



Canadian Horticulture.

An editorial of ours on "Horticultural Enterprise in Canada and the United States", which appeared in THE CANADA FARMER of April 16 1866 was copied into the *Collage Gardener and Journal of Horticulture*, an able and valuable British publication; and having crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic, at length met the eye of Mr John Paxton, Gardener, Woodfield, Quebec, Canada East, who considered that Canada in general, and particularly Lower Canada, had not received justice at our hands in the said editorial. Accordingly after mature deliberation that gentleman despatched a communication to the British journal above-named, which duly appeared in a recent number, and in which the reputation of Canadian horticulturists is defended with much zeal but little discrimination. We append the communication in full, and accompany it with a few remarks.

"I noticed in *The Journal of Horticulture* for the last week in July, an article entitled "Horticultural Progress in the United States and Canada," taken from THE CANADA FARMER. Now, with all due respect for that periodical, I beg to dissent in no small degree from the writer of the article in question. I readily admit that much remains to be done before we can attain perfection in horticulture; but to give such pre-eminence to the Americans for their taste in floriculture is what we of Lower Canada cannot allow, and that because they choose to print some flaming advertisement about some novelty, which (thanks to *The Journal of Horticulture* for our information), is probably, if worth anything, already in Canada. As an instance, the *Cyanophyllum magnificum* was advertised in the American catalogues at the enormous sum of \$26, or a trifle over £5 sterling, while we Canadians very quietly imported it from England for the modest sum of 3s. 6d. Doubtless, in a pomological point of view, they are our superiors, which seems to be the sum total of the aforesaid writer's idea of horticulture. Their climate and season are extremely favourable for fruit-growing, neither of which advantages do we possess, having only five months in which to perform all our out-door operations, the other seven bearing a strong resemblance to the same months in the Arctic regions. Moreover, when we consider that not more than twenty years have elapsed since horticulture was mooted in this locality by a stranger visiting Quebec for the first time, it would scarcely be credited; and I safely say now, that as regards taste in floral display, the ancient capital yields to none on this side of the Atlantic. The great number of prizes annually awarded to us will amply testify to the quality, and many of the leading English and French nurserymen can tell of the large orders of new plants, &c., which they forward to us.

"Had the writer confined his remarks to Upper Canada, there would have been a fair amount of truth in his statements. If he ever stood in the magnificent Crystal Palace where the Montreal Horticultural Society held their annual Exhibition in 1862, and again in the spacious Victoria Skating Rink in 1866, he might there judge whether progress was perceptible. He might there have seen Dahlias and Hollyhocks which would have been no discredit to a Regent's Park or Crystal Palace Show. Black Hamburg, Alicante, Lady Downe's, and Muscat of Alexandria Grapes, which might have graced a royal board; Peaches, Nectarines, Apples, Pears, Plums, and Figs of the first water. With regard to vegetables there was left nothing more to be desired. Upwards of one thousand greenhouse and stove plants were there, their healthy appearance giving abundant evidence of careful and superior cultivation. Among the stove plants might have been seen superb specimens of the newest Begonias, Caladiums, Gynogramma chrysophylla, Pteris tricolor, Cyanophyllums, Dracenas, Cycads, Marantas, and many other new and interesting plants.

Did he ever visit the greenhouses of Quebec or Montreal during the winter and spring months? If he did he must have failed to notice the dense masses of bloom which the pines and well grown Camellias, Azaleas, Acacias, &c., among which may be found

almost as fine specimens as can be met with in England, notwithstanding that the thermometer often descends to 36° below zero.

Again, if he had walked through the various flower gardens in our neighbourhood, and seen the taste displayed in planting, and the excellent quality of the bedding stuff (thanks again to the *The Journal of Horticulture* for keeping us up to the scratch in this respect) he might have exclaimed with J. Jay Smith, editor of the *American Horticulturist*, who visited Quebec in 1849 for the express purpose of noting the progress of horticulture there, "Well, well, we had no conception of this; why, one can almost fancy oneself translated to some stately well-kept domain in England." And were that gentleman to visit Quebec now, he might pass a still higher encomium, inasmuch as many of our places have undergone a thorough renovation since that time, to meet the requirements of the present improved system of bedding out. We can count almost all of the newest bedding Pelargoniums in our collections, including Mrs. Pollock and Sunset, many of the new Roses, Verbenas, Petunias, Pansies, Dahlias, Hollyhocks (albeit the very cream of the catalogues), Coleus, which by the way grows to immense bushes with us when planted out, Centaurea, Cerastium, &c.

I fear that I have trespassed on your space, yet I cannot look on these few rambling remarks in any other light than as an act of justice to the gentlemen of Lower Canada, who vie with each other in a spirit of friendly rivalry in the adornment of their conservatories and grounds, as well as to the English people, who might otherwise remain in ignorance of the true state of things here; and I doubt much if brother Jonathan could not take a wrinkle from the bullfrogs without losing caste."

Mr. Paxton professes to "dissent in no small degree" from our article. The chief point of dissent seems to be that we "gave such pre-eminence to the Americans for their taste in floriculture, and that because they choose to print some flaming advertisement about some novelty," &c. Now we did not assign pre-eminence to our American neighbours "for their taste in floriculture," merely, but for their "horticultural progress" in all departments, and the proof we gave of their progress was not "some flaming advertisement," but the citation of real and valuable additions to our garden treasures, especially in small fruits, and the manifestation of rural taste by the population in general. Of the floral and fruit novelties advertised in the United States, we said, "while, of course, many of them are mere pretenders to excellency, and trumpeted forth for money-making purposes, it cannot be gainsayed that we have obtained some valuable horticultural acquisitions from our neighbours across the lines." Unless Mr. Paxton means to assert that American nurserymen advertise only humbugs and cheats, and is further prepared to deny that we have received any horticultural acquisitions from the United States, he cannot "dissent" from our representations in the smallest degree.

Mr. Paxton admits that the Americans are "our superiors in a pomological point of view," and in connection with this admission, does us the injustice to say that pomology seems to be the sum total "of our idea of horticulture." The article he has undertaken to set right, affords abundant evidence that our "idea of horticulture" is not by any means so limited as he seeks to make out, for we advocated the purchase of ornamental plants, shrubs, &c., and eulogized the disposition to collect and plant about one's home the lovely and valuable creations of God, - the flowers and fruits that declare His glory and show forth His handy-work. Were our critic as diligent a reader of the CANADA FARMER as we are glad to find that he is of the *Journal of Horticulture*, he would know very well that our views and tastes are quite as broad and general as any "gardener" need desire. His admission of the pomological superiority of the Americans is qualified by a reference to the greater mildness of their climate. Strange to say, however, his defence of Canada is chiefly based on the successful raising of tropical productions in green-houses, while we purposely cited hardy products which even in this country can be grown in the open air.

Mr. Paxton indignantly says, "Had the writer confined his remarks to Upper Canada, there would have been a fair amount of truth in his statements. Now

we do not hesitate to say that our statements are far more true of Lower than of Upper Canada. We spoke not of exceptional and rare instances in which wealth combines with taste to get up costly structures of glass and fill them with the rare productions of tropical regions, and of which we can present as many and as eminent ones in Upper Canada as our friend in Lower Canada can produce; but we spoke of the population at large, and chiefly of "rural homes." Behind-hand as our population is in this respect, it is far in advance of the farming communities of Eastern Canada. Has Mr. Paxton ever travelled in the United States? If he has, he must have been struck with the taste of the inhabitants as manifested in the planting of shade trees, and the attention given to flowers and fruits. Many uncouth and unattractive homes can be found on the other side of the lines; but we have considerable progress to make before we equal our American neighbours in the respects indicated.

We have said nothing to disparage the skill of Canadian gardeners or the enterpriso of the rich gentlemen who employ them. Nor have we overlooked the fact that there are in the neighbourhood of all our cities and large towns, multitudes of beautifully-kept places. We are not familiar with the environs of Quebec, and have never walked through the flower gardens that adorn them, but if they excel those of Montreal, Toronto, and Hamilton, they are well worth going far to see. All honour say we to those who are achieving the brilliant results about which our critic says so much, but we are not only desirous that a few wealthy people here and there should have their green-houses, gardens, and pleasure-grounds, but that the people at large should cultivate ornamental plants and trees, lay out gardens and stock them with flowers and fruits. And Mr. Paxton would act a more patriotic part in co-operating with us in the endeavour to stir up the rural population of Canada to more horticultural taste and enterprise than in writing letters across the Atlantic of such a character as the one we have re-produced and reviewed, "Emulation is a noble passion," and every one who is conversant with the two countries feels that there is considerable room for its indulgence on our part in reference to the horticultural progress which is being made in the United States.

The Tilden Tomato.

From all accounts it would appear that this new variety of the tomato, is particularly worthy the attention of those who find the season rather short for bringing the ordinary kinds to full ripeness. In many parts of Canada, the early fall frosts are apt to cut off the plant just before the point has begun to change colour, which is very discouraging. The Tilden variety is the earliest known, and would therefore seem to be particularly suited to sowing in Canadian gardens. A correspondent of the *Country Gentleman* writes as follows respecting this variety:

"I procured a paper of the seed from a reliable seedsman in this city, (Philadelphia) and sowed them, with the Feejee and Cook's Favorite, in a hot-bed, and set them all out in the open ground at the same time, when large enough to remove, and the proper season had arrived. The Tilden came to bearing ripe tomatoes, fit for the table, two weeks sooner than the others; the fruit was of medium size, well formed and solid, and of good eating quality. They bore profusely all the season, and continued in bearing longer than the others. They are certainly an earlier variety than any others with which I am acquainted, and herein is their chief recommendation. I have raised the Feejees for a number of years, and like them better for table use than any other kind."

The largest seed garden in the world is said to be situated on the Delaware river, at Bloomsdale, Pa., occupying six hundred acres, and belongs to David Landroth & Son, of Philadelphia, and is under the personal supervision of the senior member of the firm.