

Horticulture.

IMPORTANCE OF ORCHARD PLANTING.

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Climate and Soil of Canada peculiarly adapted to Fruit Culture.

Canada is probably as favorable a climate for the cultivation of fruit as any in the world. The great chain of Lakes and Rivers is most beneficial in ameliorating the climate, and also serves for water communication to a market, as fruit will bear very little land carriage.

There is no place, probably, of Canada, even the most inhospitable, where suitable localities could not be found to grow apples, if not other fruits; and the banks of the St. Lawrence and Lakes, from a little below Quebec to Penetanguishene, are well adapted for raising nearly all kinds of hardy fruits, and in many localities any kind can be grown to perfection. It is a well known fact, that large bodies of water tend to equalize the sudden extremes of heat and cold, which are the most dangerous enemies the fruit culturist has to contend with in this country. Thomas says, "Large bodies of unfreezing water (such as Lakes and Rivers) are peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of tender fruits. They soften the severity of the cold, by the large and warmer surface constantly presented; on the other hand, they chill the dangerous warm air which starts the buds in winter, and they afford great protection by the screen of fog which they spread before the morning sun. Along the borders of the lower parts of the Hudson, and on the banks of the Cayuga and Seneca Lakes, tender fruit trees often afford abundant crops, while the same kinds are destroyed only two or three miles distant. Along the southern shore of Lake Ontario, the peach crop scarcely ever fails, and the softening influence of that large body of unfreezing water, extends many miles into the interior."

If the southern shores of Lake Ontario are so peculiarly suited for fruits, there is no reason why the northern shore should not be equally so: such is found to be the case on Lake Erie; the northern being, in fact better adapted for fruit than the southern, and as far as my experience goes, I have found the freezing of the Lakes and Rivers in winter to be no injury to the fruit crop. They remain unfrozen in autumn much longer than is necessary for securing the fruit, and, though frozen over in winter, it has no injurious effects, as the water being colder exerts a greater and longer influence in spring, by cooling the air, in checking the tendency to vegetation, often induced by a few warm days in early spring, which are generally followed by cold weather after.

It is not severe cold that injures the fruit crop nearly so much as the sudden changes from heat to cold, during winter and spring; and the great object to be attained is to keep your fruit trees in a dormant state from the commencement of winter till late in spring, when frost is nearly over, which is to be attained more by choosing a suitable soil and site for your orchard than by climate, as will be explained when directions are given for situation and soil of orchard. Lower Canada, owing to the more uniform severity and longer continuance of her winters, and absence, in a great degree, from late spring frosts coming after vegetation has commenced, is much better adapted for the cultivation of all the hardy kinds of fruits such as apples, and the greater part of pears, plums, and cherries, than many of the more southern parts of Upper Canada, where late spring frosts are very prevalent. Parts of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, are much worse situated in this respect, than any part of Canada. Owing to being further south, vegetation commences much earlier, and is far advanced by the latter part of April, but it is often suddenly checked,

and the hopes of a fine crop of fruit completely ruined, by a few days continuous wind from the north, sweeping down over the great frozen northern lakes, and ending generally in a severe frost. A glance at the map will shew that Canada is pre-eminently favored above all other countries in the world, in her splendid lakes and rivers, which are, in a great measure, sheltered from the cold northern and north-eastern winds, that sweep down from the far north over Lake Superior, across Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, &c.

As regards soil there can be nothing better adapted for the culture of fruit, than the greater part of that of Canada, and it would be a difficult matter to say where the best soil is to be found. By many it has been supposed that the Western parts of Canada are the best—but I believe it is because they are newer and not worn out. A great part of the valley of the St. Lawrence, near Montreal, must have been as rich soil as any on this Continent, but it has been partly worn out by injudicious culture. What it once was, however, it could soon be made again, by draining, manuring, proper tillage, and planting trees, for, I believe, the almost total absence of trees, in many parts, for miles together, to be one of the great predisposing causes to barrenness, as there is nothing to break the sweep of the bleak and chilling winds. On some of the most exposed parts of the Atlantic coast, it has been found impossible to raise any kind of tree or vegetable, owing to the tremendous winds sweeping in from the sea. One person, however, has succeeded in making a rich and beautiful garden, filled with all the choicest fruits, flowers, &c., on one of the most bleak and barren parts of the coast, by the simple plan of having two pailing fences round the garden, within a short distance of one another, the outside one being the highest; these break the wind sufficiently to allow all sorts of trees and plants to grow with great vigor, where nothing would grow before. A close board fence would have been useless, as it would have soon been levelled by the force of the wind, besides, the wind would have swept over it with unabated violence. I have often thought that belts of trees which would act in a similar way, would have a very beneficial effect on some of the more exposed situations, in improving the soil, besides giving shelter to the cattle; and fruit trees, though of slower growth than forest trees, would serve an excellent purpose for these belts, by selecting those of the quickest and largest growth. Many kinds of pears and apples would be well adapted for this purpose.

Any soil that is high and dry can be easily made to grow fine fruit; low lying, wet or peaty soils are not suited to plant fruit trees in, and should never be selected for this purpose. A great error is often made in choosing low warm sheltered places, at the bottom of the hills, or rising grounds, for planting the finer kinds of fruit, this is a mistake which often leads to the loss of the fruit, if not of the tree; the tops or sides of the rising grounds in these instances being much better places—but this will be more fully explained in my next—*Montreal Witness*.

REMARKS ON THE DISEASES OF THE PEACH, PLUM, AND CHERRY TREE.

From the Horticulturist.

Whoever has observed with attention the growth of fruit trees in this country, must frequently have seen with surprise the peach and plum tree struck with disease, and dying early, while other fruit trees appear in a sound condition, and live to a great age. The cherry tree, also, seems to be less healthy in this country than in Europe.

This fact justifies the suspicion, that these trees contain in themselves properties not to be found in such as remain healthy; and it is known that they differ from all others, in the abundance of a substance called *gum*. Let