

Railway Gardens.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—In your issue of the 15th inst., I read with much pleasure your article on Railway Gardens, and would beg leave to state that the little oases on this railway are more numerous than your article would lead one to suppose; also, that the chief officers are very anxious that, as far as possible, their agents and employes generally should do all they can to beautify their surroundings at stations, and also help them to the extent of placing fences around, and filling in land if necessary, leaving their men to lay out and ornament, the expense of which they kindly allow them (the agents) to pay out of their pockets. The Managing Director, for one or two years, on the Toronto and Montreal District, gave an annual premium for the best laid-out and kept garden, the prize being always taken by the one at Brockville, which is really most beautifully kept, and a great credit to the persons in charge. There are also very fine gardens at Cornwall, Belleville, Newcastle, Whitby, and several other places on the Central Division, and I believe the wish is general among the agents to do all they can in this direction, but in many cases the obstacles to be overcome are great. I sincerely endorse the idea that it would be a good investment for the Company to lay out and beautify their station grounds, as they would thereby attract more travel. I have had persons assure me they have chosen the Grand Trunk Railway from Detroit east mainly to see the gardens at Kingston and Brockville; and when the train draws up at these stations a general exclamation of delight is at once manifest, and passengers rush to view them, much as I have seen tourists leave the table on a Mississippi steamer to view the celebrated Maiden's Rock. Many of these stations have fine fountains, which add so very much to their attractions that I am in hopes your excellent article may induce the Company to place them at all water stations, and especially here, and that all who can, and particularly railway men, may adorn as far as possible their waste places.

G. A. OXNARD.

ENQUIRY.—A subscriber from Addington County sends an "enquiry," which has been handed to the proper authority and will be attended to.

OIL FOR INSECTS.—A correspondent cautions all gardeners against the use of diluted coal oil as a remedy for insects. He tried the plan recommended in the *Gardener's Monthly*, and copied from that journal in our last issue, and found the application destructive to all the plants on which it was used.

SPRING-BEETLE.—Mr. A. T. Walbridge, of Whitby, sends a specimen of one of our largespring-beetles, and wishes to know its name. The specimen sent is the *Elater* (or *Alaus*) *oculatus*. The name spring-beetle is given to the genus from their "power of throwing themselves up with a jerk when laid on their back, and this species is called *oculatus* (eyed) from the eye-like spots on its thorax.

WELLS.—Mr. J. Ketchum, of Brighton, Ontario, writes:—In your issue of 15th inst., I notice an enquiry from a "Colborne correspondent" for information as to whether there is not a more economical way of obtaining water from below the ground than the old-fashioned way of digging and walling. I think there is decidedly a much cheaper and easier method; and in California, where I have seen the method fully tested and generally used, it gives complete satisfaction and is universally conceded to be preferable by far to the "old way." In fact it can be used, particularly for extreme depths, where water could not be obtained at all by digging. I refer to the plan of boring and piping, using 2 or 4 inch tubes. If your correspondent will address or call on me, I shall be happy to give all the information I can on the subject, with regard to tools, mode of operation, &c.

CANADIAN FLORA.—A "subscriber" asks:—Would you through your valuable columns inform me what work on Canadian plants would be best for a person intending to make a botanical collection?

ANS.—The best book for the purpose at present published is the *Manual of Botany for the Northern States of America*, by Professor Asa Gray. This work, though not intended to give the Canadian Flora, contains an account of most of our plants, and is the only work, as far as we know, that will enable the young naturalist in this country to determine the names of the plants he may meet with. A small work by the same author, entitled, "*How Plants Grow*," will be found useful for beginners, and this also contains a large portion of the Canadian Flora.

EMIGRANT'S GUIDE.—"A Constant Reader" asks: "1st. Are there any books giving reliable information as to the cost of an outfit for the backwoods, with list of necessary articles? 2nd. Is it possible for a comparative greenhorn to obtain information that will enable him to judge properly of land and timber? If so, where can he get it?"

ANS.—We do not know of any complete Emigrant's Guide for Canada; and we think that such a work by a competent hand would be of inestimable value. Our correspondent may find some information that will be of service to him in the "*Canada Emigration Gazette*," published at Quebec, which can be obtained, free of charge, from A. C. Buchanan, Esq., Chief Emigration Agent, Quebec, and probably from other Emigration Agents in this Province. There is also a small work recently published by the Rev. W. Fraser, of Kincardine, entitled the "*Emigrant's Guide, or Sketches in Canada*," which contains many useful hints. Maps of the Free Grant lands are supplied by the Crown Land Department, and information respecting them can be obtained from the same quarter. But we would caution any one who is altogether unacquainted with "land and timber" not to take up land till he has practically acquired some little knowledge of these matters by a few lessons in the "Bush," beyond the mere study of books. A year's residence with an old settler would be a good school.

The Canada Farmer.

TORONTO, CANADA, JULY 1, 1868.

American Pomology.

We have just examined with some care, and with no little interest, the recently published proceedings of the Eleventh Session of the American Pomological Society, held at St. Louis, in September last. This goodly volume, of 264 pages octavo, contains a vast amount of information respecting the present state of the important branch of rural industry to which it relates. The Society above-named has for its objects, adjudication of the merits of new fruits, identification of varieties, establishment of a common nomenclature, dissemination of useful pomological information, and the promotion generally of fruit-growing. It meets biennially, and its transactions consist chiefly of essays and discussions on points connected with fruit culture. On the occasion to which the report in question relates, papers were read on the general subject of pomology, on diseases of the pear, on packing and marketing fruit, on diseases of the grape, on plant diseases, and on insect enemies of fruit. Free discussion was had in reference to the subjects just enumerated, also in reference to numerous varieties of fruit; reports were also given from different parts of the United States and Canada respecting the condition and prospects of fruit-culture.

Some idea of the work done by the Society, also of the progress of pomology on this continent, may be

formed by looking at the following facts: The Society's catalogue now contains the names of five hundred and sixty-one fruits, viz.: 178 apples, 122 pears, 43 cherries, 55 peaches, 6 nectarines, 11 apricots, 33 plums, 3 quinces, 18 native grapes, 22 foreign grapes, 18 currants, 13 gooseberries, 12 raspberries, 2 blackberries, and 25 strawberries. Its list of rejected varieties is even larger than its catalogue of recommended varieties, containing no fewer than six hundred and twenty-five kinds, viz.: 126 apples, 351 pears, 5 apricots, 32 cherries, 2 grapes, 31 plums, 3 raspberries, and 75 strawberries, making a total of one thousand one hundred and eighty-six varieties of fruit, on which the Society has put the stamp of its approval or disapproval. Each of these varieties has been the subject of free and sometimes protracted discussion, and the decision come to has been arrived at by an open vote on the part of the members who have participated in, or listened to the discussions. It is especially indicative of pomological progress, that instead of only fifty-four approved varieties of fruit, which comprised the Society's list in 1848, there are now the large number of five hundred and sixty-one. This evidence of advance is the more striking when it is considered that the standard of excellence has not been lowered but raised. The President, Hon. Marshall P. Wilder, in his opening address laid down very clearly the requisites in a tree or fruit, for obtaining favour with the Society. A good tree must possess, *first*, health, or freedom from constitutional disease; *second*, hardiness, or the power of resisting extremes of heat, cold and drought; *third*, fertility or productiveness of fruit; *fourth*, persistency of fruit, or power of adhering to the tree; *fifth*, vigour of growth, or productiveness of wood; *sixth*, persistency of foliage; and *seventh*, a good habit of growth. Those which unite these characteristics in the highest degree are most valuable. A good fruit must be, *first*, of the best quality; *second*, it must possess durability, or the property of remaining sound after being gathered; *third*, size; *fourth*, colour; *fifth*, form. It is conclusive evidence of the vast capabilities of the American continent as a fruit region, that between five and six hundred trees and fruits have stood the test of the foregoing rules, while among the still greater number of ostracised sorts there are doubtless not a few of a high order of merit, though they are eclipsed by others that are still better than they.

The Society's catalogue of approved fruits is an interesting and useful study. Certain varieties do well almost everywhere, while others have only a limited range. Thus among apples the Red Astracan, Baldwin, Early Harvest, Fall Pippin, Fameuse, Gravenstein, Yellow Bough, Maiden's Blush, Northern Spy, Rambo, Rhode Island Greening, Roxbury Russet and Wine Sap, have won golden opinions North, South, East and West. The apple has been well designated "King of Fruits." It has been also said of it that it "belts the year." A farm that has on it an orchard comprising such varieties as those just enumerated is well enough supplied with fruit, though it refused to grow any other. Pears are perhaps less cosmopolitan than apples, yet the following are spoken well of in most parts of the United States and Canada; Bartlett, Belle Lucrative, Beurre d'Anjou, Flemish Beauty, Louise Bonne de Jersey, Seckel, Tyson, Vicar of Winkfield, Winter Nelis; and he who can grow these, or the half of them, is well off. Cherries are coy, and beyond the Kentish, May Duke, and Morello, there seems to be none that can be called universal favourites. Peaches, Nectarines, and Apricots are of course limited to sunny spots and favoured latitudes. Among plums, Coe's Golden Drop, Green Gage, Imperial Gage, Lombard, Smith's Orleans, and Washington, seem to have the widest popularity, and if curculio and black knot would only let these alone, we need hardly sigh for more. Of hardy grapes there are Concord, Delaware, Hartford Prolife, and Diana, which are widely diffused and approved. There is only one universal gooseberry, the Houghton. Hovey's Seedling, Triomphe de