

Fruit Competition.

(To the Editor).

SIR—Will you allow me to answer, through the columns of your journals the challenge of Mr. Harris, of Nova Scotia. Now, Mr. Editor, this challenge is given in such a way as to make it impossible for us to accept. In the first place, it meets my eye for the first time on the 6th of February; and his proposition is only for the last year's crop of fruit, and the trial to come off in Nova Scotia; and further, he must have just such varieties as he happens to have on hand, and which, perhaps, not another man in the whole Dominion would have at this late season of the year. Again, he does not give us his rules as to judges, &c.; so that before all those items could be arranged the fruit would be spoiled—especially as our apples would have to be subjected to the accidents incidental to such a journey at this time of year, especially the pounding over 1,000 miles of railway. Now, if Mr. H., or any other Nova Scotia friend, would really like to have a fair competition, we will submit a plan, and appeal to all intelligent and fair-minded pomologists if it is not eminently fair to all parties. Meet us half way—say at Montreal—select 20 of your best varieties, 10 of fall fruit and ten of winter fruit, 12 of each variety—10 varieties to be baking apples and 10 dessert fruit—quality to rule; but stipulate that the samples shall not fall below the medium size, as laid down by Downing. Each of the contestants to select such varieties as may be considered the best from his own Province. Judges to be chosen from the United States. The defeated party to pay all necessary expenses of the contest.

Yours respectfully,

J. C. KILBORN.

Beamsville, February 18.

Pear Growing.

"Cultivateur" writes as follows:—

"Not having any experience in pear growing, I write to you for information. What are the best varieties of summer, autumn, and winter pears for the country in the vicinity of Toronto, say two of each. The soil is a heavy clay? The reason why so few pears have been grown is that we have so few hardy and productive kinds."

Will some of our readers, living at Toronto or vicinity, who have had some experience in growing pear trees, have the goodness to give "Cultivateur" the benefit of their experience?

"How can pear trees be raised from the seed? I have sown the seed several times in the fall, on good soil, but the seeds never germinated. Is there any different manner of sowing them? Are not pear trees raised from the seed more hardy and productive than grafted trees?"

There is no better way. Seed sown in the fall ought to grow. Was it sound seed when sowed? for if it is allowed to heat in the pomace it will not germinate. Or did "Cultivateur" cover it too deep? It needs only a very slight covering. No doubt some of the seedling pear trees will be hardy, perhaps more hardy than those in cultivation; but the quality of the fruit will be very uncertain, unless hybridization or cross-fertilization is resorted to. With a little attention to this, and judicious selection of parents, the results will be as certain as those of the stock-breeder, and good quality, quantity and hardiness be secured in the seedlings. The Buffam, Beurre Diep, Flemish Beauty, Louise Bonne de Jersey and Summer Bon Chretien, have the reputation of being our most hardy pears, and particularly the Flemish Beauty and Bon Chretien. With such varieties as these, there should be no difficulty in securing a hardy and valuable race of seedlings.

New Material for Strings.

A correspondent of the *Ohio Farmer* speaks in high terms of the value of the plant known by botanists as the *Yucca filamentosa*, one of the varieties of the Adam's Needle, for supplying strings as tough as leather, useful for every purpose of the farmer and gardener where strings are needed. He says it grows wild on the Southern Ohio and Mississippi, sending up leaves from three to four feet long. Perhaps it may be profitable to gather the leaves and prepare them for use in these northern parts, where the plant is not found.

TO PROLONG FLOWERING.—By cutting off the seed vessels of flowering plants, as soon as the petals drop, the plants will be kept in greater vigour, and the season of flowering be considerably prolonged.

POINSETTIA PULCHERRIMA POISONOUS.—As a warning to hothouse gardeners, I think it my duty to inform you of an accident which occurred to Mr. Buck, my gardener. On the 8th of this month, as he was pruning a plant of *Poinsettia pulcherrima*, he cut his thumb, but took no notice of it at the time, so slight was the incision. On the Thursday following, however, he felt an unpleasant prickling sensation in the thumb, which soon extended up the arm. On Friday it was succeeded by great numbness in his right arm and leg, and upon consulting a medical man he found that the poisonous juice of the plant produced these painful sensations. His leg was so much benumbed as to render it useless, but upon further applications of the fomentations and other remedies prescribed, the baneful effects have now subsided, leaving only a few spots on the lower part of his thumb, similar to those of the small pox. OSWALD MOSLEY, Bart., Rolleston Hall.—*The Journal of Horticulture*.

Agricultural Intelligence.

Agriculture and Arts Association of Ontario.

FIRST MEETING OF THE BOARD

The newly-elected Council of the Agriculture and Arts Association of Ontario met for the first time since the re-organization of the Board under the provisions of the present Act, at the office of the Association, on Wednesday, February, 24th. The following elected members of the Board were present:—The Hon. David Christie, Paris; Hon. J. Skead, Ottawa; Andrew Wilson, Maitland; John Walton, Peterboro'; Geo. Graham, Brampton; James Cowan, Waterloo; J. C. Rykert, M. P. P., St. Catharines; Robert Gibbons, Goderich; Lionel E. Shipley, Kirk; and Stephen White, Charing Cross, Kent. The following were present *ex-officio*:—Professor Buckland, Professor of Agriculture, University College; Dr. Beatty, President of the Mechanics' and Arts' Association, and Mr. W. H. Mills, President of the Fruit-Growers' Association. Messrs. Edwin Mallory, Napanee, and Geo. McDonnell, Cornwall, the remaining elective members of the Board, were absent. Mr. McDonnell telegraphed to say that, owing to the storm, he would not be here before noon next day. Mr. H. C. Thomson, Secretary, acted as secretary to the meeting.

To allow time for the arrival of the absent members of the Council, the meeting adjourned till the day following, but before the members left the room, Mr. Mallory arrived, making only one absentee.

On the re-assembling on Thursday, Mr. Hugh C. Thomson, the Secretary, took the chair. No particular business was transacted during the morning, as it was deemed desirable to wait till afternoon for Mr. McDonnell. Mr. Christie, who had been nominated for President wished his name withdrawn, as he had determined not to become a candidate.

In the afternoon, after another adjournment, business was resumed, and Mr. Edwin Mallory having been elected President of the Council, took the chair. Mr. Lionel E. Shipley was elected Vice-President.

After considerable discussion, Mr. George Graham, of Brampton, was elected Treasurer, the salary being fixed at \$400 per annum.

The Bank of British North America was selected in which to deposit the funds of the Association.

Mr. RYKERT moved, seconded by Mr. McDONELL, that four securities of \$5,000 each, the Treasurer himself in security of \$10,000, should be given by the Treasurer. Carried unanimously.

Mr. MACDONELL moved, seconded by Mr. RYKERT—That a new seal be procured for the Board. Carried.

The question of appointing a new Secretary was then brought up, and excited considerable discussion, but the motion to that effect, as well as another to postpone the decision, were lost, and Mr. H. C. Thomson was retained to fill that office.