

**MY GARDEN COMPANION, A  
HANDBOOK FOR AMATEURS  
AND OTHERS: A COLLECTION OF  
PRACTICAL ARTICLES ON  
GARDENING. SECOND SERIES**

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My Garden Companion, a Handbook for Amateurs and Others: A Collection of Practical Articles on Gardening. Second Series by Donald McDonald

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**DONALD MCDONALD**

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# My Garden Companion

A HANDBOOK FOR AMATEURS AND OTHERS

A COLLECTION OF PRACTICAL ARTICLES ON  
GARDENING

BY DONALD McDONALD, F.L.S.

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### AUTHOR'S NOTE.

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The contents of this book comprise a further series of the gardening articles contributed to **The Daily Telegraph** during the past year.

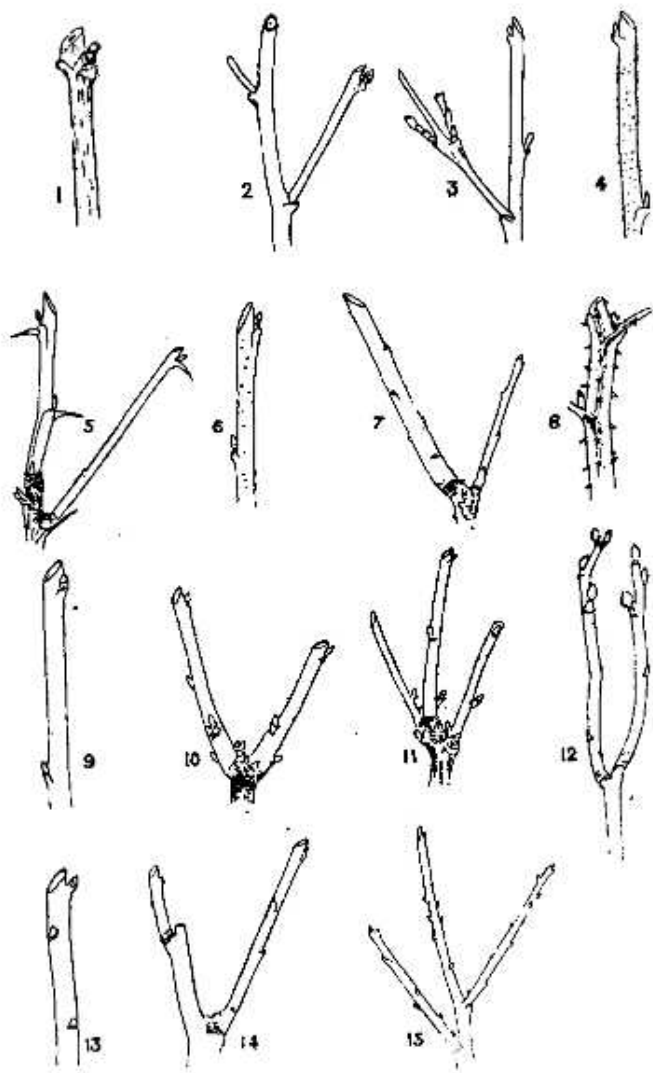
Two editions of 5,000 copies each of the first series have found a ready sale, and only a few copies now remain.

It is gratifying to know that such numbers of readers have availed themselves of the Notes in this permanent form, to which numerous practical illustrations have been added.

I have again to express my thanks to the Proprietors of **The Daily Telegraph** for the special permission to reproduce these Notes in book form, and to numerous correspondents who have written me regarding them.

DONALD McDONALD,  
*Fellow of the Linnean Society.*

CLEEVE HOUSE,  
BEXLEY HEATH, KENT.  
*January 1st, 1903.*



**A Lesson in Pruning.**

See chapter commencing page 10; also see page 9.

- 1.—Grape. 2.—Nectarine. 3.—Peach. 4.—Raspberry. 5.—Gooseberry. 6.—Cherry.  
 7.—Apricot. 8.—Blackberry. 9.—Plum. 10.—Red Currant. 11.—White Currant.  
 12.—Black Currant. 13.—Apple. 14.—Pear. 15.—Damson.

## THE APPLE.

Of all the productions of the vegetable world which the skill and ingenuity of man have rendered conducive to his happiness and to the increase of his enjoyments the apple stands forward as the most conspicuous. It is now a fruit crop of universal growth, and although the most beautifully sun-stained examples reach us at various periods of the year from Canada and California, and the temperate regions of our great Australian Colonies, for flavour none of them equal those grown in England. The garden apple is believed to have been introduced into Britain by the Romans, and the wild apple of our hedgerows is the type of the fruit when left to degenerate, and to which it would speedily return but for constant culture. The finer and highly-flavoured apples are used as dessert, and are often expensive; the juicy and hard-fleshed sorts are in request for culinary purposes, while those of a more austere nature are utilised in the making of cider, and not a few go into pulp for the foundation of certain brands of jam.

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In regard to the general cultivation, the apple, whilst it will live in any common soil, thrives best in a soft medium loam, slightly impregnated with sand and overlying a well-drained subsoil. On such a formation the fruit attains full size, colour, and flavour, and the trees will be most productive, and continue to flourish for a long period. Yet there are certain soils and situations in every part of the country where perhaps some of the varieties named over-leaf have not proved successful. There are also many apples that gain local fame, and are unknown outside limited bounds. Upon investigation, it is often found they are identical with some well-known variety, and though our list does not pretend to include all the good apples, it has been compiled according to the votes given at the last Apple Congress, for popularity over the widest area in both sections.



## DESSERT.

NAME.	SEASON WHEN RIPE.
Devonshire Quarenden .. .. .	July August
Irish Peach .. .. .	August
Yellow Ingesterie .. .. .	September
Ribston Pippin .. .. .	October December
Cox's Orange Pippin .. .. .	October January
King of Pippins .. .. .	October January
Blenheim Orange .. .. .	November February
Scarlet Nonpareil .. .. .	November February
Claygate Pearmain .. .. .	January February
Court Pendu Plat .. .. .	January April
Sturmer Pippin .. .. .	February May
Fearn's Pippin .. .. .	March June

## CULINARY.

Keswick Codlin .. .. .	August September
Lord Suffield .. .. .	September October
Ecklinville Seedling .. .. .	September October
Worcester Pearmain .. .. .	September October
Pomona .. .. .	September November
Stirling Castle .. .. .	October November
Nonsuch .. .. .	November December
Warner's King .. .. .	November December
Bismarck .. .. .	December February
Dumelow's Seedling .. .. .	December March
Prince Albert .. .. .	January February
Bramley's Seedling .. .. .	January April

Many of the sorts included in the dessert class are suitable for cooking, notably Blenheim Orange, and *vice versa*, like Worcester Pearmain. Dumelow's Seedling is known under the name of Wellington in some parts of the country. Court Pendu Plat is popularly known as the Wise Apple, because it is one of the last to come into bloom, and on this account often misses the late spring frosts, thereby ensuring a certain crop of fruit.

## THE PEAR.

Although there is a wild pear found in some parts of England, we have nothing on record to show that the luscious varieties now found in gardens have emanated therefrom ; yet doubtless they come from a common origin in the course of centuries of cultivation. The fruit was certainly known to the great nations of the East, and most of the approved types have come to this country through Europe.

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Gerard, in 1633, enumerates seven sorts, all of which, he says, and many more sorts of "tame peares," and those "most rare and good, are growing in the ground of Master Richard Pointer, a most cunning and curious graffer and planter of all manner of rare fruits, dwelling in a small village neere London, called Twickenham ; and also in the ground of an excellent graffer and painfull planter, Mr. Henry Banbury, of Touthill Street, neere Westminster, and likewise in the ground of a diligent and most affectionate lover of plants, Mr. Warner, neere Horseydowne, by London, and in divers other grounds about London." This was the pear in olden times. As is well known, it is now grown as a delicious table fruit, also as an appetising cooking fruit, and again for the production of a liquor called perry.

Dessert pears are characterised by a sugary aromatic juice, with a pulp soft or melting, as in the beurres or butter pears. Kitchen pears should be large of size, with the flesh firm, neither breaking nor melting, and rather harsh than sweet. Perry pears may be either large or small, but the more uninviting the taste the better will be the liquor. We are most interested in it as a garden product chiefly for eating purposes. It is as easy to grow a good pear as a bad one ; the difficulty lies in knowing what is really good. The amateur cultivator has many difficulties to deal with. He takes up a catalogue of fruits containing very many varieties, and as he may only require six or a dozen he is quite at a loss what to select from among the many glowing descriptions given. He ventures to make a selection, plants his trees, and when they fruit he is much disappointed. It is very difficult to name pears that will do in all situations. It may be done, but in such a list many of the best must be avoided, as what varieties will do in one position will not succeed

in another. A deep dry loam is best when the trees are growing on a stock of their own species, but a moister soil is preferable when the quince stock is employed. The soil may be 18 inches in depth. Gravel is a good sub-soil when the incumbent earth is suitable. Clay is a good subsoil, generally speaking, though it admits of great improvement and amelioration by draining. To prevent the trees from striking down into a formation of this nature, a great deal may be done to this end by a good preparation of the surface soil, sufficient elevation in planting, and by giving the roots a proper direction in the first instance at the time of planting.

“ Though a loamy soil of medium texture is that in which the pear may be most successfully grown, yet almost any soil, with a proper and careful preparation, will support the pear tree in good health, and enable it to produce fair crops of fruit.” Soils of this nature seldom require any artificial drainage, the natural texture and composition of the subsoil being such as to admit the percolation of moisture with sufficient freedom. On the other hand, heavy, adhesive soils, approaching to clay, require the greatest care and attention in draining in order to prevent the stagnation of moisture beneath the prepared surface. On these soils trees must be planted high; for it is under such circumstances that the roots become most injured by deep planting, which is far less felt on light porous soils.

## EATING PEARS.

NAME.	WHEN RIPE.	SUCCEEDS BEST AS A
Doyenne d'Été	.. July ..	Bush or standard
Beurre Giffard	.. August ..	Tree or wall
Bon Chrétien	.. September	Standard or wall
Beurre d'Amanlis	.. September	Standard or wall
Fondante d'Automne	October ..	Standard, pyramid, or wall
Louise Bonne of Jersey	Oct. & Nov.	Tree, espalier, or wall
Glou Morceau	.. November	Bush, espalier, or wall
Doyenne du Comice	December	Wall, espalier, or pyramid
Beurre Diel	.. December	Bush, pyramid, standard, or wall
Winter Nelis	.. January ..	Pyramid, espalier, or wall
Josephine de Malines	February	Bush, espalier, or pyramid
Easter Beurre	.. March ..	Bush, pyramid, or wall