

HORTICULTURE.

(Under this heading all questions relating to flowers or horticulture will be answered.)

HOP CULTURE.

Editor Horticultural Department:

SIR—In your issue of April 21, an article appeared relating to the cultivation of hops. I am very much surprised that more attention has not been given to the cultivation of the crop, and I have no hesitation in offering it as my opinion that there will be a perfect future for hop-growing in this Province, in the course of a couple of years. I am of the opinion that hops can be raised with less expense than in the State of Washington, as we have a large amount of cheap labor at our doors—I mean the Indians and Chinamen. Washington has to import the former from here at a large expense; the latter are not available. Again, land adapted for that purpose may be had much cheaper here. Particularly is this the case on the Mainland. Now, as to the expense of production. Basing a calculation on the supposition that you already own the land, fifty acres could be put in and cultivated until harvest time at an expense of \$8,000, which would include the building of dry kilns, warehouses and the purchase of the necessary spraying apparatus, presses, etc. With proper cultivation, you would harvest 40,000 pounds of hops. The additional cost of harvesting would amount to say \$2,500. This added to the original expense of \$8,000 amounts to \$10,500. Supposing operations had been commenced February 15, by the first week in October the crop would be in bale and ready for shipment. Now, taking 15 cents per pound as the selling price—a very conservative estimate—the crop would realize \$6,000. For the following years, very little addition need be made to the plant, except perhaps the building of an extra kiln or two, and the expense of cultivation, spraying, harvesting, etc., which in round numbers would amount to say \$6,000 the second year, always supposing that your land is good and has received proper attention at your hands, you will harvest 100,000 pounds of hops, which at 15 cents per pound will amount to \$15,000. The money received for the two years' crop will therefore aggregate \$21,000, which would be \$4,500 more money than your total outlay. To this you may reasonably add the enhanced value of your property, inclusive of the valuable buildings, etc., thereon. Can any farmer show me a better investment for a year and eight months' tillage of land in any other crop? Hop-Grower.

ORGANIZATION.

Editor Horticultural Department:

SIR—I am a constant reader of your paper, and was pleased to note that you had added horticultural and poultry departments.

I have a proposition to make, which I trust will find favor with your many readers. It is that there should be formed an amateur gardener's association in Victoria.

I am not, on general principles, a believer in "Associations." We have far too many of them. As a matter of fact, there are so many "useful" societies that if we gave a tithe of the time and attention to the furtherance of the objects

which they profess, we would never see home, except to snatch a hasty meal and a short nap occasionally. But gardening—and if you please to include poultry keeping, all the better—is so important and so distinctly domestic that it should have special attention paid to it.

As one who dabbles in gardening, I often feel the great need of assistance in the way of friendly advice. Experience is the great mentor. We may talk as we like about methods and principles, but the one thing which must determine the success of gardening is experience.

Gardening, or horticulture, if you please, is a subject of wide and varied character that a hundred men or a thousand men even might become specialists in as many departments without clashing with each other's knowledge. Some man may know all about roses and nothing about vegetables, or he may be "up" in vegetables, and know little or nothing about floriculture. Or he may be a success in peas, beans and lettuce and fail to comprehend the culture of celery, and so on. Horticulture, as a practical science, is simply the accumulation of minor and very minute experiences.

My proposition is, therefore, that those interested—and there are very many in this city—should form an association for the purpose of holding meetings to discuss methods and compare notes. It doesn't involve a cumbrous constitution—the *lex scripta* of which is usually the curse of organizations—or much expense. A simple document avowing the objects of the association and a membership roll need suffice, while a few cents per month (prepaid) need pay room rent and light.

If weekly meetings were held, much seasonable information in a variety of horticultural subjects could be imparted and obtained. Such an association, while simple and unassuming in its constitution, could be made useful, influential and popular. What could be of more interest to a naturally beautiful city like Victoria than the utilization of its large garden spaces and the beautifying of fruits which in too many cases grow rank with neglect or exhibit shocking bad taste and a very imperfect knowledge of the first principles of how to make home a dwelling place.

Yours in hope,
A SUBSCRIBER.

According to the report of England's Consul General at Buda Pesth, the prune crop of that region last year was a short one, and the unprecedentedly cold and stormy weather of the winter of 1892-93 ruined at least 500,000 trees. The average annual product of these trees is given at 255 pounds of fresh fruit each, and the annual loss incident to their destruction, at least \$250,000.

Recent letters from Wellington, in New South Wales, advise us of large plantings of various fruits. Figs, prunes and raisins are as yet, perhaps, the greatest favorites in the Wellington district, though of course many other varieties are grown on a considerable scale. Our correspondent speaks of the great need of evaporators for use in that section, and we doubt not that a good, live man who understands the business, could go there with profit to himself and to the Australian fruit growers by erecting suitable appliances for drying their fruit. Our correspondent adds: "There is plenty

of sun in this part of Australia, but thunder storms with heavy rains are frequent and liable to happen any day at the time the fruit is ripe, which renders necessary to use evaporators."

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