

MOTERING NOTES.

CLEANING SPARK PLUGS.

Spark plugs require cleaning occasionally. The proper way is to take the plug apart and get all the black, carbonized oil and dirt away from the junction of metal and porcelain. The porcelain must not be roughened with sandpaper or a file, as this makes it more likely than before to accumulate carbon. The points should be brightened with emery cloth, and the rest of the plug be treated with petrol and a brush.

ATTRIBUTES OF PETROL.

Most motorists will be surprised to hear that a very light petrol, of, say, .690 gravity, is not necessarily the best. A low specific gravity means ready evaporation, and this involves great difficulties in storage, transport, and safety. Also the higher the specific gravity, the higher is the calorific value; that is, the heat evolved on burning unit weight of the substance. Petrol consists of a number of compounds of carbon and hydrogen, and the higher the gravity, the greater becomes the proportion of hydrogen, but the heat of combustion of hydrogen is over four times that of carbon—a fact which may help to explain this phenomenon.

CAR-TRACK DRIVING.

One of the biggest abuses solid tyres are subjected to is the practice of car-track riding, according to an official of a prominent rubber company. Aside from the element of danger attending skids from contact with the frogs and switches of street car tracks the premature depreciation of a tyre is certain, because of the abnormal strain on a small section of the tyre. When on the tracks most of the load is concentrated on a limited portion of the tread, so that it is overloaded and quickly worn away; besides a sharp pointed frog may actually cut out a piece of the tyre just as a knife would, this action being aggravated when the rails and rubber are wet.

FREAK HILL-CLIMBING.

An amazing variation of methods of negotiating abnormal surfaces and gradients is to be observed in the motor-cycle hill-climbing tests so popular at Home. In one of the tests (says the "Motor Cycle"), the hill concerned was one of some severity, with a very loose and moist surface. The majority of the side-car outfits failed through wheel slip, resulting from rushing tactics. One or two old hands climbed steadily, avoiding the loose crown of the road and selecting firmer ground at the side. The engine must be kept turning over at a moderate rate, well within its power. Undue acceleration and knocking are alike to be avoided. Solo failures mostly resulted from too great a speed. The old hands climbed steadily and slowly, wrists braced, feet on foot-boards, and eyes selecting the firm places.

FUEL ECONOMISING DEVICE.

The chief disadvantage of the majority of extra air inlets is that they leak when closed, sometimes causing erratic running at low speeds, and difficulty in starting. An English inventor now claims to have eliminated air leaks and to have introduced a new method of control (says the "Autocar"). Such fittings are usually controlled by lever on the steering column, and drivers often fail to get the best results. This new extra air inlet is operated by a pedal, placed adjacent to the accelerator, which is opened by pressing the foot sideways. On removing the foot the extra air device automatically closes, and it is impossible to leave it open. The inner portion is clipped to the inlet pipe, and round it a sleeve rotates, carrying the balls and springs, which are displaced from their seatings as the sleeve is moved. These balls, when seated, prevent any leakage of air which may penetrate between the fixed and rotating portions of the device. Very little effort is required to operate the valve, since it has not to work against the suction of the engine.

Reference is made in Weddell's review of the frozen meat trade in 1919 to the New Zealand legislation to control the operations of foreign firms in the Dominion. Whether or not the American traders will accept the position which the New Zealand Government seeks to establish, says the Review, remains to be seen; but this legislation marks an important step forward in the attempts being made in various parts of the world to impose some effective check on the ever-growing menace of what is known as the "Beef Trust."



HORTICULTURE.

The weather changes of last week or two have just been such as to make us feel that we are in that period that makes the amateur gardener realize that there is just a little gap as it were between autumn and winter, during which we must hurry up and prepare for winter conditions.

The days are short, many mornings, evenings, and half holidays are unfit for the particular little job we intend doing, and these are just the little misses that often result in things being left over till spring, that ought to be done in autumn. Transplanting of small seedlings of annuals, etc., and newly rooted layers or cuttings must be done in time to make at least some new roots before the frosts overtake us otherwise so many will be turned out by the frost and die, that it will be wiser to leave them till spring.

Many of the self-sown annuals that can now be seen in our borders will not stand the winter, and are thus not worth transplanting, but there are numbers of nice little plants of hardy kinds of annuals as well as biennials and perennials that are worth picking out and transplanting, and which will make strong plants for early flowering. The large yellow coreopsis drummondii (or grandiflora), in particular should be saved for early flowering, also geums, anchusa, wallflowers, and don't forget the double arabis alpina, which can still be divided and is sure to delight with its masses of pure white flowers in spikes like small stocks. Cerastium with its small whitish leaves now, and throughout the winter, and later its snow white flowers is always charming. Cut out and clean out the crowns of gypsophila paniculata and fork round the plants as slugs are particularly fond of it, and if shelter is left for them, will take all the strong early shoots as soon as they appear above the ground, and although the plants will come on again, they are much retarded and a dense weaker growth takes place. Watch helioborus also as they are now coming on, the dwarf white niger is greatly improved if provided with a glass topped covering of some sort, particularly if the flowers are wanted for cutting as is usually the case. The oriental varieties, particularly the white hybrids make magnificent plant if grown in deep soil with plenty of shelter, say, near a fence facing east and will bloom all through winter and spring, single specimens will grow three feet across and two feet high, with immense foliage and scores of bloom stems each giving a dozen or more blooms in succession. Don't delay your ordering, particularly roses and shrubs, and be ready for them when they arrive. What you have to do will of course depend greatly whether you are planting new beds or simply replenishing. Some varieties make very good border plants and can be used with nice effect where they are suitable spots, but the greatest satisfaction can only be got from separate beds and proper cultivation and pruning, cutting the plants well back each year. Dwarf growing and small rooting plants can well be grown in the rose beds and by covering the surface and keeping it cool, are beneficial to the roses, particularly in hot and dry seasons. Pansies and violas are particularly suited both by their top and root growth and their colours which all harmonise with the various art colours of the roses, even the yellow of pansies and violas which however need not to be used if there is a desire to avoid everything approaching a primary colour. There are also various annuals such as phlox drummondii, etc., which can be used with good effect by selecting the colours used, or if the bed has a hedge or wall at its back some long spurred aquilegias can be grown with excellent effect towards the back, as with such beds the best effect is got by growing the bushes of the back row or rows to a greater height than those in front which is purely a matter of pruning. When your plants arrive they will not be pruned. Don't prune them but put them in just as they are, except perhaps to shorten some of the longest stems for convenience, as they will do better if the pruning is delayed until new roots have been formed.

Doronicum is an extremely useful thing which should be planted now so that its large yellow marguerite like flowers with their long stems should come in just as the daffodils are over, and if cut back as soon as their first blooms are over they will later on give quite a good second blooming. Unfortunately in most gardens quite a number of useless things and poor

varieties of desirable things are retained from year to year, where the space might just as well be occupied by good varieties. Take a look round and get rid of rubbish, for instance don't let any old useless rose occupy a space where you might have something good and delightful. How frequently the old useless montbretia potii is seen in large clumps where some of the lovely new varieties might just as well be grown. How much better to have some of the cactus dahlias, lovely in colour and beautiful in form, than dense ugly coloured things so often seen, and the same rule can be applied to so many things, and wondrous changes made at very little expense, such as pansies, polyanthus, auriculas, wallflowers, sweetwilliams, antirrhums, all of which have been so improved as to gain quite a new popularity.

GARDEN NOTES.

SHELTER HEDGES.

In town, unless the section is very large, there is not room for a shelter of tall forest trees, and hedges of various kinds have to be provided, and if the situation is very exposed it may be necessary to have several dividing hedges in addition to one round the margin and in addition to providing shelter, a hedge, if well kept, looks well, and it can be worked in as part of the landscape effect.

The site for a hedge should be well and deeply trenched, about two to three feet wide, and from two to three feet and a-half deep, a very liberal dressing of stable manure being worked in to encourage rapid growth during the first few years. Good drainage is also essential, more hedges perish through too much water than too little, and the healthy appearance of the hedges in and around Dunedin, after three months of dry weather, is ample proof of this fact. Drainage can be provided by laying a drain pipe along the bottom of the trench with the necessary fall and outlet, or, if the hedge is up on a bank, openings can be made at intervals. The best hedge of all is the holly, and though it is often considered to be a slow grower, when the soil is well prepared and liberally manured it soon comes on, though it cannot compete with some of the olearias. Well-grown plants should be put in two feet apart, and although the sides can be clipped in from time to time the tops should not be stepped until they have reached their maximum growth. A newly planted holly hedge often looks very bad for the first year or so, if the plants have not been transplanted regularly while in the nursery, but if the leaves fall off they will recover all right in time. Olearia Forsteri is a very popular hedge, and there is little wonder, for it is so very accommodating. It thrives equally well in pure sand and well-drained clay, it will stand up to the salt-laden south-west winds, it grows rapidly, is easy to cut, and always looks well. It can be planted from 18 inches to two feet apart for an ordinary hedge, but if very high growth is desired three feet will be close enough. Olearia Traversii is a faster grower than O. Forsteri, and when shelter is required quickly it should be planted, but it never looks as well as O. Forsteri. Macrocarpa makes a good hedge when allowed to grow for an ordinary height, but it is not suitable for an ordinary low town hedge, and is hard to clip. Other hedge plants are Escalonia macranthe, which is very suitable for the seaside, Berberis, Darwinii, Privet, Laurel, Box Thorn, Elaeagnus, and Cupressus Lawsoniana. Occasionally it is desirable to have a deciduous hedge which will provide shade and shelter during the summer and allow the sun to get in during the winter, and, as the ordinary thorn is not desirable the most suitable is Hornbeam or beech. Where high shelter is required there is no better tree than the Pinus radiata (Insignis). It grows very rapidly, stands up to the strongest winds, and whether planted in single rows, double rows, half chain or chain wide strips, it is very effective. Cupressus macrocarpa also provides excellent shelter, and will stand a certain amount of pruning to keep it in shape, but it does not transplant well, and it is better to get balled plants if they are to be had. Pinus muricata makes a fine shelter belt, and as it is harder than either the Pinus insignis or macrocarpa it can be planted in districts where these would be damaged by frosts. Cupressus Lawsoniana and Menzies spruce also make good shelter belts, but neither grow as rapidly as the pines.

When planting shelter belts the most suitable distance apart is from 4ft to 6ft. Holes should be dug about a foot square and 18 inches deep, and when planting place the tree against one side of the hole and tramp the soil firmly; it can hardly be too firm.

RETURNED SOLDIERS.

MEETING OF ASSOCIATION.

MR W. PERRY ELECTED CHAIRMAN IN A CLOSE POLL.

The annual general meeting of the Wellington Returned Soldiers' Association, which was held in the concert chamber of the Town Hall last night, was distinguished by two things—the size of the attendance, and the lively and good-humoured interest manifested by the members in the business considered, and even though those present were about equally divided in their support of the two candidates who were seeking election to the position of chairman, not a discordant note was struck. Mr A. B. Sievwright, proposed by Mr A. Kyle and seconded by Mr J. O'Sullivan, and Mr W. Perry, proposed by Captain W. Hardham, V.C., and seconded by Mr R. Collins, were the candidates, and in a remarkably close contest, victory went to Mr Perry by 280 votes against the 266 polled by his opponent.

In calling on Mr Perry to take the chair, Mr A. Curayne, vice-chairman, expressed the hope that the members had found the right man for the position. They looked to him, he said, and hopefully, to see that the association was made a real live body in the future.

Mr Perry congratulated Mr Sievwright on the closeness of the poll. He was very glad to see such a large attendance, as it indicated that the members were taking a keen interest in the affairs of the association. The position he had undertaken was no light one, but he would try to carry out the trust given him, and he felt that in his efforts he would have the hearty support of all members.

Congratulations were extended to the new chairman by Mr Sievwright. He said the close vote showed that the members wanted a progressive policy, because his platform and that of Mr Perry's were practically identical. Even though he was defeated, the association would not lose his services, because he intended to render every assistance in his power. They should adopt a national policy with national ideals; and so get on the road of progress. That was the policy for which all returned soldiers should stand.

Mr Sievwright and Mr J. D. Harper were then nominated for the position of vice-chairman, and the ensuing poll resulted in favour of Mr Sievwright by 312 votes to 205.

Other officers elected were:—Hon. treasurer, Mr T. Jones; hon. solicitor, Mr T. Neave; auditors, Messrs Watkins Hull, Hunt, and Wheeler.

"TEN MINUTES' HALT."

It was early in September, Sunday evenin' I remember;
We'd been trampin' all the day long an'
our skins was sweatin' salt.
We was weary with the marchin' an'
our tongues was dry an' parchin'
When we fell out by the roadside for
the old ten minutes' halt.

She was young and she was slender,
an' her smile was kind an' tender,
When I saw 'er in the sunshine there
a-lookin' down at me.

I was lyin' there an' dozin', and I gazed
at 'er s'posin'
She was jist the kind of dream-stuff
that a fella Tommy'd see.

So she stood a minute waitin', lips apart
an' hesitin'
Then she spoke up softly, "Would the
Anglais S. that wish to drink?"
I was weary, I was thirsty; huskily I
murmured "Merci"
As I took the jug she held, an' set my
lips agen its brink.

It was "Packs on" then an' "Fall in,"
but I eard 'er voice a-callin'.
As we limped along the dusty road
"Bonne chance, Monsieur! Bonne
chance!"

Now I ain't a chap wot's flighty (I've a
wife and kids in Blighty),
But I guess I shan't forget that gal,
that damsel of France.

The executive of the R.S.F.U. begins the 1920 season with the good wishes and with the respect of a great number of lovers of the good old game of rugby. This body, which controls the football of a very wide area, has opened its deliberations and has already set its mark on the football of Southland, the prints will be for the gathering. In three matters it has shown itself composed of a majority of officers, who are ahead of club considerations and petty interests, motives too often clogging the wheel of football progress in other centres as badly as in Southland.

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