

Cymbidiums.—The seeds of these are much larger than in the majority of orchids, they can therefore be watched very easily from the first. Precisely the same treatment may be adopted as for cattleyas, with a temperature of 70 degrees by day and lowering to 60 degrees at night. Give plenty of moisture with a fine sprayer, and dip the pans occasionally in water.

Dendrobiums.—These also require the same treatment as cattleyas, except that instead of polydium fibre use osmunda, packed very closely and leaving a rough surface, over which stretch the canvas tightly, pressing it well down between the side of the pan and the compost.

Odontoglossum.—The seeds of these are treated by several different methods, of which I give two, both of which have proved successful. The first one is to select a quantity of well-rooted healthy plants as nurses, pot them in a mixture of osmunda fibre and polydium fibre, mixed with a small quantity of sphagnum moss and silver sand. The pots should be filled to within about half an inch below the rim of the pot and then well watered. After they have been potted about a week the seeds may be sown on them, taking care that the material is very moist before doing so. Sow them in the same way as advised for cypripediums, spray them, and then place the plants in a temperature of 55 degrees to 60 degrees by day, which may fall to 50 degrees to 55 degrees at night. Give plenty of air and protect from bright sunlight. January and February are the best months for sowing.

Miltonias also can be raised by using either of the methods advised for odontoglossums, with a slightly increased temperature.

Sophranitis.—Although the matured plants are what are known as cool orchids, the seeds

The second method is to pot the nurse plants in oak leaves with a covering of clean sphagnum, from which all heads and dead portions have been removed, chop it very fine, and place it on the surface about a quarter of an inch in depth. This is most easily put on if it is saturated with water. The seed may be sown the following day, after which they must never become dry, especially when germination has commenced. As soon as a minute leaf appears they should be pricked off with great care and placed into tiny pots or pans filled with a compost consisting of three parts of polydium fibre, one part of finely chopped sphagnum moss; pot them firmly. When transplanting the seedlings care should be taken to fix them so that they do not get washed away by watering or dipping. After the seedlings begin to make new roots it is beneficial to again transplant them into freshly prepared pots of the same compost, extreme care being taken not to damage the roots. It is of great importance also that they should never become dry; a great many more die from drought than from over-watering. When the leaves of the plants are about half an inch long they may be potted singly in thimble pots, and again when they have become rooted and established as often as they require it.

Cochliodas require the same conditions and treatment as odontoglossums.

Miltonias also can be raised by using either of the methods advised for odontoglossums, with a slightly increased temperature.

Sophranitis.—Although the matured plants are what are known as cool orchids, the seeds

and young seedlings require a warmer temperature. For the seeds take some round blocks of wood three inches in diameter and half an inch thick, cut across the grain, leaving a rough surface. Through this make a small hole an inch in diameter in the centre, and then place it in a small pot or pan partly filled with crocks and making it secure by wedging a few small crocks round the side. It should then be thoroughly soaked with water and the seed sown sparingly over it. Over the pan place a pane of glass, which may be supported by a small label on the rim of the pot, being careful that the glass is about half an inch above the seed. Keep the wood moist by using a fine sprayer for the first four or five days, after which it may be watered with a fine rose. When germination begins the seedlings grow rapidly, and after about fourteen days they should be large enough to be pricked off in small pots in a compost consisting of polydium fibre and sphagnum moss finely chopped and mixed with a little silver sand. As the plants become stronger they may be removed into fresh pots of the same compost. A temperature of from 60 degrees to 65 degrees at all times is beneficial, and they should have a fair amount of shading during the hot summer months.

Phaius.—The seeds of phaius do well when sown on the surface of pots containing healthy plants of the same genus, provided they have been potted recently in some fresh sphagnum moss, good fibrous loam, and osmunda fibre. The plants should be watered carefully for the first two or three times after sowing, so

that the seeds are not washed away, and the seedlings can be left where they grow until they are large enough to be transplanted singly into small pots. A temperature of 60 degrees to 65 degrees by day and 50 degrees to 55 degrees by night is sufficient, and they should have heavy shading with a plentiful supply of water. Where the conditions are suitable they should flower in from two to three years from the time of sowing.

Sobralias.—For these prepare small pans as for cattleyas, and when the seeds are sown place them in a temperature of 65 degrees to 70 degrees, where they should be kept well sprayed, and in about twelve days they should be large enough to be handled and placed into small pans of sphagnum moss with just a little peat added, repotting them afterwards as often as they require it, and giving a little more peat each time. When they are about eighteen months old fibrous loam may be mixed with the compost. After this they may be potted in equal proportions of peat, loam and moss until they flower.

Epidendrums.—These may be raised in the same manner as sobralias, but they do not require any loam mixed with the compost. Peat and moss, with a small quantity of silver sand, are more beneficial.

Zygopetalums.—If the seeds of these are sown in pots containing good healthy plants potted in a mixture of osmunda fibre, fibrous loam and sphagnum moss, and the plants are watered cautiously (care being taken that the water does not flow over the tops of the pots), a plentiful supply of seedlings will be obtained.

These may be left undisturbed until they are large enough to be placed in thimble pots, a temperature of 55 degrees to 60 degrees by day and 50 degrees to 55 degrees at night being sufficient. Other genera of which seedlings may be raised artificially are calanthes, which require to be treated as for phaius; brassavolas, as for cattleyas; and thunias and vandas, as for sobralias. The above does not exhaust the list of those that have actually been grown from seeds under cultivation; indeed, it is probable that scarcely any orchid is incapable of yielding under cultivation good seeds from which plants could be raised. It is only a question of supply and demand; for just as we might now quite easily maintain a supply of such genera as cypripedium, cattleya, dendrobium, odontoglossum, etc., without troubling to import any more plants, so also no doubt this could be done in the case of many other genera if it were considered to be worth the breeders' while.

U. S. GOVERNMENT EXHIBIT

The United States Government has made a special effort to make its exhibit at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition especially attractive to farmers. Among the most interesting features may be mentioned the good roads display, the model dairy farm, the evolution of the harvester, diseases of animals and their treatment, the rural mail delivery and soil analysis.

Life on the Islands of the Gulf

By CLIVE PHILLIPPS-WOLLEY

Nearly two decades ago I was building myself a house where the wild flowers were most abundant and the pheasants loved to sun themselves on the seaward side of the moss covered rocks.

The mosquito hawk nested (if you can call it nesting) on those rocks. Golden stone crop and pink peucedanum carpeted them. Where they met the woods a cataract of spirea and mock orange flowed down upon them, and over all hovered the wide winged swallow tails and "admirals" of the red and white.

Somebody, I believe, once bought that paradise at a dollar an acre with the rock and swamp (!) thrown in as valueless, and today perhaps you may buy it at a thousand dollars a lot, though it is not half as beautiful now as it was then, but in those days you went to it by trail and today it is served every ten minutes by the electric tram company and has a right to any water which the city has to spare.

At the time I speak of the house was not finished and the owners were very much in their shirt sleeves, superintending the builders. To them enter, in much pomp, two equestrians unknown, who, having assumed a commanding position, upon the future tennis lawn, condescended with those two foolish young English people upon the isolation of their future home. They would be unable, the equestrians said, to see anything of their friends.

The answer was too obvious to record, but the condolence serves to make my point. Gregariousness is one of the leading characteristics of our people, in sharp contrast to that pioneer spirit of their predecessors which hated to see another man's smoke across their sky.

The house I have spoken of was only three miles from the post office, but it was too far out then and, for a great many, the islands are much too far out today.

It takes an hour even by the Creeping Paralysis to get to Sidney, whence any of the islands may be reached by launch or boat, and should the railway ever be electrified, with a terminus at Schwartz's Bay, there seems no reason why a man should take more than an hour between his island and his club, but very few of our people have that instinct for partial seclusion which accounts for the existence of the splendid country homes of England, and therefore there are still one or two island homes on the market.

It is wonderful, but even here, this state of things cannot last, if the wandering English continue to pervade our province, since, in all that goes to make a country home, perfect according to English ideas, the islands have the advantage of every other part of B. C.

I know that this is a bold assertion and I know that the gentlemen who were good enough to write to me after reading my article upon the Saanich peninsula will write and insist upon the superiority of their own districts, ending their letters with a seductive offer of a romantic home site at so many dollars per acre upon easy terms, but I cannot help it. What I have written I have written.

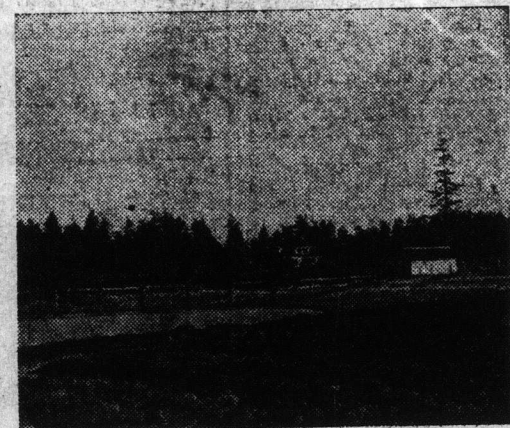
The disadvantages of the islands are these. If you are an invalid likely at a moment's notice to be in need of a doctor, they are perhaps too far from the telephone. Dr. Gordon Cumming at Sidney is perhaps within two or three hours' call (I am making the worst of it), and in some cases that is too long for a sick man or woman to wait, and of course what applies to the doctor applies to the butcher, the baker and the bonnet-maker. This is the first drawback. The second is that under present conditions it is not easy to find a working man who is content to live upon the land, or a maid who, being anxious to remain one, will give up the seductions of Government street and the opportunities offered by a large town for the quiet and seclusion of an island farm.

Moreover, it is contrary to the will of the people that any one should employ Chinamen who are content to live upon the land, and it is contrary to law, I believe, to refuse to

give a man a boat to go away in when he wants to. Seriously, the two disadvantages of the islands, and the only two, are distance from a doctor and the difficulty of obtaining any farm help other than Chinese.

Beyond these two serious drawbacks, both of which can be overcome, I know of none, except that you cannot take a friendly interest in your neighbor's quarrels with his wife; you cannot smell with accuracy what he is going to have for dinner, and you cannot at a moment's notice secure another man for bridge.

But you can keep well if you want to as long as you are young; you can lay in a supply of groceries once a week, when Bittancourt, the local grocer, calls with his launch, and twice a week at least the Iroquois will bring your mails and all the news which the Colonist thinks it right for you to know.



A Gulf Island Ranch

By-and-bye no doubt a system of telephones will put the islanders in close touch with the rest of the world. At present, those of them who have wharves may, if they are unlucky, be without a visiting steamer two or three days in the week.

If Saanich reminds a man of the South of France, the islands, which are strung round it like a circle of pearls, must remind him of the Channel Islands, where men farm flowers instead of turnips, and pay, I am told, as much as £14 per acre in rent.

From London and Paris the lovers of Nature's beauty flock to Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark, and I will back the islands of our Gulf to give the islands of the Channel half the distance and a beating.

In the early spring every rocky headland of them is crowned with a foam of flowers. A month later every islet is a bed of blossom.

In March, when the low thunder of the mating willow grouse is heard in the alder bottoms, the earth is starred with white lilies (erythroniums) thick as the star dust in the Milky Way, whilst here and there on the cliffs' edges the wild ribes bursts into a rosy crimson flame.

This is the beginning of it. After this there begins a riot of flowers, a pageant of spring color. The delicate pink of the wild rose, and the flaming orange of the wild honeysuckle blend with the creamy white of the plumed spirea, whilst the pines and the dark glossy foliage of the arbutus trees frame and set off their more delicate neighbors, until the time comes when that most beautiful of our native trees, the arbutus (peculiarly plentiful upon the islands), not contented with the sheen of its own foliage and the rich red of its gorgeous trunk, hangs itself with lilies-of-the-valley and combines in itself the beauties of the woodland and the garden.

But it is useless to write of the beauties of the islands; I cannot put them upon paper, the changing glories of the sheltered seas which surround them, live opals full of the laughter of girlhood in the early morning, and in the evening stretching into the shadows in a wine-colored flood, deeper than purple, but veined and shot with living gold.

I only try to suggest these things because those who are trying to call attention to the beauties of British Columbia have tired me for the last twenty years by the way in which they ignore the greatest beauty we possess and fail always to bring those who visit us to see that which would best repay them. I will put a curb upon my pen and try to come down to the prose proper to a well conducted newspaper after just one word more. Will anyone who thinks that I have over-stated my case go some day and stand upon Knapp Island in the time of the cherry blossoms and looking east toward Mount Baker tell me that there is a scene in this world more beautiful?

Years ago there were two bit-quoted reasons why men should not buy island property, and those who had farm lands to sell upon the main island were not slow to cite them, in their desire to get rid of dangerous competitors. They were lack of communication, and want of water. One of these objections has been removed; the other never existed.

In the matter of communication, I take the island I know best, now in the occupation of Mr. Taylor.

Here the S.S. Iroquois calls with the mail on Mondays and Fridays. Under ordinary circumstances the captain will also call for passengers by request on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Wednesdays Mr. Bittancourt's trading boat calls for orders and to purchase farm produce. There is a rival boat in the district which will take Mr. Bittancourt's place if he fails to give satisfaction, and during the summer the Don has been running every other day from Oak Bay and will call if flagged.

Of course if an island has no wharf and no produce the steamer service will be less. As to the other objection, want of water, it had some basis in fact as long as men were content to sink from six to ten feet. At that depth you could find water, but it was surface water, and in the long, dry summer it evaporated and the wells "played out."

Nowadays men sink from 16 to 20 feet, and at that depth find an abundance of water, which lasts comfortably through the longest and driest spells. Sidney Island is a notorious example of an island once supposed to be practically waterless, which has now an abundance of water, and Pier Island was sold for an old song for the same reason, although at present there is upon it a practically inexhaustible supply. There a well 8 ft. x 8 ft. x 20 ft. showed no sign of depletion at the end of last summer, which was a peculiarly dry one.

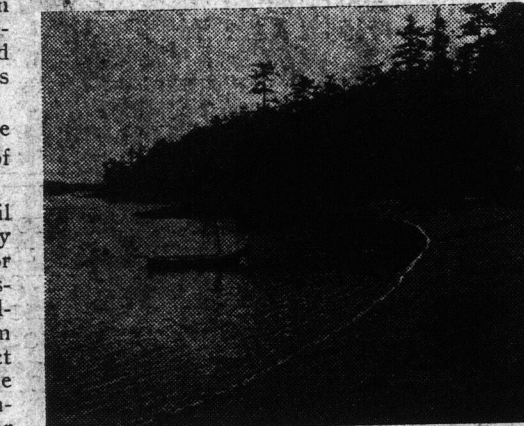
So far it should not be difficult to obtain evidence for what has been said in favor of the islands of the Gulf of Georgia. It will be somewhat more difficult to make men believe that there is a very considerable difference between the climatic conditions upon them (at least upon the smaller islands) and those of the immediately adjoining main island. Lying as they do behind Vancouver Island, sheltered by it and by each other, and yet not overshadowed by any high land, they are veritable sun traps, and this they show in a variety of ways, e.g. by the early arrival of humming birds and other summer emigrants and the earliness of certain blossoms and vegetable products; moreover (and this is not altogether an advantage) the showers which one sees falling round Cowichan generally pass round without falling upon these islands.

There is a fig tree which has borne and ripened fruit in the open, and a Gloire de Dijon rose now a mass of blossoms, at Pier Island, both of which came safely through last winter without protection of any kind. Bearing in mind the exceptional severity of last winter, these facts should save a good deal of writing.

Going a good deal further north to the exceptionally fine farm of Mr. Harry Burchell, vines may be found bearing fruit annually in

the open, and figs fruiting freely, the fruit ripening on the trees.

To sum up as to this question of climate, this has been a very exceptional year round Victoria, and contrary to the rule there was a frost which did some damage about the middle of May. Upon those islands of which the writer has most intimate knowledge, there was absolutely no frost at this time. Snow rarely lies and what little frost we get upon the islands is only in the depth of winter, so that it does not seem too much to say that the climate of the groups of islands in the Channel and in the Gulf are very much alike; what can be grown in one could be grown in the other, and at present the fee simple of an acre in the Gulf does not cost twice as much as the annual rent of an acre in the Channel.



Bathing Beach on a Gulf Island

At present, with some exceptions, these island lands are being wasted, for it is waste to use garden lands of such exceptional merit for mixed farming.

Upon Portland Island a couple of young English farmers are growing seeds for the local market and doing well. My own figures frighten me a little, but I think that Mr. Simpson showed me 153 young pea vines grown from the produce of one pea vine last year, and upon Mayne Island Mr. Bennett, and others have pear orchards which will compare favorably with any in the world; indeed, I doubt if pear trees which will produce more and better fruit than some of those at Mr. Deakins's can be found anywhere.

I had intended before leaving the islands to have collected a few statistics, but time failed me, and as I am trying to give my old neighbors a fair show in introducing their properties to the notice of the rest of the world, perhaps they may feel inclined to help me. If so, some of them might send a few statistics to the Colonist illustrative of the earliness of their farms, their freedom from frost and the productivity of their fruit trees. I know that they would be worth printing, and that my friend the Colonist would print them.

Looked at from the outside as you pass these islands, they seem to be heavily timbered with pines growing upon rocks, which in most cases come down to the water's edge. With many of them this rocky front is but the raised edge of the saucer, the hollow of which contains rich soil overgrown in most cases with easily cleared alder, and in all of them the ridges of rock contain between them deposits of rich soil admirably adapted to cultivation.

Perhaps nowhere in British Columbia is there more of that rather heavy black land adapted to pear growing than upon these islands, and certainly I have never elsewhere seen such crops of strawberries or gooseberries so free from mildew as upon these islands. Only this year I heard a fruit farmer from Rockside declare that a certain strawberry patch upon one of them was the best he had ever seen, and this patch last year bore twice, a full crop at the normal season and a second

half crop after the ordinary strawberry crop was over.

Of apples what is true of the Saanich district is true of this district. The varieties natural to it, e.g. King of Tompkins, do exceedingly well, and they have this advantage: the man who grows fruit upon an island suffers from his own pests; he cannot suffer from those imported by his neighbors.

In conclusion, to those who are not afraid of their own company, varied by almost daily visits from their neighbors, and if necessary a weekly visit to town, I would recommend an inspection of this island district, because it is the most beautiful in British Columbia, because the land is cheaper than any of the same quality in British Columbia, because for fruit and flower growing it is equal to the Channel Islands, because the bays are full of fish, which save the fishmonger's bill, and the game can be preserved, which saves the butcher's bill; because the dry, sunny land and ample beaches, full of small crustacean life, make these islands ideal poultry farms, and because the limited number of them, must some day, when the demand arises, make them almost priceless.

TO SUPERCEDE LETTERS

Successful experiments have been carried out in the United States with a machine which enables telegraphing to be done at the rate of 1,000 words a minute—60,000 words an hour.

It is the invention of Mr. Delany, to whom the British Government paid £150,000 for the synchronous multiplex system of telegraphy, the instruments for which are now a feature of the Post Office museum, their extreme delicacy making them useless for practical working in this country.

The wonderful character of Mr. Delany's new machine may be gathered from the fact that the mechanical speed limit of the Murray typewriting telegraph system, which the Post Office is using, is 120 words a minute.

Telepost is the name which has been given to the new system. First of all the message is perforated on a tape at the rate of thirty words a minute, and then the tape is passed through the transmitting machine at the high speed. This double operation is a drawback, but it loses little in comparison with the old arrangement of translating from ordinary English into Morse.

The new system can be so economically worked that fifty words can be sent any distance for a shilling, and it is expected that instead of writing letters business men will use the telepost.

Inquiries are being made as to the practicability of adopting the system in England; but they have been experimenting for some time with a similar Hungarian invention with which they have attained a speed of 30,000 words an hour, and for which the inventor claims a possible speed approximating to that of the new Delany instrument.

There are several mechanical difficulties to be overcome, however, before it could be adopted. The most serious, perhaps, is that when at work it interferes on account of the great fluctuations in the current with other systems, notably the telephone system. A complete conversion of the existing installations would be necessary in the event of its being applied, and at the moment no postmaster-general in the present state of finance would lightly take up such an undertaking.

The Post Office experts believe that the time will come when all long-distance messages will be sent by means of high-speed machines, and the telephone become the exclusive medium for short-distance messages. But it must be a gradual evolution. For the present the existing installation, the many restrictive conditions which hamper telegraph development, and the fact that the climatic conditions of England have still to be reckoned with by the scientist, are all against the early adoption of the telepost in Great Britain.