

have a stretch of country which although as yet sparsely populated is filling up with a fair amount of rapidity, many thousands of new settlers coming in every year, some from Europe and some from the United States. Throughout this whole region there is a growing demand for fruit which will admit of a consumption far exceeding anything we have at present any idea of, provided we can get the surplus stock which can be easily produced in Ontario landed there so as to be sold at reasonable rates. Talking with a gentleman from Prince Albert some time ago on this subject of fruit, he said, "Why, we have been so accustomed to pay about fifteen cents a pound for fruit that now it has got down to eight and ten cents a pound it seems to be a comparatively cheap article of diet, and we are making use of it very freely."

FRUIT GROWING IN THE NORTH-WEST COUNTRY.—I shall next call your attention to another aspect of the subject, and consider what these people living in this district, extending for a thousand miles from east to west, and 350 from north to south, are able to do for themselves in the way of growing fruit. The cultivation of strawberries has been tried at a great many different points in this part of our country, and it has not been attended with much success. Strawberry vines are hardy, but in the autumn, about the time when the young runners begin to root, the ground in the North-West is usually so dry that for an inch or two the soil becomes almost like ashes, and the winds are so frequent that the vines are rarely still, and the runners are blown about from point to point and never stay long enough in one place to send out roots, and for that reason there is seldom much success in propagating the strawberry. Where irrigation can be practised that difficulty can be overcome. Under such circumstances plots of strawberries may be grown with a fair measure of success as far as multiplication of the plants are concerned. But there is another difficulty to contend with. In the springtime it often happens that heavy frosts occur in the morning and a hot sun shines during the day. This occurs usually in April and sometimes in the early part of May, after the strawberries are in flower, and you know the effect of severe frost on strawberry blossoms—it destroys them completely, and so lessens the crop that strawberry growing cannot be relied on anywhere as a profitable industry, and this fruit is chiefly grown by amateurs. Raspberries are cultivated more successfully, and some fairly good crops are grown in some parts of Southern Manitoba, and also in the neighborhood of Winnipeg, but there is not a sufficient supply to give the general public what they want in this line. Black cap raspberries are less hardy, and blackberries are usually too tender. Red and white currants can be grown very successfully all over Manitoba and the Territories, provided there are no severe spring frosts to injure the crop after the blossoms open; in that case they can be depended on as a fairly reliable crop. The same may be said of black currants, all the varieties of which are hardy and succeed well, and, barring the effect of frosts, where they get a favorable season the crops are usually good.

Among the large fruit no success in a general way has attended the efforts to grow apples, pears, such plums as we grow in the east, or grapes. At the Experimental Farm at Brandon—and similar experiments have been carried on 200 miles further west at the Experimental Farm at Indian Head—we have tested over 200 varieties of Russian apples of the hardiest sorts that can be found. We have also tested all the hardy varieties of pears, plums and cherries, and have also tried a large number of small fruits. None of the larger fruits have succeeded, although we have been working on this line at Brandon and Indian Head for more than ten years. We have sent thousands of apple trees to these farms but have never yet succeeded in producing an apple. Hence, as you see, we have not had much encouragement thus far. Near Morden in Manitoba, which is in the Red River Valley and south of Winnipeg, at an altitude very much the same as that of Winnipeg, that is about 700 feet, or nearly 500 feet lower than the experimental farm at Brandon, there is one farmer who has an exceptionally sheltered spot who has grown fair crops of crab apples on a few trees, and he has also produced a few larger apples of several Russian varieties. This is considered quite a feat in that country, and is chronicled in the newspapers, and specimens are photographed and made much of, showing that it is a feat not often or very easily accomplished. I visited this plantation several years ago. It is owned by Mr. Stevenson, who is an enthusiast in this work. There have also been a few crab apples produced in the neighborhood of Winni-