



All communications for "Veronica" should be addressed to "Graphic" Office, Auckland. Secretaries of Horticultural Societies are invited to send short reports of their proceedings, and also any items of interest to Horticulturists. Photographs of Flowers, Fruits, or New Vegetables, or Garden Scenes, will be welcomed.

NOTICE TO SECRETARIES

We would urge upon secretaries of all Horticultural Societies the importance of sending us the dates of their shows. Neglect to do so means loss to their Society in the end.

All schedules forwarded to the Garden Editor of "The Weekly Graphic" will be acknowledged, and a sketch of same published in these columns.

COMING SHOWS.

- HAMILTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.**
Autumn Show, April, 1913.—Wm. H. Paul, secretary and treasurer.
- GREY TOWN AND LOWER VALLEY HORTICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY.**—Autumn Show, April 17th, 1913.—Mr. A. L. Webster, Secretary.
- HOTI VALLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.**—Autumn Show, April, 1913.—T. E. Barker, Wellington, secretary.
- AUCKLAND HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.**
Autumn Show, Town Hall, April 18 and 19, 1913. W. Satchell, Managing Secretary.
- CAMBRIDGE DAFFODIL SOCIETY.**—Annual Spring Show, September 5 and 6, 1913. A. Norman Macky, Hon. Sec. and Treasurer.

Gardening has brought happiness to many of the greatest and wisest in the land. Statesmen have found recreation in it, philosophers have commended it, doctors have prescribed it, lawyers have advocated it, and poets have sung its praises. It is the most unselfish of pleasures, for it is enjoyed the most in the largest company, and, unlike some other amusements to which the race is prone, inspires no evil passions, inflicts no pain, and causes injury to no man, either in character, in his health, or in his estate.—J. CHAMBERLAIN.

THE VALUE OF DRAINS.

It is reasonable to assume that the dry season is past. As March has come in with rain, it is very improbable that we shall have an extended period of drought after this. A troublesome season is the general verdict on that now passing—better than the previous one in some respects, but far from ideal. But after all, when we examine the matter, it is usually found that the trouble could have been avoided. When an extra abundant rainfall spoils the soil for working purposes for any long period, it is a sure sign that something is wrong; it may be the soil, but it is far more likely to be want of drainage. When the subsoil is of such a character that the water is unable to sink readily through it, the water accumulates; if there is heavy or continued rainfall until the soil becomes full and the air is excluded. In such condition the water disappears very slowly, partly by slow shrinkage and partly by evaporation; the soil gradually becomes more congealed, exclusion of air drives the particles together till they become a solid mass. If they are broken up they get back to the same condition, particularly if plants are put in so that the soil cannot be well worked. In summer time this condition culminates in a shrinkage, resulting in solid masses intersected with cracks. The only effectual remedy is drainage, which will prevent accumulation of water, prevent evaporation to any great extent, and allow air to permeate the soil. The time is now arriving to attend to these matters, which are of

far more importance than is often realised.

The making of a drain is a thing easily done wrong. The bottom of a drain should be made as narrow as possible. If pipes are used, they should just fit the bottom; if tools are not available that will enable this to be done. Lower one side of the bottom so that water will run to that side, and lay the pipes there. But it is useless to lay pipes unless means are taken to lead the water to them. If covered with the soil excavated the water will soon close it up. The pipes may be covered

able; they are the best material of all for the purpose. Clean metal or hard rock is also suitable; rotten rock is quite useless, as the gritty particles would be washed in and close the drain. Drains may be, and are, made without pipes at all, using either scrub or clean, hard metal, but obviously the pipes are safest and most permanent. Where soil is bad, no opportunity to improve it should be lost.

Clay soil may be improved to a very great extent by draining; this alone, by allowing the atmosphere proper play, will effect wonders. Road sand, or any

plentiful we think they will be immensely popular. Asparagus fern and light grasses are the best accompaniment, and great care is necessary not to overdo or overload the epergne. Many people spoil the effect through putting in far too many flowers. The best effect is secured by placing the flowers in as natural a position as possible, and using long stems, and on no account should they be crowded.

Horticultural Shows

THE FRANKLIN SHOW AT PUKEKOHE.

This show attracted a very large attendance of the general public, and on Saturday over 6000 were assembled on the show ground. The vegetables, flowers, and fruits were shown in the Masonic Hall, and proved to be of great interest to the crowds of visitors. It would have been a great convenience had the officials provided an exit, instead of keeping people waiting to allow others to pass out before they could enter. Practically no notice was taken by the daily press of the Hall exhibits, and a big district like Franklin, with a rising centre-like Pukekohe, should bestir itself to secure better treatment for horticulture, and if this cannot be done, why, then, let them inaugurate a society for promoting horticulture.

A new feature which created much interest was the district bays, or courts, for the display of produce grown in districts. The idea evidently was a copy on a limited scale of the district courts, which were such a source of attraction at the Auckland Winter Show. There were three entries, Mauku, Pukekohe, and Tuakau. Pukekohe won first place, easily giving evidence of a large amount of time and thought having been given to its "get up." The facings of this court were picked out in a great variety of seeds worked out in a pleasing design, and must have taken an immense amount of patience and skill, each seed evidently being handled separately and glued in.

We shall not attempt to enumerate the contents, but simply say that flowers, fruits, vegetables, pot plants, and produce were all there, well arranged and set in tins. Mauku took second place, and the display did them credit. It was well arranged, of good quality, and another season we shall not be surprised if the positions are reversed. Tuakau was third. This court had some good things, but lacked variety, and gave evidence of being hurriedly got up. We are certain Tuakau can do better, and hope another season will find them giving more attention to this important matter.

Pukekohe district has long been famed for onions, and a good display was made. There were eleven entries, and all were good. The light-skinned Brown Spanish, although not so good a keeper as the dark, is a better cropper, and the most popular among growers. Four entries were made of dark skins, and these were grand bulbs. Potatoes were well represented—seven entries for round, five for weight, but only one for collections (Mr. F. Ballard, of Drury), whose collections were nice table size, clean, and well grown. Carrots were of extra good shape and quality. Cucumbers were of great size and long, all being Pukekohe prize strain. The judge evidently gave most points for size, as the



See Letterpress. A WELL ARRANGED TABLE CENTRE.

with scrub—manuka tea-tree is as good as anything. The scrub should be laid all one way, the butt ends looking down the drain, being covered with the brush ends of each succeeding bundle. This will leave nothing but the brush visible, and that will prevent the soil from getting among the butts or reaching the pipes. After a time the soil will become more or less set, and it will not clog the drains even when the lighter parts of the scrub have decayed. This kind of drain is not adapted to lawns, for there is sure to be a sinking in for several years. Some imperishable material is preferable for lawns, so that the level will not be disturbed.

In the vicinity of towns, foundry clinkers and ashes are usually obtain-

sand, old manure, ashes from rubbish fires, are all good, but best of all materials is turf from an old pasture; this, cut about two inches thick, and stacked till the grass is dead, will improve any soil and add largely to its fertility.

TABLE CENTRES.

Miniature Sunflowers with ornamental grasses are good subjects for this purpose. Gaillardias of certain light varieties are also good, but best of all to our thinking is the Gerbera Jamesonii. The new colours of Gerbera are now beginning to be shown, and once these are more