

MR. J. S. BISHOP, of Auburn, N. S., read the following comprehensive paper on the introduction and growth of this now important business in Nova Scotia :

“THE PROGRESS OF CRANBERRY CULTURE.”

J. S. BISHOP, AUBURN, N. S.

About twenty-five years ago the late Wm. McNeil, of Melvern Square, planted a small cranberry patch, with a view to supply the wants of his own table, as the vines grew, and came into bearing, the fact became evident to him that this branch of horticulture might be made a source of profit as well as convenience. Accordingly, he enlarged his plot from year to year, and talking the matter over with those, who like himself, were interested in small fruit culture, he induced others, here and there in the valley, to experiment along the same line ; taking care to plant the best native sorts that came within their reach. As literature was somewhat scarce on this subject, and the requirements, and different systems of preparing the ground and planting imperfectly understood, ten years slipped away before the public awoke to the fact that the waste unsightly bogs of the Annapolis Valley could be made to rival its best orchard land in point of productiveness. At this time berries rarely sold for less than ten cents per quart, and the supply was never equal to the demands of the local market.

Cranberry culture was now fairly in progress. A natural bog of about three acres, near the old post-road in the vicinity of Aldershot, that had always been at the service of the public, was leased, enclosed, and with very little done in the way of improvement, yielded the first year the snug crop of eighty barrels.

Since then, every year has seen more or less ground planted to vines, with increasing interest in this direction. In the year '91 it was estimated that there were seventy-five acres under cultivation, only about one-quarter of which was then old enough for bearing. The total yield of berries that year being between four and five hundred barrels ; 170 barrels were sent to Montreal, 60 barrels to London, Halifax, and St. John, while the local demand consumed the balance. With the year '94 came another good crop, this time over 1100 barrels. These were scattered all over Eastern Canada, some going as far west as Hamilton, Ont., convincing all, wherever they