

* Open Letters. *

Should the Importation of American Nursery Stock be Prohibited?

SIR,—I read with much interest your article on the San José scale insect in your March number, and note that you recommend farmers' institutes and other farmers' gatherings throughout the land to pass resolutions requesting the Department of Agriculture to "either prohibit the importation of fruit trees and plants from the United States, or else that all trees for importation be subjected to the most strict quarantine and not be permitted to cross the lines unless a sworn certificate of an expert entomologist can be first secured by the shippers at their own expense, that the stock has been thoroughly examined, and proved to be free from scale." From your statement of the case it would appear that it is perhaps desirable that the Government should take some steps in the way of examining American nursery stock before it is admitted to the country, though I am not sure that your recommendation is really the best, and would feel inclined, for example, to think that it would be more simple and more effective to restrict importations to such States or localities as are known to be free from the insect. I desire, however, to point out that any suggestion looking towards the total prohibition of importations of American fruit trees and plants is one which would require the most serious consideration before being allowed to pass into law. I beg to draw your attention to two features of the case

1st. The authorities of the Dominion Government Experimental Farm at Ottawa state that the *Americana* varieties of plums [De Sot], Hawkeye, Stoddard, Wyant, Miner, etc.], are the only ones suitable for the greater part of the Province of Quebec and Eastern Ontario, where the European varieties fail. The cultivation of these American plums has developed enormously in Iowa, Minnesota and the Western States, one authority estimating that from 100,000 to 150,000 of these trees are planted each year in the State of Iowa alone. With the exception possibly of the first named, I am inclined to think that it is impossible to obtain trees of any of these varieties, in any considerable quantity, from any nurseryman in the Dominion, or even from all combined. The reason for this is, that most of the Canadian nurseries are situated in Western Ontario, and their proprietors are apparently not alive to the needs of the Province of Quebec in regard to plums; and farmers in the East must either neglect this branch of horticulture, or purchase from nurserymen in the Western States. Would it be just or right to pass a measure which, though it might not seriously injure Western Ontario fruit growers, would yet very greatly handicap those who live in the East and North?

I am further informed by the authorities of the State Agricultural College of Iowa that the San José scale is unknown in that State.

2nd. The possibility must not be ignored that, if American nursery stock were prohibited, Canadian nurserymen might combine and raise their prices throughout the whole country, greatly to the detriment of all Canadian farmers.

Montreal, March 15th.

M.

Discouraged.

SIR,—I have taken CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST for fourteen years but must now quit on account of poverty. I rented a small farm with every convenience, rent and taxes, etc., \$100 per annum. Drouth and rust, and not forgetting grasshoppers, about cleaned me out; prices, you know. I picked for a grocer 1 bush. crabs, best I ever saw, put them in clean new baskets, he gave me 20cts. in trade, he had them ordered. A gardener here was asked for a basket of crabs, he picked them and took them to the house, they said *thanks*, that's what we are living on; we did think the hens were going to help, but McKinley Bill will fix that. I came from England seventeen years ago, have wished 17,000 times I had never seen the country. Some of the best of workers here have lost their homes and come to the hammer; still they wish to encourage emigration. What for, to help us starve.

S. P., *Wingham*.

Spring's Active Work.

SIR,—In the cool pleasant days of early spring, when one's enthusiasm and activity is high for the planning of the flower garden, we are apt to think that we are possessed of abundance of natural wisdom, that will lead to success in all we undertake, and we are of the opinion that anyone can raise flowers and plants without the general information required to make it a success. Of course at the end of the season we note our disappointment and failure. Now I think we may overcome some of these difficulties, by careful observation and reading our CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, or any good floral publication that will give us some knowledge in planting, habit and growth of seeds and plants that we intend growing. Many flower growers I know do not look into a magazine to seek information or advice from the experienced men and women who have made a lifelong study of flowers and plants.

When the out-door work in the garden commences in April and May, it is certain that we will all feel better and made brighter by the result of our labors, while we must not forget the steady and healthful employ-