

Celestials, is a variety of Narcissus, bearing in lavish profusion chaste flowers of silvery white, with golden yellow cups; they are of exquisite beauty and entrancing perfume. It is grown by the Chinese, according to their ancient custom, to herald the advent of their new year, and as a symbol of good luck. The bulbs are grown by a method known only to themselves, whereby they attain great size and vitality, ensuring luxuriant growth and immense spikes of flowers; in fact, the incredibly short time required to bring the bulbs into bloom (four to six weeks after planting) is one of the wonders of nature. "You can almost see them grow," succeeding everywhere and with everybody. They do well in pots of earth, but are more novel and beautiful grown in shallow bowls of water, with enough fancy pebbles to prevent them from toppling over when in bloom. *Culture*.—As the plant is partially aquatic in its nature, plenty of water is necessary. If it be grown in soil, it should be light and sandy. After the bulbs have been planted they should be kept in a closet or in a cool, dark place for a few days, to induce a growth of roots before the tops start; afterwards, they should be placed in a sunny window.

Cyclamen Persicum Giganteum.—One of the best of plants for window culture, and a great improvement on the *Cyclamen Persicum* of bygone days. Easily propagated from seed or bulbs, bearing a wealth of dark green foliage, above which stands, beautifully poised, great white flowers with just a slight tinge of color.

Primula or Chinese Primrose is one of the most desirable of plants for winter blooming, and of the easiest culture, the main facts to be borne in mind being the necessity of mel low soil for the fibrous roots, a moderate amount of water for the same, and none for the foliage. Easily kept through the summer by being placed in any partially shaded situation out of doors, and given just enough water to keep them alive.

Plum Growing.

I was much interested in the perusal of Mr. Cline's excellent article on "How to Grow Plums for Profit" in your last number. The views of practical fruit growers, when backed up by years of experience, should receive the thoughtful attention of all members of your great army of readers. Mr. Cline was no doubt speaking for the Niagara district in particular, and the milder portions of Ontario in general, when he stated that such varieties as De Soto, Marrianna, Forest Garden, Weaver, etc., were not hardier than the large fruited sorts. In this locality there are barely half a dozen of the list Mr. Cline recommends that are sufficiently hardy to live on from year to year, much less mature crops of fruit. Of those which have come through the past winters with least injury are Glass Seedling, Reim Claude, Yellow Egg, Richland, Newman, Pond's Seedling and Lombard. These belong to the *Prunus Domestica* class, while De Soto, Forest Garden, Wolf, Wyant, and many others, are varieties of our American species, either *Prunus Americana* or *P. Chicasa*. Wherever varieties of *Prunus Domestica* succeed they should be planted in preference to any other, with the exception of, perhaps, De Soto, a few trees of which will make a desirable addition to any collection; but where these finer plums are shut out by climatic barriers, then we must accept the alternative and plant the best selections of our American species. The trees are hardy, bear early and freely, giving us fruit not to be compared with Bradshaws and Gages for dessert use, but very much appreciated when canned. In the matter of curculio proof plums, I heartily agree with Mr. Cline, and as far as I have been able to observe, they chiefly and solely exist in the minds of originators or proprietors of new varieties.

JOHN CRAIG,
Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

[Our readers, as well as ourselves, thank Mr. Craig for this letter. We invite each of our subscribers to send us criticisms on articles or editorials which appear in our columns. By this means only can a first-class live paper be published. Read our columns attentively. If you have anything useful to tell, let us hear from you.]

Farmers' Societies.

The Patrons of Industry and Combines.

BY UNCLE TOBIAS.

Mr. Chas. Braithwaite, of Portage la Prairie, in the December number of FARMER'S ADVOCATE has taken me to task for my uncalled-for remarks upon the organization called the Patrons of Industry. Now, nothing was further from my thoughts and intentions than to throw any discredit upon the organization, or to do it any injury. My motive was purely and simply this: To put the Patrons on their guard, and not allow themselves to be carried away like so many children by the wonderful and unreasonable stories and promises made by the organizers of these societies. I would say to all members and would-be future members, also, of this or any other society, "go slow." Think for yourselves. Don't take all these organizers tell you as gospel. "Boil it down." Yes; and it will bear boiling down one-half, or even three parts into one, and then be a good thing. "Rome was not built in a day." Neither can the Patrons of Industry do everything in a month, or year, or even five years. What business or concern of any repute, or even professional man, has come to the front and stayed there in less than five or even ten years' time. This is your great danger. You are going too fast, and doing and undertaking too much for the age and experience of your organization.

Another point lost sight of. Your members or patrons must be educated and prepared for these radical changes. But how many are so educated or prepared to turn over and jump out of buying and trading on credit to paying cash for everything they want? I venture, not one in ten. How are these members going to pay cash when they are already in debt to the country storekeeper? Look at the hundreds, yes, thousands of farmers who are gulled and fooled into buying all sorts of things they don't want; and still worse, of buying what they really do want from pedlars and tramps and rascals of all descriptions that are scouring the country and persuading and tempting the farmers into buying goods and all sorts of things that are worthless, and dear at half the money. These poor deluded farmers pay for such rubbish, when the very same goods, I care not what it is, can be bought in their nearest town or city for less money from respectable, reliable dealers and merchants, whose goods are worth the money asked for them, and should they by any accident or mistake prove otherwise, can be returned. Why farmers buy such goods, is what astonishes me; and why don't the organizers of the Patrons of Industry start a crusade against these worthless fellows instead of against the quiet, inoffensive, honest country trader and storekeeper. Now, there would be "common sense and consistency" in this, would there not? Let the heads and leaders of the Patrons of Industry take up this, and they will have the hearty support of every class of the community. Let them educate their members on this idea. Again, I say, "go slow." Don't undertake too much. Get your members into line and touch on some other points before dictating to the merchant what his profits shall be. Get them to read and thinking more for themselves. How many members take a good agricultural paper? Teach them to read and study out both sides of the question. Don't for one moment think that all who don't think or do just as you do or would, are all wrong, either on political or any other question. No man ever made a greater mistake, and no man who reads and thinks on only one side of any question can form a fair or honest opinion.

But Mr. Braithwaite has entirely misunderstood my remarks and mistaken my meaning, when he says that I am not consistent with re-

gard to combines. I did not say one word against farmers combining, but rather against their mode of procedure. By all means let them combine. But by all means let their combinations be consistent and fair, and on good business principles. If this is done they will succeed. But be careful and moderate, and don't brag and shout and trumpet your work and intentions all over the country, and in everybody's ear. Do the other combines do that? No, sir. They know enough to keep their business to themselves until they are ready to act or take some decided step. Not so with the Patrons. Their business, their intentions, their future plans, and all and everything, are paraded before the public, and, as it were, for the especial benefit of these other combines they (the Patrons) are opposing. This is just what they want, and they are all this time laughing in their sleeve at the ignorance and cupidity of the farmers. And just here I want to impress it upon all the leaders of this Patron movement, that before you can be ultimately successful you will have to educate at least a portion of your members in good business methods, and calm, quiet, cool judgment and actions. Until this is done the other fellows have the advantage, and they will use it, too,—mark that! Why, if the members of your Society had one-quarter the business ability and knowledge that your opponents have, you could fight them without any trouble; yes, and bring them to time. Here is another point for the leaders of Patrons to take hold of and profit by, and use to the advantage and for the benefit of your members. *viz.* Business methods of doing business. Get them up out of the ruts and mire of a slipshod, guess-work, kind of "go-as-you-please" way of doing their business. Teach your members how to save money and make money by being good, shrewd, honorable business men. I for one do think that this would pay every member of the Patrons of Industry much better, and in the end be more lasting and satisfactory than by trying to dictate to any business man what his profit shall be. How many Patrons know each how his business stands, and whether he is going behind or making money? How many Patrons keep even an ordinary cash-book? How many Patrons can tell me how much it costs them to live? How many can tell me how much money they handle or turn over in a year? How many Patrons can tell me how much per annum their cows or sheep or stock of any kind brings them in? How many Patrons know or can tell me how much it costs to keep each cow or sheep or horse or anything else on their farm? Here is where all ye organizers of the Patrons of Industry should begin. Do the other fellows who organize combines run their business in this way? No, sir; they do not. If they did, I would have no trouble in telling just how long they would last and when they would burst.

Another point and I am done for this time. I have heard good, calm, cool-headed business men and friends of the farmer say, "Don't waste your time and energy in trying to do something that is far-fetched and very uncertain, but go to work and start out with the determination to meet these questions" by "*lessening the cost and increasing the production*." Now, if the Patrons would engrave this upon their foreheads, or into the heads of every member, and live up to this principle, they would soon be out of the mire and ruts. Let every Patron get up and start out with the determination that he is going to increase his yield of grain per acre twenty-five per cent.; his yield per cow, in butter or cheese, ten, fifteen or twenty dollars per head. Let the leaders and organizers of the Patrons send and get a copy of the report of the Bureau of Industries and figure out for the benefit and instruction of themselves and their audience the enormous amount this extra yield per acre, or per cow, would bring, and it will astonish both them and their audience. Yes; and this increase will benefit them far more than the paltry reduction they will get on the cost of goods by asking the country storekeeper to sell them at twelve per cent. over cost. This is the kind of doctrine the organizers should talk and preach. They will then have the hearty support of all reasonable and sensible men in all lines of business and pursuits of life.