

AMATEUR GARDENING NEAR TORONTO.

LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE.



IT is some years since I have troubled the regular subscribers of the *HORTICULTURIST* with what I call my experiences. I have been working away in a quiet manner, meeting with disappointments and reaping some experience, but I find that it occupies valuable time for getting that experience, and some more to avail oneself of it. I do not know whether it is fancy on my part, but it does appear to me that the insect pests are upon the increase, yet one always determines to give the shrub, plant or the article attacked one more trial, and, if no change, then to put the mental threat into execution.

My chief amateur gardening consists in the growth of grapes, and it is concerning these I desire to give my experience. During the last four years I have found it difficult to ripen mine thoroughly, though I have them in a good situation.

The months of July and August (the real time for grapes) have invariably been cool, and, although we may have had mild, warm days in September, yet the shortness of the days and the heavy dews are a deterrent. I have about twenty-four varieties. This year I have fruited for the first time the *Early Victor*, *Niagara*, *Empire State*, and *Bacchus*. I find the *Early Victor* the first to ripen, earlier even than the *Jessica*. It is not a first-class grape, and I should only grow it for its earliness. Some of Rogers' blacks are far superior. The *Empire State* is too late to be depended upon here. It is not, in my opinion, so good as represented.

From a report of this grape which I have, I quote, "Flavor sweet, rich and sprightly, without foxiness and among the best." However, I think we have, and have had, many grapes which are far superior in flavor and sprightliness. Personally, I would not recommend it.

The *Bacchus* is only good for wine, and with me the bunches are disappointingly small. The *Niagara* has ripened, but I have not an exalted opinion of its flavor; it is a fine-looking, showy variety, but, when ripe, has a somewhat mawkish flavor. Its appearance, however, is attractive. The *Jessica* is sure to ripen, but is not such a favorite with me as formerly. I find the pulp somewhat difficult to separate from the seed, and the grape lacks richness, and the color is against it, yet I should always recommend it because it is early and of fair medium quality. The bunch and berry are small, which are not in its favor with the general public. The *Delaware* grows well with me, the bunches and berries are large. To my taste it is one of the best cultivated, and I find it productive. If I could only ripen the *Iona*, I should grow more of that variety than any other,