

NOTES FROM THE PROVINCES

The Gulf Islands of B.C.

W. J. L. Hamilton.

Great crops of all kinds are raised on the islands, that stretch from the shores of Saanich peninsula up to Nanaimo, on the east coast of Vancouver. Wheat yields as much as 50 bushels to the acre; potatoes, up to 16 tons; cereals and all kinds of roots and other crops, in like abundance; and fruits succeed to perfection. Heavy crops of berries of the best quality and bountiful crops of apples, pears and other tree fruits are produced where attempted.

Salt Spring Island is the largest of the group, being about 20 miles long by six to eight wide. Salt Spring Island butter from our Creamery, and Salt Spring mutton from our hillsides, are held at a premium in our markets, but Salt Spring Island fruit, which should be our staple product, is of minor importance. Why is this?

The answer at first seems strange. It is due to the fact that Victoria's surroundings of which this is a part, form the earliest settlement in the province; hence, at first, Hudson's Bay Co's employees—miners, sailors, fishermen and all trades except fruit growers—settled on the land, and because, before fruit tree diseases were known, the finest orchard produce could be raised. Antiquated methods are still followed in some instances, Spraying is contemned. Scale, scab and aphids are, in consequence, in evidence, and naturally much second rate fruit is produced.

But this is not the fault of the locality. At Granges Harbor, where many follow modern methods, and at the South End, where some do the same, fruit of all kinds, second to none, is raised and marketed. Unfortunately, many do not yet realize that the troubles of years' accumulation cannot be cured in a day, that one spraying will not turn an old orchard into a new one, and so, many a wail on the hardship of compulsory spraying is heard. "Fruit growing doesn't pay as it is," say they. "So, how can it pay if we have to go to the cost of spraying several times a year?" Let this be an object lesson to others.

Kootenay Valley, B.C.

E. W. Dynes

The following letter from Mr. W. A. Birman, Thrums, B.C., which appeared in the *Nelson Daily News*, shows what can be done with strawberries even on a very small patch of ground:

"I would like to say a few words on the much talked of strawberry question. I came to this country about 19 months ago and bought a partly improved ranch on which were two acres of strawberries. Part of these had already borne their third crop. Last year, I picked the fourth crop but was one of the shippers through the old association and obtained very small returns for the fruit. A part, however, I shipped directly and obtained for them a fair

price. I then plowed up all my strawberries except those on 56 square rods of ground.

"From this small patch I sold 87 crates of berries, which netted me, clear of express charges, \$215.30. This amount would have been considerably larger if the plants had been younger and in their first year of bearing instead of the fifth. The picking was all done by myself and my family. In addition to this we harvested eleven loads of hay and looked after other crops on the ranch. This seems to me to prove conclusively that large profits can be realized from Kootenay fruit lands when farming is carried on in a business like way."

Saskatchewan

Angus MacKay

Small fruits were never so abundant and fine as they have been this year. No late spring frost injured the blossoms, and rain fell during the fruiting season in sufficient quantities to give the very best fruit of all sorts. Strawberries and raspberries have been especially good. In a few cases currants and gooseberries were more or less injured by the currant maggot (*Epochra Canadensis*), but on the whole the yield and quality have been exceedingly fine. Wild fruits—strawberries, raspberries, gooseberries and Saskatoon berries—have been, like the cultivated varieties, extremely abundant over the entire province.

In larger fruits, crab apples and wild and cross-bred plum trees are well loaded and very promising. Large apples, cultivated plums and cherries have not yet succeeded in any district, although reports claim a few apple trees in bearing in some favored localities.

In the vegetable and root line, no year

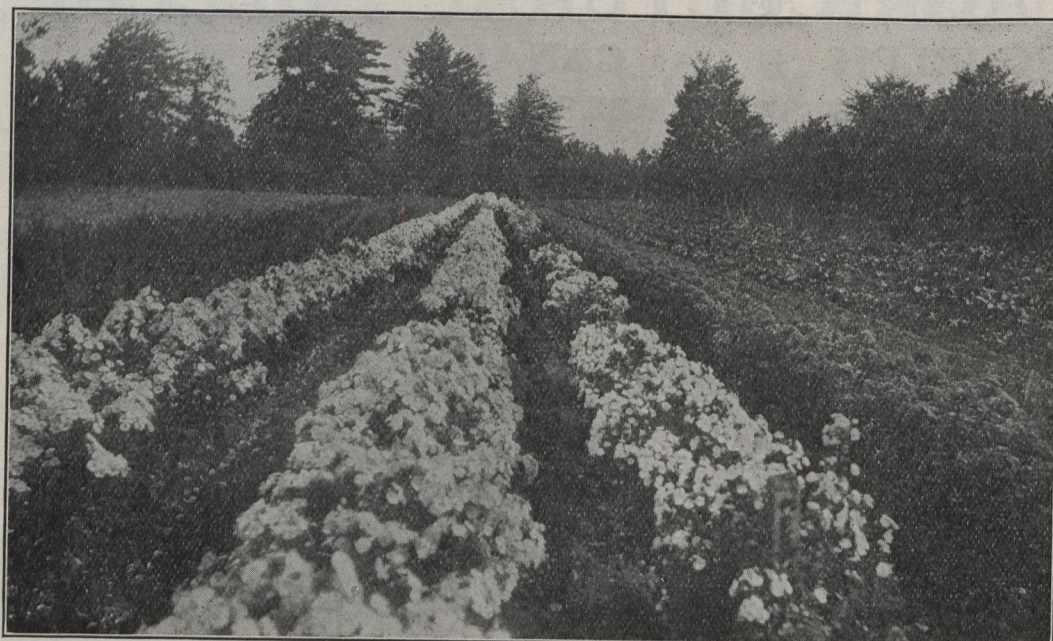
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