

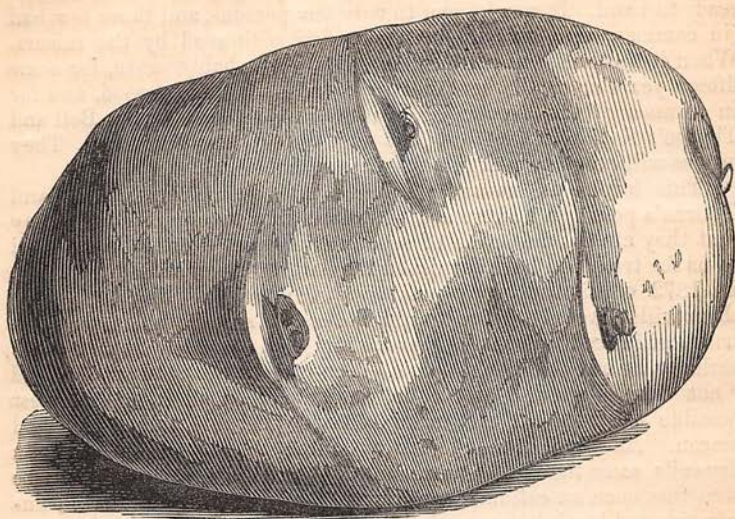
blooming kinds, because they will have the aid of glass after the first or second week in October, and be safe from the destruction of their opening buds by frost. I think if I had to provide a display for an employer, and certainly if, apart from all business, I were to grow a lot for my own enjoyment, I should select for the conservatory a few from every one of the classes, including Incurved, Reflexed, Japanese, Chinese, Anemone, Pomponé; and trust for the names to the "Garden Oracle."

NOTES ON POTATOES.



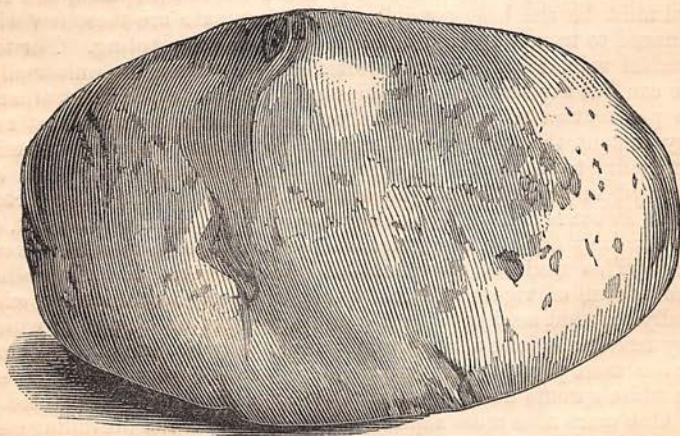
THE notes on "Disease Proof Potatoes," which I contributed to the FLORAL WORLD for December 1872, have, I am happy to say, created a great demand for the sorts recommended, and I beseech of our readers to make themselves safe in respect of seed potatoes in good time, for the disease proof sorts will soon be bought up, and we may really witness a repetition here of the American mania, which raised the value of some sorts of potatoes to fifty dollars a root. All we experimental gardeners can do, is to state as plainly as possible what we know, and then leave the laws of supply and demand to settle the commercial matters. Now it will be seen, we hope, how important it is for the interests of the public, and of really honest journalism, that we should keep aloof from all trading operations and avoid the very appearance of evil. We have but one correction to make in the list of disease proof potatoes published last month. It is proper that *Wood's Scarlet* should be added to the list, for this we find is one of the very best on our wet soil, and in several far removed wet and dry districts, it has given good crops in the past summer. If I could be carried away from public duty by private friendship, I should stick to *Headly's Nonpareil*, which is without question the finest potato in the world, and as the production of my dear old friend, Mr. Headly of Stapleford, a most agreeable reminder to me of happy days of "auld lang syne." Mr. Headly has lately sent me samples from his lively sandy loam, and they are certainly superb. He reports that he has taken up a heavy crop, and is as much as ever satisfied that Headly's Nonpareil is worthy of a place in every garden in the British islands. Fortunately for the cause of truth, it matters not to Mr. Headly, as it matters not to me, on financial grounds, whether his seedlings or my seedlings produce money in the market, and so we can consider their respective claims without fear of the detestable influence of what is called the "commercial principle." Therefore in respect of the favourite potato of my dear old friend—who is one of the best judges of *quality* in vegetable productions that ever lived—I shall say that on dry soils it is disease proof, but on wet soils the disease annihilates it, and there, as respects the disease, the grand question is at an end. In respect of quality, apart from the subject of disease, Headly's Nonpareil is all that Mr. Headly declared it to be years ago—the finest potato in the world.

In comparing the immense number of reports that I have received from various parts, the preponderance of testimony is in



BELL AND THORPE'S SEDILLA.

favour of Sutton's Red-Skin Flour-ball as the best potato of the season, and the American Early Rose as the second best. Now I



BELL AND THORPE'S CLIPPER.

must repeat the remark made in the report published last month, that Bell and Thorpe's *Model* is the best potato of the season, for it

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was not only disease-proof, but handsome, fine in quality, and wonderfully prolific. You will ask, perhaps, why it was not reported on from several districts as a remarkably fine potato, and the answer is ready to hand. It was known to very few persons, and those few had (in common with myself) been supplied with seed by the raisers. When it becomes generally known, it will probably prove, for some fifteen years or so, the best of all potatoes. Nearly as good, and far in advance of the average of potatoes in the market, are Bell and Thorpe's *Sedilla* and *Clipper*, of which we present figures. They are, as will be seen, neat kidney-shaped varieties.

This brings us naturally enough into contact with Bell and Thorpe's potatoes, and we are bound by duty to our readers, to say that they are the finest lot of seedlings we have ever had submitted to us for trial, and have furnished the largest number of any group in 1872 of disease proof potatoes. The raisers' descriptions of them will serve as a guide to purchasers of seed potatoes, who, we trust, will carefully observe that we find some of Bell and Thorpe's varieties as bad as other people's. The words "disease proof" and "not disease proof" are to be understood as affording the best possible estimate we can make of their probable values in a bad season. As there is no potato absolutely disease proof, and as on dry soils, some that suffer much on wet soils, escape unhurt, it will be seen that such an estimate as we make for our own guidance is comparative and local, but as we judge potatoes on heavy land lying low, our estimates of goodness are perhaps severer than many other people's would be, and perhaps for that reason the more useful to the public generally, as explained in the *FLORAL WORLD* last month.

There are the very important preparatives for the crop of 1873 now to be thought of. The land must be well prepared, and the seed must be the best possible. Most fortunate are those few who managed to trench up land in autumn for potato planting. For the dreadful rain, rain, rain, prohibited the work almost universally. We can but say that opportunities must be made the most of, and the preparation of the land for potatoes should commence at the very instant that the ground is either sufficiently frozen or sufficiently dry to allow of deep digging. As to the seed, it should be prepared in *daylight*, and the simplest way is to put the selected tubers in boxes and baskets, and set them out on the floor of a loft, or any similarly dry and cool place where there is some amount of daylight. This mode of treatment will insure short, hard, purplish sprouts, full of vigour and ready to push freely when covered with kindly soil, but seed potatoes taken from sacks or clamps in which they have made long white sprouts are already debilitated, and have for the most part to make a quite new growth from dormant eyes, the white sprouts usually perishing as soon as the sets are planted.

One more note must suffice for the present. The prevailing custom of planting potatoes so close that the haulms become entangled, is an invitation to disease to come and ravage the field. The potato, more than any other plant in the garden, lives on sunshine, and the planting should be so ordered that the whole plant is fully exposed to the light and air, and the soil around it allowed to absorb the heat

of the sun. Our own rule is to plant all strong growing sorts four feet apart, and put out winter greens between. By the time the winter greens begin to be a little hampered by the overspreading growth of the potatoes, the latter will be ripening, and will be taken off the ground. The result will be, as a rule, a fine crop of potatoes, and the ground covered with a grand growth of such things as sprouting broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Scotch Kale, and such like. S. H.

CHOICE STRAWBERRIES FOR GARDENS.

BY GEORGE SMITH.



As you well know, we grow a large collection of strawberries, comprising all the most important of the new introductions, and thinking a few notes on those which deserve to be the most generally cultivated, to be acceptable, I have sent them, for you to do with them as you wish. As some strawberries do better on certain soils than others, it is desirable it should be stated that the soil of my garden is a rather deep holding loam without being too heavy; strawberries therefore do exceedingly well, and some varieties which make but poor progress in other gardens thrive amazingly, and yield very excellent crops. It may happen that in very heavy or very light soils, some of those which I shall recommend as being really first-class may not do quite so well as could be wished; but it is very certain they are all exceedingly good when grown under favourable circumstances. The varieties which are the best for maintaining a succession over the longest period are—

Aromatic.—A heavy cropper, producing large and handsome fruit, fine flavour, with a most agreeable aroma; valuable for main crops.

Cockscomb.—Fruit large and rather flat, hardly so handsome as some others; flavour rich, productive and useful for main crops.

Crimson Queen.—Fruit large, but sometimes coarse in appearance; the flesh is very solid and highly coloured, but it is hardly so richly flavoured as some others; it is, however, most valuable for late crops, and will be much appreciated by those who prefer a rather acid strawberry.

Dr. Hogg.—Valuable in rather strong soils, but of little use in those of a light character. The fruit is large, handsome, and well coloured, and the flavour rich and sweet; rather late.

Elton Pine.—The fruit is large, handsome, and well coloured; rather late in attaining maturity, and like other late kinds it possesses a rather acid flavour.

Frogmore Late Pine.—This is one of the most valuable of the late varieties; the fruit is large and handsome, and the flesh is rather sweeter than the other late kinds.

James Veitch.—Fruit very large and handsome; flesh white, with dark crimson skin; flavour rich, with most agreeable aroma; fine for main crops.

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