

# The Canadian Horticulturist

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## Apple Growing in the Province of Quebec\*

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ON the Island of Montreal, in the early days, when the Fameuse apple was supreme, followed closely by the Pomme Gris, Bourassa and Canada Reinette, one would realize as much for one barrel of Fameuse as for two of winter apples from Ontario. Pomme Gris were sold in half-barrels at fancy prices. The late Hon. E. Prudhomme sold, in one year, \$7,000 worth of apples. These results stimulated a great many to go largely into apple growing, with the hope that in a few years their fortunes would be made, and that in their old age they would take their ease, but the old saying of the poet Burns came true: "The best laid schemes of mice and men gang aft a-glee." When their young orchards came into bearing, the insects became numerous, especially the codling moth and plum curculio, with an occasional deluge of caterpillars; then followed the fungous disease known as the apple scab, which for a number of years ruined the crop.

Some farmers got discouraged and chopped down their orchards. All sorts of remedies were tried, until a French scientist, in Bordeaux, France, discovered what is now called the Bordeaux mixture. This remedy is now used in all the fruit-growing sections of the world. All up-to-date fruit growers have a good spraying outfit. Those who spray find that it pays.

The severe winters of 1903-4 were very hard on the orchards, in some sections killing out whole orchards. The introduction of Russian varieties of apples by the late Mr. Chas. Gibb, encouraged a great many in the colder parts of our country to grow these varieties with a great measure of success. There are seedlings and hybrids of these apples propagated at the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa that will be a great boom to the country. This is the past with its successes and failures, its ups and downs, but altogether more success than failure. Those who come after us make use of our experience.

Now, what is the outlook for the future? Our worthy Premier, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, truly said that "The nineteenth century was for the United States, but the twentieth century is for Canada." What share shall the fruit growers of Quebec have in the prosperity of our vast Dominion? Can we share with Ontario and British Columbia in supplying the great provinces of the west with fruit that they can not grow?

With the shipping ports at our doors, and with improved transportation facilities, including cold storage and ventilating fans, we have access to the markets of Europe, but we, in the province of

pears, grapes, and even tobacco, can be grown successfully.

What is wanted is more care in the selection of locations and soils in setting out orchards. Trees are set out in land with cold, wet subsoils. They make a healthy growth for a few years, and, when the roots strike the cold bottom, they lose vigor and gradually die.

More care should be taken, also, in the selection of varieties. In the last report of the Quebec Pomological Society is a valuable list of varieties, prepared by a committee of the society, that should be distributed over our province.

Greater care should be taken in the preparation of insecticides and their applications. I know of a case where a man lost over \$2,000 worth of apple trees. It was recommended by a lecturer to paint the trunks of the trees with good paint, so as to prevent the ravages of the borer. There was spirits of turpentine in the paint and it caused the damage.

More care should be taken in the packing and marketing of our apples. I strongly recommend cooperation. Every grower should read Mr. Alex. McNeill's (Chief, Fruit Division, Ottawa) Bulletin on cooperation, also his bulletin on packing apples in barrels and boxes. They are replete with valuable information. I would suggest that they be printed in the annual report of our society.

The great trouble in many orchards is that the trees are neglected, while much care and fertilization is given to other crops. Some men are looking for better varieties of apples to supplant the old kinds. If the old Fameuse could only speak, you would hear the echo from hill to hill: "Oh, for a better class of farmers to take care of us!"

### THE RESOURCES OF THE PROVINCE

The province of Quebec is a land of boundless possibilities. It excels in the manufacture of butter and cheese, as well as in fruit production. It leads in the manufacture of maple products.

### Of Much Interest

Please accept my congratulations on the attractive appearance and interesting contents of THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST.—S. W. Fletcher, Professor of Horticulture and Landscape Gardening, Michigan State Agricultural College.

Quebec, are not taking advantage of these great opportunities. We are plodding along in the old rut, and are allowing the other provinces to get ahead of us. Some say that we cannot grow apples to a large extent in Quebec. It was an eye-opener to one of my friends from Ontario recently, when he saw the fruit-growing regions of the Island of Montreal, and of the Counties of Rouville, Chateauguay, Huntingdon, Vaudreuil and Lake of Two Mountains.

It was amusing, at the Dominion Conference of Fruit Growers, held in Ottawa two years ago, to hear the delegates from British Columbia and those from the Maritime Provinces vie with each other in praising their respective provinces in relation to fruit growing. The delegates from Quebec were too modest to do so. They are not given to blowing their own trumpets. They have erred to the other extreme and have not made known the fruitfulness of their own province. Apples, plums, cherries,

\* One of the papers read last week at the summer meeting of the Pomological and Fruit Growing Society of the Province of Quebec.