

manner and remarks added much to the interest of the meeting, which was crowded to the doors. He first called upon Hon. Mr. Dryden, Minister of Agriculture for Ontario. Mr. Dryden said he was not present to attempt to instruct the members of the Association in a branch of industry in which they were thoroughly versed, but he came to congratulate them on what they had accomplished, to encourage them in their work, and stimulate them, if possible, to greater efforts and further successes. He reminded them that they were the representatives of one of the greatest industries in the Province, and the possibilities of future development depended largely upon the work done by the present generation. The Fruit Growers' Association had a great future before it, and he warned the members of it against being satisfied with what they had already accomplished. The possibilities of fruit-growing in Ontario were enormous, and the Government aid given to the Association was not that it might rest on its achievements already won, but to aid it in going on to further and better things. On no other ground could the Government grant be justified. The Government wanted this Association to spread the knowledge which they possessed to all the people of the Province, so that the very best and nothing but the best in every line of fruit could be produced. There was plenty of demand for the best at good prices, but no demand and no price for an inferior article. It was for this purpose that they as a co-operative body existed, and it was for this that the Government gave them encouragement and assistance. This year was an exceptional year, but, with all its abundant production, if the country had had facilities to handle the crop and distribute it properly, there would have been no cry that the crop was too great. Mr. Dryden pointed out that the real danger to the fruit industry lay not in overproduction, but in the production of an inferior quality of fruit, and in an overcostly distribution. It was idle to send an inferior article to the foreign market, for in that market, as well as in the home market, it was in the way of a superior product. In conclusion, Mr. Dryden said we have a good reputation in the British market for our cheese, and I am going to see that we keep it, though others are trying to take it away. Every effort should be made to gain a similar reputation for our fruit. We should put a premium on quality. Let the people of Britain and the United States see that we have the best, and they will have it and pay good prices for it. Do not let them see your inferior fruit. It is because they have seen too much of it that we have not better markets and a better reputation for our fruit today. Let the knowledge of how to produce the best spread all over the land, and the Government which I represent bids you godspeed in your work.

Hon. Mr. Fisher in a short address supplemented what he had said during the afternoon. If improvement in shipping facilities, cold storage, and any other accommodation within the reasonable province of his Government to give is what is needed, he could cheerfully promise that aid. The Government of Ontario in rendering the required aid has contributed largely toward placing the Province of Ontario foremost among the districts of the world. There is a sphere in which the Federal Government may render aid without overlapping or interfering with the work of the Local Administration. But the people must not expect Governments to do for them what they can do for themselves. The people must rely upon their own efforts as much as possible, and the Government will render aid when and where it is actually needed.

A Cover Crop for the Orchard.—Prof. J. Craig said that many of the roots of trees in the orchard are often killed by continued hard frosts for want of a covering. Trees with their roots thus killed will bud out all right, but will make no further progress. As a cover crop, he suggested some variety of clover sown in July, and he recommended the Mammoth clover as the most valuable for the purpose. Crimson clover was too delicate, unless protected by oats or some other crop.

At the close of this session the following resolutions were submitted and passed:—

Moved by Mr. Burrell, seconded by Mr. E. H. Smith.—That, for the guidance of the committee appointed to appear before the Tariff Commissioners, this meeting is of the opinion that the present import duties upon fruit should be maintained as they are, with the following changes only, namely: The *ad valorem* duty upon pears and plums of 20 per cent. and 25 per cent. respectively be changed to a specific duty of one cent per pound, and that the duty upon imported evaporated peaches be increased to two cents per pound.

Moved by Mr. E. D. Smith, seconded by ex-President M. Pettit.—That as it is extremely important to prevent the utter ruin of Canadian nurserymen by the unfair competition of United States nurserymen driven to sell their stock at a frightful loss by the enormous production of Southern nurserymen, and as a consequence of such ruin of Canadian nurserymen this country would be flooded by Southern grown stock, which, though firm in appearance, is not at all suited for planting in this country, this meeting is of the opinion that the present duties should be maintained.

Mr. T. H. Race submitted the report of the Nominating Committee, which recommended the appointment of these officers: President, W. E. Wellington, Toronto; Vice-President, W. M. Orr, Fruitland; Secretary-Treasurer, L. Woolverton, Grimsby;

Directors—Division 1, Harold Jones, Maitland; 2, R. W. Whyte, Ottawa; 3, Geo. Nicol, Cataragui; 4, W. Boulter, Picton; 5, T. Beall, Lindsay; 6, R. L. Huggard, Whiby; 7, M. Pettit, Winona; 8, A. M. Smith, St. Catharines; 9, J. S. Scarff, Woodstock; 10, John Stewart, Benmiller; 11, T. H. Race, Mitchell; 12, G. O. Oaston, Craighurst; 13, Alex. McNeil, Windsor. Auditors—A. H. Pettit, Grimsby; G. E. Fisher, Burlington. The report was adopted.

Secretary-Treasurer L. Woolverton presented his annual statement, showing the receipts of the year ending Dec. 1st, 1896, to be \$4,765.42; expenditure, \$4,806.67; leaving a deficit of \$41.25. Amount due the Association for advertisements, \$209.55.

The Association decided to hold their next annual meeting in the town of Waterloo.

House Plants.

BY HARRY BROWN, EXPERIMENTAL FARM, BRANDON.

It has often occurred to me whilst visiting the homes of some of our farmers, that they would appear more homelike and be more conducive to the happiness of the inmates with the addition of a few flowering plants in their windows. Only the fortunate few, who have cultivated a taste for flowers, know how fascinating is this pursuit and how much unalloyed pleasure can be obtained from watching the development of some beautiful flower from its infancy to its brilliant maturity. More especially is this applicable to our own Province, where for four or five months there is nothing to relieve the monotony of the snow-covered prairies, and it is then, most particularly, that we can turn with delight to a beautiful collection of indoor flowers, and we feel better and brighter as, contemplating them, our thoughts turn to Him whose bounteous goodness has bestowed such blessings upon us, and we exclaim, "Verily, Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." There seems to be a special dispensation in the fact that most of the winter-blooming plants are very brilliant in their coloring, far eclipsing the summer-flowering varieties. Take for example the floriferous *Cyclamen*, the many colored and graceful *Chrysanthemum*, the gaudy *Cinerarias* and *Chinese Primroses*, and last, but not least, the army of bulbs which bloom in the winter and spring, of which I will specially mention the *Tulip*, which can be had in (I may say without exaggeration) a hundred colors and shades; the many varieties of *Narcissi*, better known, perhaps, under its familiar name of *Daffodil*, and the exquisite shade and delicate perfume of the *Hyacinth*. But some of my readers will perhaps say that considerable skill is necessary to bring to perfection the varieties enumerated, and then again there is a more popular fallacy very prevalent, and which is, that in order to be successful in the winter culture of house plants a high temperature must be maintained, and many are deterred from attempting it solely on this account, whereas the fact is many of the plants decidedly prefer a cool temperature during their entire growth. I will endeavor, in the following, to give a short synopsis of the method of growing *Hyacinths*, which will also apply to *Tulips*, *Narcissus*, and other winter-flowering bulbs. As soon as received, plant firmly in a five or six inch pot, leaving the crown of the bulb just above the surface of the soil; nearly all bulbous plants delight in a rich compost, which should be made up of about two-thirds decayed fibrous loam and one-third well-rotted manure and sand. After potting they should be given a liberal watering, care being taken to see that the water has thoroughly penetrated all the soil. As soon as the pot is drained it should be removed to a cool situation (a cellar is preferable where the temperature remains in the neighborhood of 32°) and covered over with about six inches of moist sand and allowed to remain there four or five weeks. At the expiration of this time a good growth of roots will have been made, and it is essential in *Hyacinth* culture to have the roots formed before the leaves and flower spikes have made much headway, otherwise a weak, straggling, and imperfect flower is produced. I call special attention to this point, as I have met with numerous instances in which the bulb has been placed in the window as soon as potted, and then the poor results were wondered at. After the plant has been brought to the light it should be kept in a temperature of from 50° to 60° Fahr., although it will not injure it materially should it drop to freezing point; in fact, the cooler the plant is brought along, providing that it is not below freezing point, the better will be the flower spike produced, the only advantage of heat being to hasten the time of flowering. For the benefit of those who may be confused by the large list of varieties generally given in catalogues, I will recommend the following: Red, *Lord Macaulay*; blue, *King of the Blues*; white, *La Grandesse*; yellow, *Bird of Paradise*. The above four are the cream of varieties now grown, and I am confident that any one purchasing a few of these bulbs and following the directions given will be amply repaid by the delicious fragrance and beautiful texture and coloring of this sweetest of winter-flowering plants. Before closing I would like to make a few comments on a plant which is much abused by amateurs, and yet very generally grown, viz., the *Chrysanthemum*. The type of plant that has often come under my notice in the windows of amateur floriculturists produces a confused mass of weak, straggling shoots, which, when they produce flowers, and this is rather a rare occurrence, present an appearance very dissimilar to the gorgeous Queen of Autumn as it should be. Instead of flowers six to twelve

inches in diameter, which is a fair size to expect, they are generally two to three inches, and even this size is not always attained. On inquiry I find that the plants have been carried on from year to year, a method totally at variance with all recognized modes of *Chrysanthemum* culture. Never grow a *Chrysanthemum* more than one year. When the plants have ceased flowering (which is about this time) cut them down to the pot, and in a short time suckers will spring up from the base of the plant, and these are the stock for propagation. Select the strongest of these, and plant in a small-sized pot (not more than three inches in diameter), using a very sandy, finely pulverized soil. They should be placed in a light, cool position to strike root, as much of the after success depends on cool growth at the commencement. Want of space prevents my going further into this subject at present, but I will continue it at a later date, having, I trust, said enough to enable lovers of this beautiful flower to commence its culture in a systematic manner.

Covering Strawberry Plants.

BY ELLIS F. AUGUSTINE, LAMBTON CO., ONT.

The season is now at hand when strawberries should receive their winter protection. It is always much better to attend to this important work soon after the ground is frozen sufficiently hard to bear the weight of team and wagon than to delay it until a later date. Although the most important object of such covering is to prevent the alternate freezing and thawing which occurs towards spring, still the plants will come out of their dormant state in much better condition if the protection is given while the leaves still retain something of their summer greenness.

Where marsh hay can be obtained it is much the best material to use, as it does not contain grass or weed seeds, so common in all kinds of straw. I know of one grower who has gone a distance of ten miles to procure marsh hay rather than use a covering which may contain seeds of any kind. The greatest drawback in procuring such hay is the low, marshy nature of the ground upon which it grows, which is so soft and yielding as to prevent a team and wagon being driven upon it.

Like myself, most growers will have to be content with using straw, selecting the cleanest at command. Where the material is not too scarce, it should be spread over the entire surface of the ground, as well between the rows as upon them. The plants should be covered to a depth of two or three inches, and if the work is done when the weather is slightly thawing the material used will become frozen to the ground, which will prevent it blowing away during heavy winds. It will require about three loads of straw to properly cover an acre of plants.

In the spring, when growth begins, part of the covering should be raked off the rows and tramped into the paths between, leaving just what the plants can readily push their way through. This acts as a mulch and retains moisture during a drouth, and also keeps the fruit nice and clean.

If a portion of the plants are of a late ripening variety, and the covering is not removed from these until late in spring, the ripening season can be very much lengthened. Berries which ripen after the bulk of the harvest is over often give as good or better returns than early ones, as consumers often neglect putting them down at first, or hold off from buying, expecting prices to become lower, then, as they grow scarcer, are eager to purchase them at almost any price. We have never had our supply of late ripening berries equal to the demand, and it is well to bear this in mind when removing the mulch next spring. No cultivation should be given next season before the fruit is harvested, as the mulch will largely prevent the growth of weeds.

The past season I saw some very large berries for which no sale could be found at any price, as they were almost unrecognizable beneath the coating of sand which had been washed over them during a heavy rain. The land upon which they had been grown had received no mulch and had been frequently cultivated during the growing season. Now is the time to guard against such results, as spring mulching is objectionable on account of attracting solar heat, which frequently scalds the fruit. If the covering applied is sufficient it can be utilized as a protection against late spring frosts when the plants are in bloom, by drawing it up over them with a hand rake when the thermometer shows indications of frost. In this way three or four persons can quickly cover an acre of plants, thus often securing a crop when all others fail, and it is then that handsome prices are received, compensating many times over for the extra labor given.

A Word with Our Readers.

We do not give premiums with the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE*, because the paper itself is full value for its price, \$1 per year. (Scores of our readers during the past month have written us that it is worth many times the subscription price.) But we do recognize the services of friends in securing new subscribers to the paper, and endeavor to give them something of substantial worth. This issue gives an idea of what the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE* for 1897 will be, but we aim to make every issue better than the last. Renew to-day and send us one or more new subscribers.

The Nova Scotia School of Horticulture at Wolfville begins its short winter course on Jan. 7th. It is a well-equipped institution, of which Prof. E. E. Faville is Principal.