

* Open Letters. *

Grapes for England.

SIR,—By to-day's mail I send you a ripe bunch of the Mills grape grown in my garden at Lindsay and gathered on the 21st of September for exhibition purposes. All my late kinds also ripened their fruit this season, namely, Jefferson, Agawam, Vergennes and others, showing the possibility of gratifying the most fastidious taste as to color, flavor and size by a range from Moore's Early, Jefferson, Lady Washington, Mills, even in this latitude, whenever we are fortunate enough to have a favorable season.

May I make a few suggestions regarding the Mills grape and other hybrids. The Mills was produced by a cross between the European species *Vinifera* and our standard American varieties, resulting in the production of a grape that has the essential characteristics for export. In the hands of a skilled hybridist there might be produced from it a progeny earlier in ripening which might meet the requirements of the middle, mechanical and laboring classes of England. The vine is healthy, hardy and productive; the fruit is attractive, of fair size both in berry and bunch, and in flavor it is of near approach to the European varieties; the flesh is firm, meaty and adheres well to the cluster. It is a good shipper and a good keeper, an excellent combination, and if to this could only be added the property of early ripening, we might reasonably expect to find a demand for it at popular prices in the old country.

This last summer I had the pleasure of spending about six weeks in England during July and August, and, being interested in fruit, particularly grapes, I noticed the difference in quality, color and size, as accounted for by the district in which the fruit was grown. England receives large importations in season from Spain, Portugal, France, and the Channel Islands, the prices varying according to the size and quality from 12c. to 60c. per lb. I have a strong impression that a consignment of a few tons of such showy grapes as Niagara, Agawam, Vergennes and other good keepers could be profitably disposed of in the latter part of September in some of the large manufacturing towns in the north of England, as, for instance, Leeds, Stockton, Middleboro. Newcastle, Sunderland, each with an average population of about 100,000. In the hands of a person with some knowledge of fruit and an acquaintance with a few leading wholesale fruit men, I believe our grapes could be successfully introduced in this way. I would have no fear of making a success of such an enterprise if the grapes were in good condition.

W. M. ROBSON.

Lindsay, Ont.

A New Strawberry.

SIR,—A new strawberry, a chance seedling, was found in Ulster Co., just north of Orange,

and in the heart of the Hudson river fruit region, and was fruited in a large plantation for the first time last season. I gave it a visit and I grew very enthusiastic over it. If you did not see our paper containing an account of it, with a cut, write me and I will send it to you. It will be on the market next spring—perhaps it is now. I have a short row in my home garden which the originator's representative gave me, but I am in honor bound not to give or sell any plants until after he has disseminated it, which I believe will be in the coming spring.

I think it would please you if you could see it, and I hope you buy a few plants; two or three dozen next spring and try it. I can say this for it in its home:—Superb foliage, rank grower, perfect flower, berry large and round, regular in shape, very solid, crimson in color, and solid enough for a first-class shipper.

As an indication of its vigor, let me say, that last summer I set out a row of Wm. Belt in my garden, grown there, and they made a better than average growth. Two weeks later I set out the Gibson and they soon passed the Wm. Belt, larger plants, more runners and an altogether rugged plant. Of course, I have no interest in it; but I thought you might like to try it. The propagator's address is Marlboro', N. Y., C. H. Baildon, and he is a very honorable man.

E. G. FOWLER, Port Jervis, N. Y.

A Sham Pear.

SIR,—I am taking the liberty of sending you a little piece of news that I think might have escaped you while in the city on Tuesday.

There is a gentleman here, who grows some very fine pears that have long been noted prize winners at the country fairs. This gentleman very kindly sent a few specimens to the Horticultural exhibit; these were seen and admired by quite a number of people; one of the admirers is a gentleman who has a hobby for mock-orange gourds; he at once declared he could beat the pears all hollow.

The joker hustled home and picked the largest and best specimen of gourd he could find, rubbed a little vinegar on the side and brought out a beautiful color; he then packed it very carefully in a neat little box of cotton batten, so as to give the impression that it was a dead ripe pear (in reality to hide the bottom of the gourd, which is very unlike a pear).

The "pear" was then brought to the show, where there was much discussion as to its variety and mode of culture. The prize winner declared that it was wax, another that it was wood and tinted. But the owner would not allow his precious (pear) to be taken from the box, and so the joke went on, until some one that knew, 'let the cat out of the bag.' And now the horticulturists are wondering who it was that did not know a gourd from a pear.

R. B. C., Hamilton.