

### A Pioneer Gardener

Among the 10,000 subscribers to THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, there are a number who have been readers of the publication for many years, some of them since the first issue appeared, over 30 years ago. One of the latter is Mr. Robt. Walker, of St. Catharines, Ont., whose portrait is published herewith. He was one of the early subscribers, and has been a constant friend of THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST ever since. In a recent letter to the editor, Mr. Walker refers to some of his horticultural experiences, as follows:



Mr. Robert Walker

"I take great interest in the letters from correspondents published in your valuable paper from time to time, and it occurred to me to enquire if any farmer or gardener had grown an acre of tomatoes previous to 1869. In that year I grew about one acre and a quarter of tomatoes. The crop was abundant and proved a financial success. Many visitors from a distance and neighbors came to see them, some out of curiosity and others for information. I had also about one acre of grape vines planted in 1871, mostly Roger's varieties, Concord, Allen's Hybrid, Ontario, Isabella and a few Montgomerys.

"I was told that neither tomatoes nor grapevines were grown to the same extent previous to the dates mentioned, and would be glad if you or any correspondent would inform me where in Ontario a similar or greater area was planted with tomato or grape vines before these dates. At that time I was gardener to the late W. J. McCalla, Esq., and the grounds were situated in the township of Grantham, county of Lincoln, and are now a part of the city of St. Catharines.

"In the year 1884, we had in the conservatory a century plant (*Agave Americana*) in bloom, the flower stem being 30 feet high. It was sold to the Horticultural Gardens, in Toronto. I have not seen any record of an *Agave* blooming in Canada since 1884. One bloomed in Rochester, N. Y., in 1869, and 50,000 persons paid to see it."

### A South Australian Law

*The Standard of Empire*

Regulations issued by the government dealing with the importation of plants and fruit, the practical outcome of resolutions passed at the recent interstate conference, absolutely prohibit the introduction into South Australia of any grape-vine from any country or state. They also provide for the admission of other living trees, plants, or fruit from any other state, if accompanied by a government certificate declaring that they have been examined before being exported and found to be reasonably free from disease, and that the packages containing the exports are new or have been thoroughly disinfected by a specified process.

The regulations further prohibit the importation of any plant from a country where the insect *Phylloxera vastatrix* is known to exist, unless accompanied by a grower's declaration that the plant was grown further than 50 yards from any vine and that no phylloxera exists or has existed in the garden from which the plant came.

## NOTES FROM THE PROVINCES

### British Columbia

The fruit crop of the Okanagan Valley will be 50 per cent. larger this season than in any previous year, according to Mr. R. M. Palmer, Provincial Commissioner of Horticulture. The fruit growers should have a good year. The old orchards are bearing more fruit than ever, while many of the young ones are beginning to give returns. In the words of Mr. Palmer, "The increase in the fruit output will go on getting larger each year as the newer orchards develop but there is little or no danger of outstripping the demand. New markets are opening up. For instance, this year the Australian trade offered to take 40,000 boxes or 60 cars of apples of a certain grade but it has not been found possible to spare so much fruit. There is an unlimited market for high grade fruit also in the United Kingdom. Some of the large Okanagan firms contemplate making shipments to England this year.

"Furthermore, the northwest has 250,000 additional customers each year, which is one of the reasons why the question of distribution of the crop is such a vital one. With fresh consumers and fresh dealers, both wholesale and retail, springing up every year on the prairie, the question of marketing is one which requires both wisdom and care and not a little enterprise. It constitutes one of the most important problems in the fruit industry at the present moment. Although the industry has difficulties to face and problems to solve, everything seems in a prosperous condition."

### New Westminster Fair

*B. C. Saturday Sunset*

The fruit exhibition was one of the most remarkable which visitors to the fair have ever witnessed. Yearly the number of entries increase but those in most close touch with this department were surprised beyond measure not only with the numbers which far exceeded those of last year but with the quality.

The exhibit was significant. Not only does it indicate that fruit growing is becoming a more and more popular avenue of revenue for the farmer but the fruit-grower is now getting the art down to a science and the products are the best than an ideal soil, an ideal climate and the best of attention can produce.

### Victoria Exhibition

*G. A. Knight*

Although we have had two dry summers in succession, our fruit turned out remarkably well! this season, and there were some grand displays of apples, pears and plums at the Provincial Exhibition in Victoria. There was one thing, however, that ruffled the tempers of many exhibitors and others and not without cause. Before the judges started to place the awards, one of our sub-inspectors of fruit pests started on a tour of inspection with magnifying glass in hand. Plate after plate of beautiful fruit that would have been prize winners was condemned. If he found the slightest trace of fungous disease, or oyster-shell scale, off he marched with the plates containing such pests and piled them in a corner of the

building. How desolate those beauties looked piled in that corner! Many thousand pairs of sympathetic, but indignant eyes were cast upon them in their six days of isolation, and also upon the many bad gaps that were made on the tables. It was outrageous work and should not occur again.

The display of grapes and peaches also was good. On the coast, however, these fruits have to be grown against a wall to get them to perfection.

### Kootenay Valley, B. C.

*H. W. Power*

Contrary to general expectations, Kootenay growers did not this year realize the handsome profits from strawberry growing that past seasons have led them to expect. A combination of circumstances, over which no control could be had and which are likely to crop up at any time in any business, were responsible. In the first place, the financial depression in the neighboring republic lessened the demand there for strawberries considerably with an attendant falling off in prices and a big surplus of fruit of a perishable nature which the growers were anxious to get rid of at any old price, as long as they managed to get something. Consequently, a great deal of the surplus American berries found their way to the Canadian prairie provinces,—the only market, outside of the purely local one, open to British Columbia growers. After the results were totalled up it was found that the Kootenay growers would receive about 90 cents or \$1.00 a crate for their berries, this leaving a very small margin of profit. The amount of strawberries that can be produced upon a given piece of Kootenay ground is so heavy that a few cents more or less per crate will often mean a vast difference to the producer's bank account.

Strawberries were shipped this year from Gray's Harbor, near Crawford Bay, as far east as Prince Arthur, Ont., arriving at their destination in the best of condition. Extra choice Kaslo berries were sold in Calgary for \$2.50 a crate, being from 50 cents to \$1.00 more than the ruling market price.

KOOTENAY NOTES FROM E. W. DYNES

The continued progress of the fruit growing industry in Kootenay has made way for a new undertaking—the Kootenay Jam Factory. Their exhibit at the Nelson Fair was much admired and Earl Grey was heard to speak in complimentary terms of the enterprise of the owners. He backed up his words by ordering a case of Kootenay jam. If possible, fruit canning will also be engaged in.

The management of the fairs held at Nelson and Revelstoke were successful in obtaining the services of Mr. J. L. Porter of Hood River, Ore., as judge. In an interview, he stated that the people of Kootenay might well be proud of the progress they were making in fruit culture. When asked as to how Kootenay compared with Hood River, he said that the question could hardly be considered a fair one as Hood River had 15 years of progress and experience in her favor. However, as far as he had been able to test, with the varieties that were ripe, they were quite the equal of any he had seen anywhere.

Mr. Porter warned the growers that they