



Life, Literature and Education.

[Contributions on all subjects of popular interest are always welcome in this Department.]

A WORK FOR THE PEOPLE: "A WAR AGAINST UGLINESS EVERYWHERE."

[Let us begin the New Year by determining to take a personal interest in this matter.]

We received, recently, the following letter from one of our readers, and, in reply, may say that "The Farmer's Advocate" will be more than pleased to help on this work of beautifying our country in every way that lies in its power. We shall gladly afford space for letters such as Ruralite suggests. We feel that a widespread interest may be created in this way, and interest is only the forerunner of action.

RURALITE'S SUGGESTION.

"I was much interested and benefited by the account in 'The Farmer's Advocate' of November 28th, from the pen of 'Farmer's Advocate Representative,' on 'The Horticultural Society Convention.' I think there is a great good to accomplish for this fair Canada of ours in the beautifying of our Rural Homes, and I think your paper is the best medium. We have to start the ball rolling in the way of greater efforts being made to beautify the farmers' front yards and farms in general. I would suggest that you ask for suggestions on the best trees, shrubs, vines and flowers to plant and grow; writers to send small diagrams of their ideas of laying out a front yard for the best harmony."

Ontario Co., Ont. RURALITE.

THE OPINIONS OF SOME PROMINENT HORTICULTURISTS ON THE SUBJECT.

The following addresses, which were given at the convention of the Horticultural Association, which met in the City Hall, Toronto, in November, are published at this time with very much pleasure. Read them, and get inspiration from them.

Within two or three weeks, the seed catalogues will be beginning to make their appearance,—a new inspiration. If you have never had one sent you before, see that you get one this year. Write for it, and in good time, so that you may have time to think things over, and decide what flowers and shrubs and vegetables are best for you. Make up your mind to create a bit of beauty about your own home, or along the roadways of your own township this year. "Mony a mickle maks a muckle,"—and there are many farmers in Canada. A word to the wise is sufficient.

It will be understood that all of these articles are more or less condensed, to adapt them more especially to the needs of an essentially agricultural journal.

THE WORK OF OUR HORTICULTURAL SOCIETIES.

Mr. J. Lockie Wilson, Toronto, Ont.

You have come to this convention to discuss the problems that confront our horticultural societies. No mere mercenary motives have drawn you from the four winds at considerable expenditure of time and money to attend this meeting. It is to gratify your love of the beautiful in nature, and to signify your willingness to do your part towards making this earth more beautiful, attractive and productive that you are here to-day. I trust that our meeting may be helpful and encouraging to every horticulturist, and that all, as a result, may have higher ideals, and go home more than ever in love with horticulture, and that this may prove an epoch-marking meeting for our societies in Ontario.

The man who makes his thousands at a single deal in real estate, who has added nothing intrinsically to the value of the land, may, because of his dollars, cut a large swath in the community; but I count of far greater value to the world, one who, through the study of nature's possibilities, brings out an added flower or fruit of value to mankind, and while these dealers in lands, stock and bonds may laugh in derision at our enthusiasm over a new peach

earned fruit, has failed in the highest purpose of life.

The richest and most practical horticulturist is he who not only intelligently and successfully cultivates his own gardens and orchards, and enjoys the comforts of his well-earned prosperity, but, through the broad scope of his intellectual and spiritual vision, sees the marvellous forces and laws of the Infinite as they are shown forth in the countless forms of animals and plants, whether found in his garden as friends or enemies, or in the remotest lands beyond the seas.

The first authentic history of our race refers to a man who dressed and kept a garden. According to the Book, Adam was a horticulturist by divine order. Infinite wisdom was exercised in the choice of occupation for the highest of God's creatures. Horticulture was chosen as the best pursuit for man, and, though we have departed from many of the ancient customs, and discarded many ancient ideas, its dignity has never diminished. To-day, it ranks higher than ever before, and the progress it has made in every way justifies it to be classed, as we hope it soon will be, among the learned professions. Trace the evolution of the peach, that most delicious of fruits; from the bitter little almond we find descended all the varieties

of society is much more important than he was half a century ago. A knowledge of botany, chemistry, entomology, and ornithology is necessary in his profession. The best modes of propagation, prevention and cure of diseases and methods of dealing with destructive insects are among the subjects that claim his attention. The sons and daughters in our loved Canadian homes should be taught to regard horticulture as one in which industry is rewarded, talent developed, and virtue nurtured. The flower complete in every part, blooming in its proper season, and fruit in its perfection, should be a reminder of Him, who said "consider the lilies." Every garden, however small it may be, has in it something of Paradise. Whatever helps a life to grow upward into a purer light, a clearer atmosphere, or causes the finer feelings to take root and climb up to a more healthful place, is surely worthy of notice, and is an inspiration both noble and unselfish.

I am reminded of a quotation printed on the front page of a prize-list of the St. Catharines Horticultural Society—that society which is doing such good work in that Garden City, under the supervision of our energetic and untiring president. I will read you the quotation, though I think some of us might not agree with it to the fullest extent, but, in many cases, it would apply: "And he gave it as his opinion, that whosoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together."

The work our horticultural societies are doing is a noble one. The St. Catharines Society is an outstanding example of what can be done by earnest effort and perseverance. Last year, they expended \$1,600 in prizes, and a total expenditure for all purposes of \$2,500. Their membership roll numbers 450. The surrounding townships have caught the spirit of that energetic citizenship, and have contributed large grants to the horticultural society. The town itself considered their grant of \$350, money well spent.

We have, in the Province, 63 societies, with a membership of 7,000. Under the new Act, six other societies found it necessary to become merged with agricultural societies; their membership was 540. The total grants to societies in 1906 was \$5,956; the grants in 1907 amounted to \$8,140.

One important feature of our work must be to spread the good tidings of horticulture. Bankers, doctors, lawyers all subscribe for journals specially written for their particular lines of business, and the up-to-date horticulturist must do likewise. How are you to know about the newest kind of fruit, flower or vegetable, and the proper way to protect them from their enemies, if you do not take a journal that deals practically with your business? I would recommend every member of our society, if they have not already done so, to subscribe for a horticultural journal. We have published in this



An English By-path.

that fills its place in the succession of fruits, or a new chrysanthemum with added attractions of form or color, we can, in our ecstasy, sorrow a little that so few people of this world know how to get the highest pleasure out of life by living near to nature's heart. There is a wonderful field for improvement in the objects with which we deal, and the more we add to our knowledge of things that lie nearest to us, the wider will open the door to a wealth of information, the acquirement of which will give us the keenest delight.

The horticulturist who does not see more beauty and have a greater source of happiness in a great thought or a lofty conception of the Infinite as manifested in the marvellous works of nature, than in the gold for which he sells his hard-

with which we are acquainted. The state of perfection to which the apple has been brought is no less wonderful. Compare the apple of to-day with a crab of some inferior variety, and the difference may readily be discerned. We see in our flowers, as well as our fruits, the fairy touch of science. Contrast the wayside briar with the beautiful roses at our exhibition in Massey Hall, and you begin to have some idea of what scientific culture has done. While in reality, horticulture has always borne an important part in the affairs of men, the term has recently been given a broader meaning, and now includes all the arts relating to orchard, vineyard and garden, as well as all the pursuits bearing on the adornment and improvement of homes, parks and highways. The horticulturist as a mem-