

L'Original, April 13, 1854.

DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in enclosing for your insertion in the *Agriculturist* a letter recently received from the Rev. Andrew Bell, a scientific and practical gardener, to whom I mentioned the circumstance of my offering premiums on farms and gardens in our country.

This opinion should be adopted in preference to mine, as I neither claim practical nor theoretical knowledge; but I feel an anxious desire to advance that branch of domestic economy throughout the Province, and especially in our own country.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your most obt. servt.,

C. P. TREADWELL.

Geo. Buckland, Esq.,
&c., &c., &c.,
Toronto.

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MY DEAR MR. TREADWELL.—When you called on me to-day, you mentioned a proposal which had been made to offer premiums for the best gardens in Townships or Counties, and wished me to give you some suggestions, in writing, as to the conditions on which those prizes should be awarded. Having my mind occupied and perplexed about some other matters, I really cannot give the matter that consideration I could wish. I shall try, however, to throw out two or three hints.

I think the quantity of land you propose as a minimum in order to get a prize—being nearly half an acre—is entirely too much. Very few families in the whole country, even amongst the wealthy, have that amount enclosed and under cultivation as a garden; and, moreover, no family could do such an amount of land that justice, and give it that high cultivation, which a garden requires, except among the wealthy, who are able to keep professional gardeners, and if I understand you aright, that is not exactly the class you wish to encourage and induce to cultivate gardens. I think that about the fifth of an acre, two square chains, would be enough; and further, I think this might be left indefinite. It might very safely be included under the head shortly to be mentioned.

If I mistake not, you also spoke of the greater variety of crops—another condition. I scarcely think that would answer the end in view. It might be no difficult matter to procure such a variety of seeds and roots that a garden might present a most wonderful display in this respect: a little of this and a little of that, to the extent of a hundred or more varieties; but I am afraid that the comfort of a family would be very little promoted thereby. The great thing that ought to be aimed at, in my estimation, is, to encourage every family in the land to cultivate a garden of *such extent as may be managed by themselves*, or with as little hired labour as possible merely for the rougher and more laborious operations,—a *useful and tasteful* garden, one that would yield both *profit and pleasure* to a family, instead of being a piece of expensive and useless ostentation. To come up to my idea of the thing, the garden should contain *such kinds of vegetables—*

in such quantity—in such variety, and of such excellence and perfection, and accompanied by such taste, in the laying out and the ornamentation of it with flowers, as would not only contribute to the support of a family, but, all things considered, would, in the estimation of the judges, as sensible and discreet men, minister the most to the health, the comfort, the enjoyment and the pleasure of a family, all the year round.

Another ground of awarding the prize might be the superior excellence of the garden produce of whatever kind—large, healthy, thriving, &c., &c., as indicating the best cultivation, and giving promise of the largest amount of produce for the least extent of ground.

Other grounds might be the care bestowed on the garden, the order and neatness in which it was kept, its entire freedom from weeds &c., &c.

And last but not least the *taste* displayed in laying out a garden, arranging the crops and ornamenting the garden with flowers. To bring the whole to a point: I would advise leaving out the extent of the garden. That I think might be safely included among the "*All things considered*" which must still be left to the discretion of the judges.

The prize might go to the garden which—I. Contained *such kind of vegetables in such quantity*—and in *such variety*, and of *such excellence* as would minister the most towards the *support, the health, the comfort, the enjoyment* and the pleasure of a family *all the year round*, and which, II. Contained the *best crops of their kind*, and III. Showed the *greatest freedom from weeds*, the greatest care and neatness,—and IV. displayed the greatest amount of *good taste* in laying out and the ornamenting of it with flowers.

I hold that the cultivation of a pure, refined, elevated taste in a family circle by the floral decoration of their garden done by themselves, and studied and watched by them, is an element and by no means the smallest one in the usefulness of the garden.

And now having made such suggestions as occur to me at the moment, in regard to what should constitute the best garden, to which a prize is to be awarded, I would make another suggestion, that something more is needed, than offering a trifling prize of a few dollars for the best garden, in order to induce a larger number of the people to cultivate such gardens as will conduce substantially to the support, health, comfort, &c., of their families. Their ignorance and their prejudices must be removed in regard to the usefulness of it, and the time, labour, and expense necessary. They must be instructed in short as to how it is to be done, and done to the best advantage.

Offer then a good prize, as large as any that have been offered for other essays, for a good essay on gardening. I do not mean a mere mechanical thing, such as is printed on seed papers and in almanacs to guide a novice, as to the breadth of drills and the times of sowing; but a deeper and more philosophical thing, showing in what a good garden consists and how it may be formed, the extent of it, how it should lie, the kind of soil, how deep, how drained, how enclosed