARSLEY

The roots should be cooked as Celeriac.

PATIENCE

PATIENCE (*Rumex patientia*) is by no means a popular plant in this country, but one that will grow when Spinach fails. It will grow in almost any soil, but prefers one that is moist. A hardy perennial and a native

of Italy, in that country it is still a favourite on account of its free growth and the enormous quantities of leafage it gives. When allowed to run wild or to ripen seed, there is a great difficulty in getting rid of this plant; indeed I would not advise its culture unless it is used in a young state and the plants thrown away when they begin to form seed; cut over frequently, the plants throw out a large number of young leaves. It is

easily raised from seed sown in the spring, and there should be ample space—2 feet between the rows and 12 inches between the plants. There should be no delay in cutting down the seed stems, as when these form the plant will not furnish leaves freely, the stems being robust and growing to several feet in height. The edible portion is the young leaves, and these are used like Spinach. Older writers advise a fourth part of Sorrel to



HERB PATIENCE, OR PATIENCE DOCK

(One-thirtieth natural size)

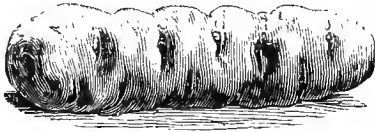
be boiled with the *Patience*, and then there will be a palatable dish. In France the leaves are used as a substitute for *Sorrel*, as this plant starts into growth much earlier, and when young is not at all an inferior vegetable. The leaves are also used in salads in the early part of the year when other green vegetables are scarce. The plant may be increased by division annually; and grown thus it gives an earlier supply than from seed.

TO COOK *PATIENCE*

The leaves should be cooked as *Sorrel*.

CONGO POTATO

THERE are three varieties of Potatoes that are quite distinct from our ordinary garden forms, and the one most notable is the Black Congo, though this is not much grown in this country. This variety cannot be called profitable as an article of food when grown along with



POTATO VITELOTTE

the ordinary kinds, but it is useful in decorative cookery, and the flavour is not inferior. This variety has a black skin and dark flesh. It may be planted in the spring, but requires a well-drained, warm soil. To be served whole the tubers must not be pared but boiled with the skins intact, and when cooked the outer skin is to be removed with a piece of flannel.

FIR APPLE POTATO

THIS is distinct, and the growth when fully developed is like a cluster of Fir Apples—hence its name. It is in my opinion, much superior in flavour to the Congo, and when well cooked makes an attractive dish. The tubers should be cooked whole and not be broken in the cooking. The culture is much the same as advised for the Congo, but the Fir Apple Potato will grow in colder positions, though it well repays a well-drained soil. There are two varieties : the White, which is a smaller kind, and the large Red. They resemble each other in flavour, and it may not be necessary to grow both kinds, the last named being best in loamy soil. They are best planted in April or early in May, and will not require too much space. The tubers will be ready in autumn, and should then be lifted and given cool storage in sand or soil.

SWEET POTATO

THIS is a great favourite in America, and a recent writer in *The Garden*, vol. lxiii. p. 191, gives the following extract in reply to a previous note of mine on the value of this root in South Africa: "The New

York market growers prefer a dry and mealy Potato such as the growers about Vine-land, New Jersey, produce in the highest possible quality, but our Southern friends prefer one that is moist and sugary, with a



"ROSE DE MALAYA" SWEET POTATO

(One-eighth natural size)

tendency to exude syrup while cooking. As for the methods of sowing they are legion. Baked as suggested by Mr Wythes they are excellent; better still when cooked in the drippings under roasting meat, like Yorkshire pudding. Roast possum, with Sweet Potatoes cooked in the gravy, forms the acme of culinary delight to the Southern negro. Plainly boiled the Sweet Potato is satisfying and nutritious. The skin should be left on until cooked, then removed before sending to the

table. Boiled and cut into slices, then fried brown, the Sweet Potato forms a nice breakfast dish, and is also admirable as an accompaniment for roast poultry, especially duck. A rich baked pudding is made from Sweet Potatoes; and the same vegetable in the Southern States takes the place of pumpkin in making pies. They are also made into biscuits (I mean buns according to the speech of the home country), and are slowly baked with butter and sugar until glazed with a rich caramel sauce. I am sure that English people who once acquire a taste for Sweet Potatoes would welcome this addition to their tables; though, unlike green Corn, which every foreigner loves upon first introduction, a taste for them must be cultivated." Any of the ways in which ordinary Potatoes can be cooked are applicable to Sweet Potatoes. See "The Book of Vegetables."



SWEET POTATOES

QUINOA

QUINOA (*Chenopodium quinoa*) is an annual plant, a native of Peru. It is a large growing plant, having stems 4 to 6 feet high and large pointed leaves of a woolly nature. It is rarely grown in this country, but in America its seeds are much employed in cookery. In the mountainous parts of the Cordilleras the Quinoa was at the time of the Conquest by the Spaniards much used, being the chief farinaceous seed used for food, and travellers inform us that now it forms with the Potato the common food by those who cannot afford more expensive foods. The seeds are the edible portion used, and these are largely used in soups and made into bread, and the latter is considered to be digestible; also when fermented a kind of beer is made, the seed being mixed with millet; and they are largely used for feeding poultry. It will be seen that the plant is valuable in the countries named; moreover, in addition to the seeds, the young tender leaves are gathered and cooked like Spinach. In this country the seeds are not much sought after, as they have a peculiar acrid taste, and so far I have never heard of anyone getting rid of this bitter flavour no matter how the seeds were cooked. It may be that owing to the plants requiring a longer season to perfect their growth in this country this bitter taste is the result, but as the same thing occurs in France, it appears that the Quinoa is not at its best grown in certain soils. There are several varieties of this plant, and it is the white one that is used for food, the others have red and black seeds,

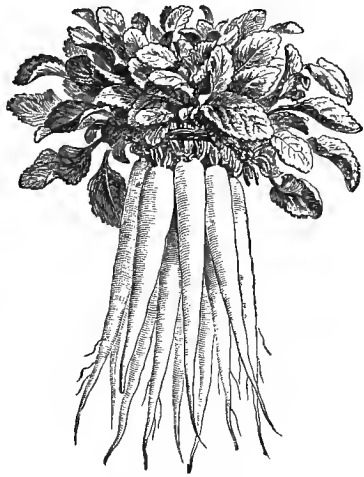
also different coloured leaves. Most of them seed freely and are vigorous growers. The plant making a rapid growth, 4 to 6 feet, and being an annual, it will be seen that much space is required to grow it properly; and it is well to give a good holding soil, and a warm, well-drained one in addition, as though the plant will grow in almost any position, it will not ripen its seed in this country, unless grown as advised. The best results I have seen *have* been from plants sown under glass in March and planted out in May or June; that is, given similar culture to our vegetable Marrow. Another plan is to sow in small pots and place in a cold frame, and to plant out when a few inches high. Seed may be sown in the open in May in drills 2 to 3 feet apart and the plants when large enough thinned to half that distance in the row. The plant raised under glass gives a much better return. The points of the shoots should be taken out when in full growth to induce side shoots to form. The leaves may be used as Spinach, and there should be ample supplies of moisture given in dry, hot weather. The plant makes its growth from June to September, and at the last-named month it perfects its seeds. These are then harvested, dried, and stored in a cool place. When the plant is only grown for its leaves, less space may be given.

TO COOK QUINOA

The leaves are cooked as Spinach. The seeds, having been boiled, may be used in soups and cakes as flavourers.

RAMPION

RAMPION (*Campanula rapunculus*) is a biennial plant, a native of Britain. It is not largely used. The roots, which are fleshy and white, are used in a boiled state and in salads; the leaves also are used in winter salads. The plant prefers a light soil, ample moisture, and a shady situation, and in dry, thin, poor soils the plants have a tendency to run to seed, so that it is well to give good culture and not sow too early for winter supplies. May is quite early enough, indeed I have got excellent roots from July sowings. The plants should be sown in drills 12 inches apart, and the seedlings thinned to half



RAMPION

(One-third natural size)

that distance or even less; and owing to the seeds being very small, many growers sow broadcast, and thin the plants to 3 or 4 inches apart, merely raking the seeds in when sown, and making the surface quite level. Why I advise drills for

most vegetable seeds is that during the growth of the plant the soil or surface is more easily kept free of weeds, as by using a small Dutch hoe the work is done quickly. In the case of very small seeds that are difficult to handle, it is an easy matter to mix sand with the seed and thus ensure even distribution in the drills and prevent crowding of the seedlings. The roots are fit for use in the autumn, and the plant may be wintered in its growing quarters, the only drawback being that in severe weather it may be difficult to get at the plants, therefore cool storage will be advisable with plenty of soil or sand placed between the roots. If the plant is much liked, two sowings may be made, in April and June.

TO COOK RAMPION

Treat the roots after the manner of Skirret, boiling till tender. Serve with melted butter or sauce Hollandaise.

RHUBARB

RHUBARB (*Rheum hybridum*) is among the most useful of plants, and certainly one that cannot be called rare. My excuse for including it in this book is that it did not find a place amongst the ordinary vegetables and it is too valuable to omit.

There has been more interest taken in the cultivation of this plant of late years, some valuable introductions have been distributed, and there is a great breadth of land occupied by these roots near London and the larger towns in the kingdom; indeed from Christmas to June, by forced produce and the open ground supply, a large trade is done, and the leaf stalks that are the edible portion both in a blanched and natural state make an excellent substitute for fruit in tarts, and a delicious preserve, and by no means an inferior wine. The plant will be found in all gardens, large and small, but it is not always given the best cultivation. It is a native of Central Asia, and has been cultivated in this country for over three hundred years. It does best in good soil and well repays for food given, but clayey or wet soils are not suitable. It is propagated readily by division, and doubtless that is a good way to get a true stock of any good kind, but I have been very successful with seed, and I find it comes remarkably true from seed, and excellent produce may be secured in less than two years from the date of sowing, that is the plants the second year produce freely. The plant requires a deeply dug, well manured soil, and when raised by seed, April is the best time to sow, and by

division just before growth is active in the early spring; each portion of root detached from the plant should have a crown or bud and the roots should be placed below the surface, so that the crown is quite covered. One good



RHUBARB STALKS

(*Ox-e-seventh natural size*)

sized plant will make a number of roots when carefully divided, and these should be made firm at the planting by treading during the work, when the soil is in suitable condition. No stalks should be taken the first year, and in dry weather supplies of food in the shape of liquid manure would be well repaid. In all gardens of any size it is advantageous to make new quarters every two or three years, and many growers force the older roots, but I find much better results will follow if two or three

year old roots are forced; the leaf-stalks, though less numerous, are much stronger, and that is a great gain. In planting, ample space should be given the plant, at least 3 feet between, and 4 feet between the rows, and in the late spring and early summer the seed stems must be cut as soon as they appear; but some of the newer kinds, such as the Sutton Rhubarb, bear very little seed and this is an advantage. Few plants force more readily, and this usually commences in November and is continued up to the time the open ground crop is ready. The old plan of covering

over with pots and warm litter is good, as it gives better flavoured stalks than from lifted roots forced in strong heat.

I have referred to seedlings and their value, and we raise plants every year for forcing in this way. The seed is sown in April each year, and the very early kinds are selected, but the well-known Champagne comes true from seed. The seed is sown in land well manured and the surface made fine, in drills 2 feet apart. Sow very thinly, and when large enough thin to 12 inches apart. The next season every other root may be removed and planted in good land, given more space, or the whole may be taken up and transplanted, and will then make good forcing plants the next autumn. If not intended to force, the first plan is good, but in all cases there must be room allowed for the plant to develop.

For forcing purposes we usually use the Early Scarlet, or Royal Albert. Myatt's Linnæus is an excellent variety, as also is the Paragon; the latter is large and very prolific, and for general purposes the well-known Victoria is an excellent variety. I have referred to the Sutton; this may be classed as a superior form of Victoria, earlier than that variety, with a bright red stalk, the colour of which is well retained after the cooking; the stalks are large and of splendid quality.

Recently there has been a small form of Rhubarb introduced from the Colonies, and this differs from ours in that it starts so early into growth in the autumn that it requires no forcing whatever, but to prevent damage by frost it needs cover of some kind. It is sent out by several firms; it is also grown in the United States, so that it will soon become well known. Another new Rhubarb is Daw's Champion, a very early and good form, a grand forcer. It will be seen that there is a wide selection of really good kinds.

ROCAMBOLE

ROCAMBOLE (*Allium scorodoprasum*) is a plant closely allied to the Onion and Garlic, and is much used in cookery where the last named plant is disliked, the Rocambole being much milder, and when used in a green state, more delicate in flavour. The plant is a hardy perennial, a native of Denmark and not so much grown in this country as on the continent. The bulbs when matured are not so large as well grown Garlic, and these are produced in a cluster at the root. The stem growth is about two feet. The stems also produce a number of small bulbs, and from these the plant is reproduced freely, but those at the root give much the best plants, if divided and planted in February or March. Much the same culture should be given as to Shallots or Garlic. They do best in good soil, planted in rows 2 feet apart, 6 inches between the bulbs, and placed at least 2 inches under the soil, each bulb being pressed well into the soil at planting, as they have a tendency to lift out of the ground when forming root at the base. The after culture is very simple, merely keeping the ground free of weeds, and as the leaves begin to decay the bulbs should be taken up and dried in the sun, then bunched together and stored in a cool shed. They keep well if suspended from a roof which is damp proof. In suitable soil and position, I have seen these plants wintered in the open. Grown thus they make a very early growth in the spring, and when required to use in a green state this mode of culture answers well.

SCOLYMUS

I HAVE seen this plant grown in this country under the name of Golden Thistle—doubtless that appellation applied to its golden coloured flower heads. These are large, and



GOLDEN THISTLE

(One-twelfth natural size; root, one-third natural size)

the growths attain a height of 3 feet. The genus is a small one. There are three species, and the variety, *Hispanicus*, or the Spanish, is the form grown as a vegetable; it is often known as the vegetable Oyster plant, as the flavour

of the roots is supposed somewhat to resemble oysters. On the continent, especially in Spain, the roots are cultivated in the same way as the Scorzonera, and are considered to be quite as good. The leaves and stalks of the plants are also eaten as Cardoons by the people of Salamanca, but they should be well grown to be equal to the Cardoon. The flowers also are used for various purposes, one being for the adulteration of Saffron. This variety is biennial and easily cultivated, and may be increased by division or grown from seeds. If the latter, they are best sown in the early spring and when large enough transplanted into deeply dug land, as though the plant will thrive in almost any soil when grown for use as a vegetable, it repays good culture and should be planted in ground that was well manured for a previous crop, as if recently manured the roots fork or split up badly. Seed is best sown in March or April in rows 2 feet apart and the plants thinned to 18 inches apart in the row. The roots will be ready by the autumn, and may be lifted and stored or left in the soil and used as required.

TO COOK SCOLYMUS

The roots may be cooked in any of the ways in which Salsify is cooked. See the recipes given in "The Book of Asparagus."

SCURVY GRASS

SCURVY GRASS (*Cochlearia officinalis*) is a hardy annual, a native of this country, being found growing on the sea shores often among sand and stones, or on shallow rocks with por-

tions of sand and earth to root into. Many years ago this plant was a much greater favourite in kitchen gardens than at the present day, and as regards its value as a vegetable it is of course inferior to many others. But it should not altogether be lost sight of,

as for many years it was considered a valuable addition to salads, and in a fresh state it possesses valuable medicinal properties as it is stimulant, diuretic, and a powerful antiscorbutic, and for these qualities it is a valuable salad plant and readily grown. It is not a large



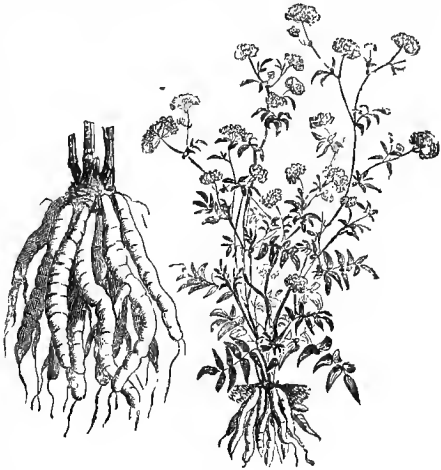
SCURVY GRASS

(One-tenth natural size)

grower, the plants being dwarf. The leaves are heart shaped, shining, roundish, and the plants produce small white flowers freely in May and June. It is best sown in a moist or shady position. For years I grew this plant for salad purposes under the partial shade of a large Medlar tree, and there was an ample supply of leafage, if the plants were given an occasional watering with salt mixed in the water. Sown broadcast in April, and the young plants thinned when large enough to handle and then kept free from weeds, there will be ample cutting. Used as a vegetable it is best sown thickly and cut over like Spinach; but I fear it will not find much favour owing to its peculiar flavour, though as an addition to salads it is worth room in most gardens.

SKIRRET

SKIRRET (*Sium sisarum*) is a plant cultivated for its roots, rarely seen in British gardens. It is a perennial plant, a native of China and Japan, and in those countries it is esteemed and much used for food. The edible portion, the root, has a very peculiar taste and it takes some time to get used to it, but this occurs with other vegetables. The roots are prepared in the same way as Scorzonera and Salsify, but I do not think them equal as regards quality to those last named. The plant is raised mostly from seed, but it may also be propagated much in the same way as Seakale, that is by root cuttings, but these must have a bud or eye, and at the planting the cutting must be placed under the soil.



SKIRRET

(One-twenty-fifth natural size; detached roots,
one-eighth natural size)

Seed sown at the end of March or early in April is the best mode of culture, but the seed will not germinate freely unless the soil is moist, so that it is necessary to give water in dry weather. For that reason I would advise sowing in rather deep drills 18 inches apart, and thinning the seedlings to 9 inches in the drill. The plant likes light, rich, deep soil, and needs ample moisture during growth, such as liquid manure or fertilisers. In October the roots will be large enough for use, or even earlier in good land. Later on the roots should be taken up and stored in the same way as Salsify. The seeds are obtained from the plants the second year they are in flower in July or later. The plants left in the soil will show flowers earlier, but these are of no value. The roots are much divided, or spread out, and need care in lifting.

TO BOIL SKIRRET

To boil Skirret, a dozen roots should be first well washed and scraped and at once put into a basin of cold water with an egg-cupful of vinegar in it. In five minutes place the roots in an enamelled stewpan containing a boiling mixture of half a pint of water, quarter of a pint of milk, two slices of lemon, a little salt, and half an ounce of butter. Boil until quite tender, which will usually be in about an hour's time or a little more. Take out the Skirret and well drain it. It may be served whole, melted butter, *beurre fondu*, or sauce Hollandaise accompanying it in a sauceboat. Or the boiled roots may be cut into inch lengths, and a layer of them placed at the bottom of a fireproof pan, seasoned with pepper and salt, and covered with a little bechamel sauce, this arrangement of layers being repeated till the pan is full. Over all sprinkle grated Cheshire, Cheddar, or Parmesan, and having covered it with very small pieces of butter, heat for a few minutes in the oven.

SORREL

THERE are several kinds of Sorrel, and they are mostly perennials, the one that is probably best known being the Common Garden Sorrel that is so plentiful in fields. There are others somewhat similar. The Belleville is a cultivated French variety, and an excellent garden Sorrel. This is superior to our common form, and there is another of French origin having blistered leaves. This latter is grown largely on the continent, as it is the last to run to seed; the common British form is bad in this respect. The Roman or Round-leaved Sorrel (*Rumex scutatus*) is a hardy perennial much grown abroad; this has a trailing stem, and is from 12 to 18 inches in height, having heart-shaped leaves, glaucous and smooth, which are more acid than those of the other species, and this by many persons is much liked, as for flavouring or in a cooked state as a green vegetable it makes a more palatable dish. There is also the Mountain Sorrel of the French (*R. montanus*) and the Oseille Vierge, a smaller form, and these do not run so quickly to seed as our varieties. The leaves of the last named have a pale green colour and are less acid, but the Oseille Vierge verte liste is the reverse in this respect, and the Green Mountain variety has larger leafage of a dark green colour, which are produced earlier in the spring and is the last to run to seed, so that it is a desirable garden variety. The Messrs Vilmorin of Paris give the larger Belleville as the best variety, and there is no doubt but that it is a good garden variety, though there are others on the continent under diverse names that are well worth attention. At one time I gave this vegetable

a trial, and had over a dozen named kinds, British and foreign; some were very much alike, but the best was certainly the Belleville and the Green Mountain. The chief difficulty with some of the small forms is their tendency to run to seed, and when this takes place the plant does not furnish good leaves, so that it will be seen the more it is cut and used the better for the plant, and in all cases the seed stems should be removed as



COMMON BROAD-LEAVED FRENCH SORREL

(One-sixth natural size)

soon as they appear. At one time Sorrel was grown in the large market gardens near London much more than at the present day. This is not surprising, as with more gardens the tendency is to grow what may be termed popular vegetables, and Sorrel requires more care in gathering and packing than many other vegetables. It was much used in the spring many years ago, but I have frequently been over large gardens where the plant was not grown. In addition to its use as a vegetable, it makes an excellent addition to the salad bowl. It may be lifted and gently forced under glass, and supplies had much earlier in the season if grown thus.

The culture is most simple, but the plant does not always come true, at least it tends to revert back to its original type when sown from seed. I prefer to divide the plant, and if this is done annually there will be a full crop of succulent leaves, and the plants grown thus will not run to seed so quickly. In many gardens the few plants of Sorrel are often relegated to an out-of-the-way corner of the kitchen garden, but these plants do not give the best material, and if left for years in one place the foliage becomes small and the plant seeds quickly. In France these plants deservedly get good culture, and well repay for labour by the wealth of leafage given for two or three months or more. Our cooks at home are not fond of Sorrel like the French chef, but it is a very good vegetable, and one that agrees with delicate persons. I have referred to seed sowing. This is best done early in the spring, though to gain time I have sown any special variety as soon as the old plants had ripened the seed in August; but sown then it needs an open well-drained soil and the seedlings thinned as soon as large enough to handle. Sown in March the seed is best in rows, 2 feet between the rows, and half that distance between the plants, when finally thinned the plants lift readily, so that seedlings transplant freely, but there should be no lack of moisture afterwards. Good land will furnish the best leaves, as though the plant will grow almost anywhere, it well repays when given a deeply dug and well-enriched soil, and prefers a moist situation. I have referred to autumn sowing. These plants will give leaves in the following April. Spring sown will need about two months before being large enough for use. In cutting the largest leaves should be used first, thus allowing the smaller ones to grow; if all are cut at the start it is wasteful. I now come to propagation by division, and this gives leaves in a shorter time; it also has the advantage of retaining

any good variety. The plants are best if divided just before new growth commences in the early spring months. Our mode of culture is to plant a small quarter annually and destroy the oldest, and not to use the same space again. For a time a certain space is allotted for the plants, and this lasts about three years. The planting begins at one end, and each year a third of the room is occupied, and at the end of the three years another site is selected. There is no loss of land, as it will be seen that every season a portion or bed is destroyed. The plants divide well, and grown about 2 feet apart in rows soon attain a large size, especially the large kinds. Our plants occupy an east aspect, as our soil is light—in cold places; a warmer site may be better, but as the supply is not required after July, the position named is suitable. On the other hand, where Sorrel is needed as late as possible, I would advise having plants in two positions, north and south, as the first named would give a much later supply than the last, but the one on the south would be early and equally useful. For ordinary supplies a quarter planted every three years will give fair material for salad purposes, or an occasional dish; and in some gardens I have seen this plant used for dividing the herb beds or as an edging, the smaller forms being used, as they are compact growers and not readily injured by slugs or bad weather.

TO COOK SORREL

Sorrel is best cooked with butter as recommended by *The Queen*, preparing it thus: Pick it over well, nip off the stalks, and, if thick, tear the midrib from the leaves, tearing these also into shreds if large; then well wash it in several waters, finally leaving it in a colander under a running tap for a little; then drain, shake off most of the moisture, and put it in a pan with a dust of sugar and one ounce of butter for each quart of picked Sorrel,

the moisture adhering to the latter being sufficient to cook it, with the butter. Let it cook till well reduced (it reduces a great deal), and when quite tender, dust in a little fine flour; stir this over the fire till well mixed, when it must be all rubbed through a sieve, reheated, and blended with a little more butter or some cream, or some good veal gravy, and, if liked, a little more sugar, and use. Sorrel may also be cooked by any recipe given for Spinach. Sorrel is one of the things that require specially to be used fresh, hence probably its unpopularity here, where there is not sufficient demand to ensure a constant fresh supply. To soften the acid flavour objected to by some, use half and half Sorrel and Spinach, or one part Spinach to three of Sorrel. If the Sorrel is old, and consequently rather more acid, mix it in the same way with Lettuce instead of Spinach, and allow a little more castor sugar.

SOY BEANS

SOY BEANS are cultivated exactly as Kidney Beans, the plants being bushy, and growing from one to two feet



ÉTAMPES YELLOW SOY BEAN

(One-eighth natural size; detached pods, one-third natural size)

or more in height. They are of vigorous habit, and of great productiveness. The beans are cooked and eaten, either green or dried, exactly as Kidney Beans.

SWEET CICELY

SWEET CICELY (*Scandix odorata*) is a plant rarely seen in gardens at the present day, but well worth culture. It is valuable in all preparations in which the flavour of Aniseed is required. By many persons the smell is objected to; as both the leaves and other portions of the plant smell so strongly of the above herb, it is disliked. It is much more cultivated in France and other portions of the continent than in this country, and, of course, from the market point of view it cannot be termed a profitable vegetable. The leaves are mostly used mixed with salads, and the roots also are edible, these being used in soups and with cooked meats. The plant is perennial, hardy, and a native of this country, and readily raised from seed, which is best sown in September for the next season's supply. It will grow in almost any soil, and if sown broadcast, should be sown thinly. If sown in the spring, it should get a good position and a better root run, as the growth must be made in a shorter time. The plant, when grown for its roots, should have more room, and is best grown in rows 12 to 13 inches apart and the seedlings well thinned at the start. For this purpose the seeds should be sown early in the autumn in an open position.

TO COOK SWEET CICELY

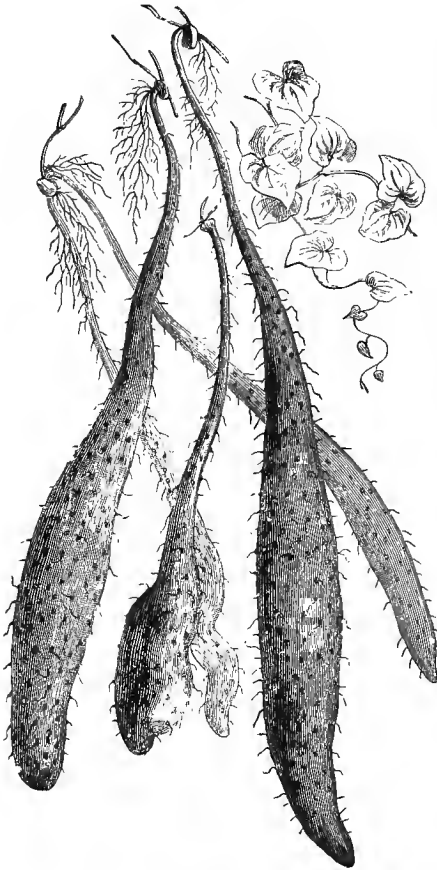
The roots are prepared exactly as Chervil.

TUBEROUS GLYCINE

THE Tuberous Glycine (*Apios tuberosa*) is known under the name of Glycine, owing to the roots being sweet—the leaves also in some cases. The tubers, which are the edible portion used as a vegetable, are pear shaped. The above plant is a hardy perennial and has a very pretty habit. It is of a trailing nature, and grown in pots it forms a handsome plant trained to stakes. As far as its value in vegetable form is concerned, of course it must be considered somewhat rare in this country; but this is not the case in other countries. It is a favourite in France, being cooked after the manner of Potatoes. The tubers are sweet. They are farinaceous, and much liked by those who have lived abroad. The plant is readily propagated by the tubers. These divided in the early spring and planted in light sandy or well-drained soil, and a sunny exposed position in the early spring, will make good tubers by the autumn. The light, graceful habit of the plant, with its brownish-purple sweet-scented flowers, makes it a pretty garden plant, the flowers being pea shaped, and produced in racemes in profusion.

YAM

THE Yam, so familiar to all classes in the West Indies, China, and other warm countries, is practically unknown in this country, as though seen at times in Covent Garden and eagerly purchased by those who have visited the tropics, few persons have much knowledge as to the nature of the plant or of the wholesome and palatable character of the food it provides. These roots are mostly grown in the tropics, and they are much esteemed, but an old West Indian told me that he had never in all his travels found Yams equal to those of his own country. There they were in great abundance, and in the greatest variety, and during the time they were in season, they formed a standard dish at the planter's table, and were one of the staple foods of the workmen—indeed, of all classes in the West Indies, being called the Barbados Yam. It is also stated that visitors to that country soon become accustomed to the flavour of the Yam, and in time fond of them. There are many ways of cooking this vegetable, that are almost unknown in this country, the common one being to roast or boil, but there are nearly a dozen others. The Yam is a perennial plant and a native of China, but found in many other warm parts of the Globe; and at one time it was thought to be valuable as a substitute for the Potato. The roots vary in shape in some parts, and the two varieties that are mostly known, *Dioscorea Batatas* and *Dioscorea Decarsneara*, are distinct in shape, and the first named is a long root. These are difficult to grow on account of their going down so great a depth into the soil, and the thin trailing stems attain



CHINESE YAM
(One-sixth natural size)

a height of from 6 to 9 feet. The growth is not unlike the Black Bryony found so plentifully in hedges in some parts of the country, as the twining stems and shining heart-shaped leaves much resemble Bryony. The second named variety is more like our own Potatoes, smooth and regular in some instances, in others very irregular, and the roots do not require such a deep soil as they grow much nearer the surface. This variety has been cultivated in many countries and was introduced

into France in 1854, and this, or a plant but differing little in shape and growth, is largely grown in South



YAMS

Africa; indeed those who have been many years in that Colony inform me they prefer the Sweet Potato to our common form. The growths of the Yam and Sweet Potatoes are so distinct in different countries that it would serve no useful purpose to describe them at length. As a cultivated root I do not think the plant will ever become a success in this country. The roots, or as they should be more properly termed the rhizomes, are full of starch and juice, and these differ from the Potato as they go downwards in the soil perpendicularly often to the depth of a yard if the soil is loose, and these plants in suitable soil, when left to themselves, spread over the ground and readily take root. The leaves of the plant have been described as not unlike Byrny; the flowers are very small, and a pale yellow, produced in small racemes at the axils of the leaves, and the roots may be said to be club shaped of different colours—mostly dark or fawn colour. The flesh is white and milky.

In China these roots have peculiar names, and the people use them largely as food; indeed as largely as the Potato is used in this country. For seed purposes the smallest tubers are preserved through the winter in pits well lined with protecting material and covered over. In spring they are taken out and sprouted by being placed close together in well-prepared soil. They then produce their trailing stems, and these, when strong enough, are made into cuttings, and planted in ridges they soon root in moist weather and form tubers; fresh stems also appear, but these are removed as they rob the tuber. There are several varieties of Chinese Yams, but they are of no value in this country. The variety noted above is very common in China, and this thrives so well that a trench 10 to 15 feet long will often produce enough roots to keep one man a whole year; that is, there is sufficient produce or roots for consumption for that period. The plants are also increased by cutting in

pieces ; also from seed. The latter is gathered when ripe, and is covered with soil to preserve it. In spring the seeds are taken out of the ground and sown. Great care must be taken that the roots or seeds are not injured by frost. It is found that a much larger crop of roots is obtained when the plants are given stakes or supports during growth. They twine round the sticks very regularly, much like our Scarlet Runners, and the tubers average from 14 to 20 inches long, the upper part being smallest, and this is often used for planting when cut, and the thick and fleshy part for food.

AMERICAN YAMS À LA FRANÇAISE

A very good way of cooking Yams is that advised by Mrs de Salis. Cut the Yams into slices about half an inch thick, trim into oval shapes, put them into a pan full of water ; wash and drain them upon a cloth ; next place them in a stewpan with two and a half ounces of butter, and season with salt and a grate of nutmeg. Moisten with a pint of water ; put the lid on and let them simmer for three-quarters of an hour, turning them over occasionally, so that they may be equally a bright yellow colour on both sides. Arrange in a circle, and pour the following sauce over them :—

Mix an ounce of butter with a dessert-spoonful of flour ; put it into a stewpan with a gill of cream, a teaspoonful of castor sugar, a little salt, and a teaspoonful of lemon-juice. Stir this over the fire till it thickens, when it will be ready.

TO BOIL YAMS

Having peeled and well washed them, place in cold water and boil exactly as Potatoes.

TO BAKE YAMS

Wash and lightly scrape the Yams. Then bake in a hot oven till soft. Serve as baked Potatoes with butter, pepper, and salt.

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