

HORTICULTURE.

VEGETABLE-GROWING.

VEGETABLE sowings for the coming month include turnips, spinach, lettuce, early cauliflower, and cabbage, and large white and main-crop onions. Turnips and spinach come into early use, but the remainder form an important contribution to the spring and early summer supplies.

Varieties of lettuce, cauliflower, and cabbage proved suitable to the locality at the season should be selected and sown in seed-beds well prepared and in good heart. The land where they are to be planted out is now probably occupied by peas, beans, or root crops, or in many cases by tomatoes. It should be warm well-drained land, carefully kept free of weeds, as if these are allowed to seed they cause endless work during the moist weather of winter and early spring, when there is little opportunity of destroying them with the hoe. As soon as the present crop is harvested apply a good dressing of manure, and cultivate the land in preparation for the plants, which will then be ready for putting out.

In many districts the main sowing of the all-important onion crop will be made now. Not only the mild large white Italian onions that are so invaluable in spring salads, but in many districts the better-keeping sorts are sown now for planting out in early spring, so that they may be harvested in the dry weather of midsummer and escape the ravages of mildew fungus. It is specially desirable that the land for the seed-bed should be firm and clean of weeds and their seeds. Sow the onion-seed thinly.

When the main celery crop has almost finished its growth it may be cleaned up, removing suckers and dead leaves, and then earthed up for the purpose of blanching the stems. This usually is best done in one or two operations. Choose fine dry weather. Tie the bunches carefully with damp raffia or flax, and make the soil fine and friable before filling it round the plants.

Carefully protect the growth on the asparagus-beds. In exposed windy places it is sometimes worth while putting stakes and a two-ply binder-twine along the leeward side of the bed to prevent the growth being blown over.

The harvesting of potatoes, onions, pumpkins, and other crops will now keep one busy. This is an operation needing great judgment and care, or all the work of growing the crop is heavily discounted. Just as important is the matter of storage and packing. If the store has not had a good spring cleaning it should be well cleaned up now. There is much virtue in the old-fashioned limewash, and more still if a solution of bluestone be added to it. This makes a good dressing for the walls. The floor of a store requires further attention. It should be scrubbed, or carefully raked out and well moistened with some solution such as formalin, 2 parts to 100 of water, or a solution of bluestone, 1 lb. to 25 gallons water. Quite often the vicinity also will need attention. It is a waste of time selecting produce and then putting it in a store infected with potato-moth, late blight, &c. It will possibly be sold before it goes bad, but buyers soon become aware of the fact that goods from certain stores have a bad knack of