

Champion Potatoes.—I have been much interested in reading the several accounts of the Champion potatoes given in the *Agricultural Gazette*. I enclose you my experience of them for the past season grown in Berwickshire, as also of Victoria, and Orkney Reds. Ten cwt. of each kind were planted after lea on a good red and dry soil sloping to the sun. The fat sheep were folded upon the grass the previous summer, getting cut swedes and cake. It was ploughed up last winter with an ordinary 7-inch lea furrow, and grubbed as deep as three horses could work it before planting. No muck was used, but about 4 cwt. of artificial manure, principally bone meal with a very little guano, was sown in the drills at the time of planting. The result obtained by measuring, weighing a chain length on each drill when lifted, gave:—Victorias, average 107 cwt.; highest, 119 cwt.; lowest, 95 cwt. per acre. Orkney Reds, 128 cwt.; highest, 150 cwt.; lowest, 95 cwt. per acre. *Champion*, average 209 cwt.; highest, 228 cwt., lowest, 189 cwt. per acre. Each sort was weighed at three places. The Victorias were planted in 27-inch drills, the others were 28 inches apart. Victorias, diseased; Reds, pretty sound, but very small; *Champion* sound, and a good size.—T. H. (1)

HORTICULTURE.

Fruit Growers Meetings—Our Prospects as a Fruit Growing Province.

The Fruit Growers Association of Abbotsford held its annual meeting on the 20th of January, at which its officers were elected by ballot for the ensuing year. The report of the Sec.-Treas., showed a smaller deficit than usual, therefore the finances of the Society were considered in a healthy condition, and it was decided to hold our fifth annual Exhibition next autumn, providing the season was a favorable one for fruits. A special meeting was also held on the 28th Feb. for the purpose of adopting the Constitution provided by the Council of Agriculture; which was done with certain amendments. This meeting was well attended, some having driven twelve miles to attend and become members, while others nearer by became members, when they found they would receive the *Illustrated Journal of Agriculture* free. However a new impetus has been given to the Society, and we are looking forward to the future with renewed hope. The Secretary read a letter he had received from a member of the Council of Agriculture, in which it was stated that the Premier, Hon Mr. Chapleau, had promised the grant for local Horticultural societies, which would shortly be placed at the disposal of the Council. This news was received by the members of the Association with much satisfaction; as we have held four annual Exhibitions, and published fruit lists, and reports, without any grant, deficits have been an annual occurrence, and consequently quite a tax upon the Directors, as each year's debts, were "wiped out" before contracting new ones, and also as there had been some doubts entertained as to whether the Government, under its present difficulties, would carry out a promise made by the Joly Administration, and thus open another drain upon the "Public Chest." We are strong advocates for economy, and especially so in these hard times, but we feel that this is a right move in the right direction, for are not Agriculture and Horticulture the "corner stones," so to speak, of our Country's prosperity. Although the Government has provided liberally for Agricultural Societies, there has been comparatively little done for Horticulture.

This Association gave in the January number of this journal the amount (as near as could be ascertained) expended for Horticultural premiums in the Province of Ontario—as compared with that of the Province of Quebec, for the year of 1877, which are

as follows: Ontario, \$11,091; Quebec, \$1,615; a balance in favor of Ontario of \$9,449.

This difference of expenditure is not because the Province of Quebec is not adapted to fruit growing.

But rather, from a want, of a proper organization by her fruit growers, in order to attain a knowledge as to what varieties and cultivation of fruits, are best adapted to our soils and climate, and a readiness of by far too many of our planters who "take it for granted," that foreign grown trees are quite as good as those that have been acclimated.

Any one who visited the Horticultural exhibitions held last September at Montreal, Abbotsford, and Dunham, must have come to the conclusion that we are neither lacking in soil or climate to grow many varieties of first-class fruits to perfection: and those shown were much admired, and pronounced by connoisseurs to be in quality unrivalled.

Of course, Ontario can grow many varieties of fruits which are too tender for our climate. But in point of quality of the apple, we can hold our own with any country. Still, Ontario has the advantage over us in many respects. And it should be remembered that at the time for which the above figures were given, Ontario was well organized, having twenty-five local Horticultural Societies, besides several larger ones in her cities; and most of her County Agricultural Societies offer prizes for Horticultural purposes, while Quebec had but two Horticultural Societies (Montreal and Abbotsford,) and but few of her County Agricultural Societies entered the field of Horticulture all.

But we are glad to find that these things are changing. Government is disposed to foster the development of Horticulture. The Montreal Horticultural Society has since become a Provincial Society, with a grant of \$1,000 a year, and publishes annual reports (which are of great value to the country) with her membership and prize list, open to all, and offering fair prizes for county competition.

Missisquoi organized about a year ago, and held her first Horticultural Exhibition last Sept. at Dunham, which was such a success as to be a surprise to many of her most sanguine Fruit Growers. To judge from the variety and quality of her Fruits, Flowers and Vegetables, then displayed, we predict she will yet win laurels at our Provincial Exhibitions.

The District of St. Francis has lately organized under the name of the "St. Francis Horticulture and Fruit Growers Association," with head quarters at Sherbrooke. Also the county of l'Islet has organized, and we hope soon to learn that other Counties have done likewise.

Now that we are to have grants for local Horticultural Societies, will it not largely depend upon the fruit growers and those interested, whether these grants are to be continued, increased, or withdrawn? It would seem that now is the time for each Town or County (who have not yet done so) to organize, either independently, or in conjunction with its Agricultural Society. To judge from our own experience, it is essential to success, in order to know what to plant, where to plant, when to prune, and how to cultivate, &c.

In a climate so changeable, and with soils so variable, it is impossible without experience or knowledge to say what varieties are adapted to a particular locality or soil. We have many varieties of apples which are doing well on our mountain slopes, and when tried even but a few miles distant do not give satisfaction, and *vice versa*; for we also have varieties in orchards upon our porous gravels, which are not satisfactory, yet these same varieties, on heavier soils, are all that could be desired in point of thrift and hardiness. With a thorough system of organized societies throughout our country gathering the varied experiences of its members, making local fruit lists, holding annual exhibitions to compare fruits, correcting names, and bringing to notice our seedling apples, of which there are, no doubt, many of value to the country if propagated, and sending their annual reports to the Provincial Society for publication: with these scattered through the land, what changes would be effected in our fruit lists, and in our present method of doing things, and the vexed question of "what to plant, and how to cultivate," would be more definitely settled, and we should then be in a position to grow an abundance of first-class fruits, not only for our own consumption, as a people, but with a surplus for export, as is the case with our sister Province, Ontario.

JOHN M. FISK.

Abbotsford, 24 March 1880

(1) is to be hoped that some of our Seedsmen will import a few buels of this valuable potato. It is, from all accounts, almost disease-proof.—A. R. J. F.