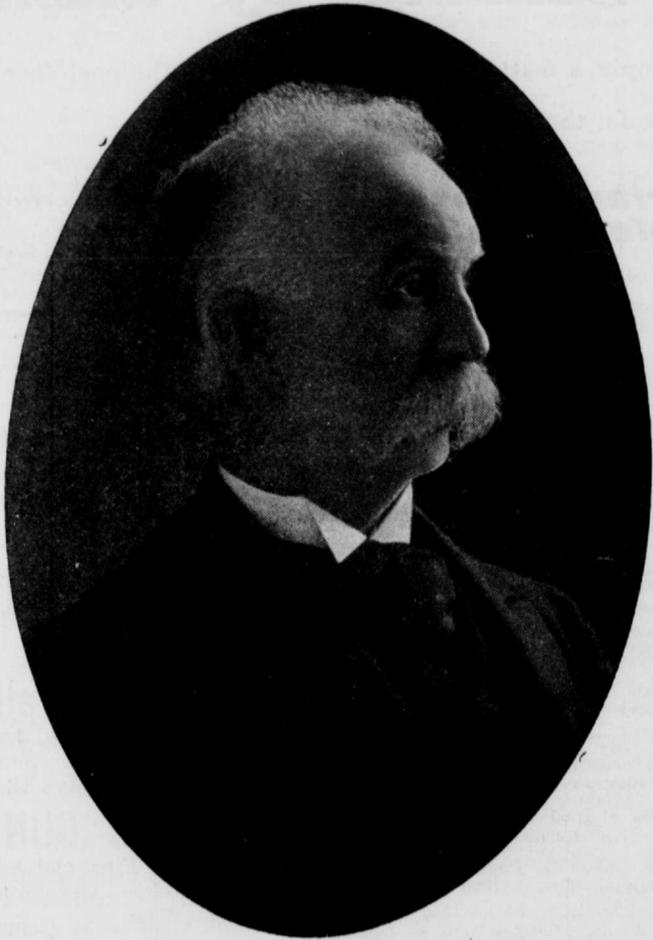


HORTICULTURAL NOTES



By F. Walden.

How a living language grows and changes. Originally Horticulture meant garden culture as distinguished from field culture which was designated as Agriculture. Horticulture now means fruit culture whether in the garden or the field. It is in the modern sense that I shall use the word in these notes.

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The growth of fruit growing is one of the marvels of the age in which we live. A hundred years ago apples were not grown for commercial purposes and the same was true of all kinds of fruit. That some fruit was sold in nearby towns is undoubtedly true, but to grow it for shipment all over the land and to foreign countries, was a thing unknown. With the increase of its growth there has been an increase of its consumption. And the latter has been equal to the former. And further, it is altogether probable that the two will go hand in hand in the future and no one now living will ever see the day when the growing of good fruit will be an unprofitable business.

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Is not fruit growing more difficult now than it was formerly? Yes. Are not insect pests more numerous than in by-gone days? Undoubtedly. Then fruit growing is less profitable than in the past, is it not? By no means. The right kind of a man can make more money now in raising fruit than at any period in the history of the human family. These insect pests are a benefit to the wide-awake, up-to-date fruit grower. The man who studies these pests and fights them intelligently will have good, clean fruit to sell at a profit, while the careless and slovenly man will fail. If all that was to be done in fruit raising was to plant the trees and then in due time to gather good, saleable fruit, the business would probably be overdone. But with the difficulties there are to be overcome, never.

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Why do we have a law providing for fruit inspectors in each county of the state of Washington? Could each one of the fruit inspectors in the state give an intelligent answer to this question? I doubt it very much. One fruit inspector in this state boasted to me that he had kept much bad fruit out of the state and thereby had benefited the fruit growers of Washington. Is that the reason he was appointed to his position? Not at all. The object of the

law is to prevent the spread of insect pests and diseases detrimental to fruit growing. Now where that end is not secured the purpose of the law is not carried out. It is notorious that fruit has been held up and sometimes destroyed where there was not the remotest prospect of spreading insect pests or in any way damaging the orchards in the surrounding country.

* * *

Suppose that a car load of wormy apples should be sent to Walla Walla, for instance, would that spread the insect known as the codling moth? Not a bit of it, for the simple reason that there is not an orchard within ten miles of that city that is not already infested with that insect. The same is true of Spokane, North Yakima, Seattle, Tacoma and every other city of any considerable size in the state. As well talk about spreading the smallpox in a pest house where the inmates already have that loathsome disease, by sending another smallpox patient there. The man who would condemn wormy fruit under such conditions, is making an arbitrary use of his position, and if the law would uphold him in doing so, the law ought to be repealed.

* * *

A county fruit inspector ought to be an intelligent man and well posted in entomology. He ought to know insects and be able to determine what are injurious and what are not. It is reported of one county fruit inspector that he recommended orchardists to drive nails into their trees, for what purpose I do not know—to kill the woolly aphis, perhaps. A better plan would be to build a barb wire fence around the orchard—it would do as much good and less damage to the trees.

* * *

If fruit inspectors are to be men of the intelligence indicated above, how are we going to get them? Aye, there's the rub. It is a most difficult thing to find men competent for this field. We ought to educate them at our State Agricultural college and appoint none to this responsible position who cannot pass an examination conducted by the professors of horticulture and entomology. Such men would come high, but would be cheap in the long run compared with some who do but little except to draw their pay. There will be some more "Notes" along these lines.

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The Northwest Fruit Growers' Association will hold its annual meeting in Spokane, Feb. 3, 4 and 5, 1903. Benj. Burgunder of Colfax is getting out the program—Secretary Bolster being absent from the state on account of sickness. It is to be hoped that there will be a large attendance at this meeting, as there are important matters to come up. No doubt there will be valuable papers and discussions besides the business to be transacted.

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There should be no strife nor jealousies among the fruit growers of the Northwest. The settlement of the "box question" is an important matter to be attended to. The railroad companies have promised a uniform rate per box if we agree on a uniform box. This means many dollars to the fruit growers. We should pull all together if we would settle this question.

* * *

Some things should be asked of the next legislature in the interests of the fruit growers of Washington. But we should agree on the things to be desired and then we are sure to get them. Hence the necessity of harmony. There should not be rival fruit growers' associations in the same territory. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

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