

Cherries on the British Columbia Coast

W. J. L. Hamilton, South Salt Spring

IN the island district of British Columbia, cherry growing is likely to prove a profitable industry, as the climate is suitable, the crops heavy and the prices good. Cherries can be divided roughly into two classes, the sweet and the sour.

The sweet cherry is the descendant from the European *Prunus Avium*, and is characterized by white birch-like bark, erect growth, large leaves and flowers opening in clusters, whilst the tree is green. It is, on the coast, much subject to the cherry aphid, the cherry slug (saw-fly) and also to gummosis.

The sour cherry, derived from the European *Prunus Cerasus*, is low growing and spreading, has small leaves, and the flowers open before these develop. It is little subject to diseases or pests, and is altogether the more satisfactory to grow.

The cherry aphid, a pest of the sweet cherry, and very closely allied to the peach aphid, is black in color, and generally appears on the leaves in May or early June. It causes the leaves to curl up and eventually die, and, naturally, the curling of the leaves makes it very difficult to kill by spraying, as it is almost impossible for the spray to reach the insects safely protected by the incurving leaves. Fortunately the larvæ of the lace-wing fly, of the syrphus fly, of the various lady birds, and some small parasites, all feed on these pests, and are often numerous enough to practically clean the tree.

In winter, these aphids are found on the tree roots, where they are, sometimes at any rate, carried by the ants, who regard these insects as their milk cows, since they secrete honey dew, and, like provident husbandmen, the ants remove their cattle to winter quarters.

The cherry tree slugs, the larvæ of the cherry saw-fly, can be killed by summer strength lime-sulphur solution, or by an arsenical spray, whilst the gummosis, caused by the rapid expansion of the cambium, due to sudden sap flow, and consequent exudations, owing to the lack of elasticity of the outer bark, can best be overcome by making a longitudinal cut, with a sharp knife, down the stem and main branches, taking care to cut only through the outer bark, thereby releasing the bonds of the inner layers, and keeping the sap in its proper channels.

As, however, the sour cherry is free from these troubles, and as it brings as good a price, these are mostly grown, and prove very profitable. I have a sour cherry seedling which ripens in September, is of large size, prolific, and brings twelve and one-half cents a pound. Besides this, the Early Richmond for early

use, the Morello and Olivet are good value.

Other profitable cherries are Ostheim, Bing, and, for shorter distances, Royal Ann, but these being sweet cherries, need more care.

Sour cherries may be set twenty feet apart, and sweet ones twenty-five to thirty feet. They are not hard to please as regards soil, but it can be too rich and too moist; a good, somewhat sandy loam, suits them well.

Clean cultivation, disking for choice, is necessary and must be constantly repeated during the dry season to ensure good crops of fruit.

Pruned in the low-headed vase form, after about four years this form should be established, and after this as little pruning as possible should be attempted.

All fruit should be picked with the stem on, and carefully packed and faced to secure best prices.

The Grape Growing Business

In last November CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, a portion of an address on grape culture in the Chautauqua grape belt was published. This address was given by Mr. D. K. Falvey of Westfield, N. Y., at the convention of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association. His remarks on the cost of producing grapes are published herewith:

"The cost of production varies somewhat, taken individually, but as a whole, may be conservatively figured as follows, on vineyards producing an average of 900 eight-pound baskets or three tons per acre: Labor and expense to time of harvesting, \$13; baskets, \$18; harvesting, \$18; interest and taxes on investment at \$200 an acre, which is low value in New York, \$14; total, \$63 an acre. If grapes sell at ten cents a basket net, they would bring \$90, which would leave a net profit per acre of \$27 above interest on investment. If an average yield of 600 baskets or two tons an acre be figured it would be as follows: Labor and expenses to time of harvesting, \$13; baskets, \$12; harvesting, \$12; interest and taxes on \$200 an acre, \$14; total, \$51. If the grapes sell at ten cents they would bring \$60, leaving but \$9 profit above interest and taxes..

"Not taking the value of the investment into consideration it costs the average Chautauqua grape grower to put an eight-pound basket of grapes on the cars as follows: Labor to time of harvesting, two cents; package, two cents; harvesting, two cents; total, six cents. It is easy to figure the profits or losses if you know the size of the yield per acre.

"Treating the subject in ton lots, we must figure the cost per acre to time of

harvest the same as in baskets, namely, \$13. Picking a ton of grapes in trays at three cents a tray and sixty trays to the ton costs \$1.80; delivering with team and extra man, labor in vineyard, \$2 a ton; total, \$3.80. It requires an extra good vineyard to produce three tons an acre, the average with us being two tons. On a three-ton basis per acre, it costs \$11.40 for harvesting and \$13 for expenses up to beginning of harvest, or a total of \$24.40 an acre, without interest on investment included. It will be readily seen that the grower will have nothing left after paying interest and taxes with grapes selling at \$11 and \$12 a ton. We make no charge for packages as the buyer pays for the package after deducting its weight."

Planting Blackberries

John Ferguson, Murches, N.B.

To best understand blackberry culture, it must be known in the first place that the canes of blackberries are only biennial; that is, canes are produced one year, bear fruit the next and then die. There is no such thing as two-year-old plants (as with trees and vines) when we refer to the stems, though the roots may remain alive and growing for several years. One-year-old plants are used for transplanting in all cases.

It is considered best to plant in rows and then restrict the plants to hills. The rows should be four or five feet apart according to the variety to be cultivated, and the plants two feet apart in the rows. Be sure that the plants have small fibrous roots and do not set them any deeper than they were before removal. Cut the canes of these plants down nearly to the surface of the soil, because if not cut they will take away from the strength of the root in forcing growth. The whole strength of the root is required the first season to produce canes, as upon this growth will depend the fruit of the next year.

The weeds should be kept down and the soil level, as the blackberry plant should never be banked up. There must be clean cultivation or the fruit-bearing canes and those for the following season will suffer from lack of moisture.

Two years ago Dr. Wm. Saunders of Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, sent out a few specimens of two new standard apples; viz., "Charles" and "Tony." I received two young trees. They have grown rapidly, and though the winter of 1908-09 was extraordinarily severe, the trees have shown no signs of injury from the weather.—Brenda E. Neville, Cottonwood, Sask.

Do not apply nitrogenous manures too liberally on a blackberry patch, as they induce a rank growth of canes at the expense of fruit.