

new members if they would only take the trouble to have a few minutes' chat with their subordinates. Now, supposing the society has a good number of members, what steps should be taken to keep their interest from flagging? It goes without saying that every new-comer should be warmly welcomed by the committee. In reality the very existence of the society and its usefulness ought to be sufficient reasons, but in this age of "inducements" in the form of prizes for this, that, and the other, something more tangible is required in mutual improvement associations. In the first place—

(1) Every horticultural society ought to become affiliated with the R.H.S. The subscription is as low as one guinea, and the benefits to be obtained are great—of many times the value of the subscription. The greatest benefit, to my mind, is the copy of the "Journal," a periodical at once instructive, scientific, practical, and very useful, not only to the profes-

exist for the benefit of its members. Some of these books might be obtained as gifts from ladies and gentlemen interested in the society, others purchased by the committee. There are so many good works now in existence that it would be difficult to make a selection for this paper, nor perhaps would it be wise to do so. The "Gardener's Chronicle" publishes a catalogue which would form a guide to anyone wishing to make a selection.

(5) A good microscope and accessories, again, often prove very useful in determining fungus pests, the structure of plant forms, etc., and if one or more of the members are adepts at staining, mounting, and preparing objects, so much the better.

(6) A magic lantern, too, fitted with a good generator for acetylene gas, is of great service, and can be the means of illustrating many a lecture, for so numerous are the slides in almost every

difficult to get members together for an indoor meeting.

(10) Another, but certainly not the least, of these suggestions—a flower show might and can be arranged, where facilities exist, for the non-competitive exhibition of flowers, fruit, vegetables, etc.

FLAVOUR IN POTATOES.

After the subsidence of the great boom in potatoes, cultivators of various classes have now settled down to test the quality and general value of the varieties in cultivation. The Monmouthshire Education Committee have been making several trials with potatoes for the purpose of ascertaining the most useful varieties in general cultivation. A report of one of the trials held at the White House Farm, Llanvair, Abergavenny, shows that these trials have been extensive. The cultivating and manuring of the ground was such as would be given to a potato crop on any well-managed farm. At the annual gathering of the Agricultural Education Department of the County the varieties under trial to the number of forty-two baskets were exhibited, together with cooked samples of the best exhibits.

It is interesting to note that two of the leading early varieties are described as being very close in texture after the cooking trial. Sir John Llewelyn had very little flavour, but Duke of York, in spite of its close character, was of fairly good flavour. A large number of the varieties tested were described as floury, and amongst these Russet Queen and Peace-maker are classed as very floury. Mayfield Blossom is described as of excellent flavour and easily cooked; others are described as of very good flavour, and this includes Sutton's Abundance, The Factor, and Discovery. Southern Queen is said to be very good indeed in the matter of flavour, and is easily cooked. Others described as of good flavour are Radium, The Cottar, Table Talk, and Royal Kidney. Slightly less decided in this respect are those described as of fairly good flavour, and under that heading may be placed Webber's Early, Selected Northern Star, Up-to-Date, Duke of York, Premier, and Warrior.

It is also of importance to note the cropping qualities of the various varieties under trial, or at least those that were heaviest. Eighteen sets of each variety were planted, and the resulting tubers were classed under ware, seed, chits, and diseased. The lightest weight of ware or good, useful tubers was 4lb., and both of these were early varieties. By contrast with these we may say that the heaviest weight was produced by Mayfield Blossom, namely 57lbs.; Selected Northern Star came next with 52 lbs.; The Factor, 49lbs.; Royal Kidney, 43lbs.; The Cottar, 39lbs.; Table Talk, 37lbs.; The Laird, 34lbs.; Sutton's Abundance, 32lbs.; Up-to-Date, 26lbs.; Tync Kidney, 25lbs.; Warrior, 24lbs.; and The Moat, 24lbs.

KITCHENER AS GARDENER.

Lord Kitchener has, it appears, a sentimental side in his character. The grim "K," as he is called in India, is an enthusiastic gardener, and his principal delight is in growing flowers, and in this pursuit he excels.



Some Fine Blooms.

Six Cactus Dahlias, in bunches, of three distinct varieties. Exhibited by Messrs. D. Hay and Son, at the Auckland Horticultural Society's Show, and awarded first prize.

sional gardener, but also to the amateur. I need not enumerate the other advantages to be obtained from affiliation, but any society wishing to unite with the R.H.S. for the good of horticulture generally should apply to the secretary of the society at Vincent Square for particulars.

(2) A gardeners' mutual improvement society by its very title suggests lectures, debates, essays, and chats, which necessarily would be on some subject connected with horticulture. As many of these papers as possible should be given by members of the society, although occasionally some outsider might be asked to give a lecture to infuse a little more life into the meetings of the association.

(3) Members should be encouraged to ask questions on matters relating to their profession and work. There could be a certain time allowed for them on the agenda at each meeting, in addition to the discussion on the lecture, and they could be asked verbally, or be written on a slip of paper and handed to the secretary, or placed in a "question box." Any member who might feel qualified to deal with the subject should then give his opinion or practical experience.

(4) A good library of useful works on the theoretical, practical, and scientific aspects of horticulture ought to

branch of science that winter meetings can be made very instructive as well as entertaining. Many gardeners now are good photographers, and take pictures of pretty scenes and flowers in their own or, in other people's gardens. These can often form the subject for an evening's chat if made up as lantern slides.

(7) Exhibits of flowers, fruit, or vegetables should be encouraged at the meetings, for they not only give the members something to look at, but often form the subject for conversation as to culture, training, etc. Some societies give points for these exhibits, and on them depend prizes at the end of the session. There is much to commend this, but at the same time it is not fair to the under-gardeners, who have no means of bringing produce for this purpose. Certificates are sometimes awarded for well-cultivated specimens, or for new and good seedlings.

(8) Essays, again, form another attraction for which prizes can be offered, but unless a man has had a certain amount of practice with his pen, and can express his ideas clearly, he fights shy of the undertaking.

(9) Visits to famous gardens, to each other's gardens, or, again, to the nurseries and seed trial grounds of noted seedsmen, often provide instruction and enjoyment in the summer, when it is

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