

PETERBOROUGH FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION.

Officers for 1891:—President, George Hilliard, Peterborough; Secretary-Treasurer, E. B. Edwards, Peterborough; Executive Committee, President, Secretary and the following: G. M. Roger, B. R. Matthews, F. Stinson, George E. Elliot, James McKibbin, Wm. Collins and John Best, all of Peterborough.

This Association was organised in 1890. The basis of organisation is that payment of one dollar constitutes a person a member of this and also of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario, to which 80c. of the subscription money from each is forwarded.

PETERBORO' FRUIT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION. ITS OBJECTS AND AIMS.

(Read at the opening meeting of the Association by the Secretary, Mr. E. B. Edwards.)

There are several hundred fruit growers in this county. We want to bring them together, make them acquainted with each other and useful to one another. We want to increase the number engaged in fruit growing, to increase the number of trees planted, to increase the interest taken in the orchard when it is planted. We have in the country surrounding Peterboro', both in soil and in climate, a district that is not surpassed in the world for raising the finest kinds of fruit, especially winter apples. Yet instead of the whole country being given up to fruit growing as might be expected, there is not an orchard in the county worthy of the name, when compared with the great orchards of New York State, or with some of the large orchards in other parts of Canada, and the small orchards are, in general, not what they ought to be. From lack of information, lack of interest, from the failures caused by the impositions of unscrupulous tree peddlers, the orchards in this county are for the most part small, of badly selected varieties, ill cared for, and the fruit, when ripe, is generally handled so as to realize nothing like its full value. Our object is to improve all this.

1. Each of us has been groping along for himself, experimenting on his own account and not infrequently to his loss. Each order given for trees is an experiment, first as to the nursery to buy from, second as to the kind of trees. The tree peddler often makes a happy combination of both, to the cost of the farmer. One great object of our Association is by comparing notes to gain a knowledge of the kinds of trees suitable for this climate, and the kinds suitable for market, and also the kinds to be avoided. We have been planting too many varieties and too many poor varieties.

2. Next we want to know something of the soils to plant in, the best position on the farm to choose, planting or taking advantage of existing windbreaks, the preparation of the soil, drainage and the subsequent cultivation of the land. It is folly to put trees in an unsuitable soil, or in a piece of land that has not been properly prepared beforehand.

3. After the orchard is planted most of us have a great deal to learn about looking after the trees, pruning, destroying insects, and keeping up the heart of the land. Very few orchards in this county are properly attended to in any one of these respects.

4. In picking, sorting, handling and packing fruit most of us are at the beginning of our lesson. Greater care is necessary, whether it be simply to keep our fruit for ourselves, or to ship to an outside market. It is safe to say that the value of the crop in the county might be increased one half by attention to these matters.

5. The marketing of the fruit crop, especially in apples, is one of the most important objects of our organisation, and will become more and more important as the crop increases in this neighborhood. Already we produce much more than enough to supply the local market. If fruit growing is to be a paying business in the future we must seek an outside market for our surplus, and must take the best means of reaching that market. Without attempting to decide I suggest for consideration the different methods by which this may be accomplished:

1. Through local buyers who buy in the orchard and take the risk of loss or the chance of profit. This mode of sale has the advantage that the producer has no care or

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