

to the interest of this paper that I am about to read that Mr. Smith has already directed your attention to frauds in fruit at fairs. In this short paper, it is my object to throw what I think is a new light upon the temptations and the difficulties surrounding the business of fruit growing, and one which the general public, and also fruit growers themselves, have entirely ignored up to the present time. My proposition is this: That there is an inherent original sin in fruit itself, which exposes those who plant it in the nursery, those who grow it in the orchard, and those who sell it on the market, to peculiar trials and temptations. On looking back to the earlier stages of the human race, we are told in the story of the Garden of Eden how the Devil, in the guise of a serpent, entered into, not a cabbage, nor a potato, but an apple; and since then, apparently, not only apples but all other fruits, although pleasant to the eye, and seductive to the palate, have retained that primeval devilishness. If this be *not* the case, how do we account for many well-known facts relating to the fruit business? For example, the way in which the large apples, peaches, strawberries, etc., find their way to the top of the basket, and the small, wormy, and bruised ones to the bottom. The outside public say that the growers put them there. I know this to be erroneous, because the growers have told me that they do not, and I will undertake to say that if one of the outside public were to ask any fruit grower in the whole Province if he put the large ones at the top and the little ones at the bottom of a basket or barrel, he would reject the idea with scorn. But the public say that the large apples, etc., *do* come to the top and the small etc., to the bottom. Are we then to consider the public as liars? By no means. This seemingly inconsistent state of affairs had long puzzled me, until I was led to make the following experiment. I collected a basket of fruit and put it by itself in the fruit house, carefully placing the small and poor specimens at the top, and the large fine ones at the bottom. It was then left by itself for two or three days, without being watched or interfered with. At the expiration of that time, upon examination, the large ones were all at the top and the little ones at the bottom. This experiment has been repeated several times, with a similar result. It is true that certain scoffers have suggested the children as the authors of this strange metamorphosis, failing them that it was owing to rats. But to both of these objections I think "rats" is the proper reply. I am forced, then, to the following conclusion, viz: That if fruit in a basket or other package be left to itself and remain quiescent for a considerable period, that the big ones will work themselves to the top, and the small, wormy ones to the bottom. Now to prevent this requires great watchfulness and care on the part of the grower, added to high moral principle, and the purchaser little knows what a struggle has been gone through, what a moral victory gained, when he remarks, on examination of a basket of fruit he has purchased from the store, "Why, I have actually got a basket that is good all through!" But this same character follows the fruit into the hands of the commission men and retail dealers. How else do we account for the marvelous discrepancies between the actual sales and the growers' returns therefrom, of which great complaints are being continually made? No doubt the commission men are an honourable body, but, unless the moral qualities of people handling fruit are unusually strong, the innate devilishness of the fruit itself overcome them. For to the commission man the fruit-devil whispers: "That was a splendid sale you made, but you need not return the full amount to the grower. Ten per cent. is but a beggarly amount to receive for a sale like that, owing to *your* energy and business capacity, besides he will be satisfied with much less." And too often this fruit-devil is listened to, the commissionman falls, and the grower suffers.

Look at the number of "wet," "slack" and "wasty" returns that come back from the old country. Think you that there is no fruit-devil at work there? I am afraid that the English commissionman too often, like his Canadian *confrere*, does not exhibit sufficient moral fibre to withstand his temptations. Even in the nursery row fruit trees exhibit their evil propensity, for which some blame the nurserymen, who are in the main a fine body of men of more lofty principle, who would scorn of themselves to do anything wrong, and yet, varieties first-class when planted, turn out but third class at bearing time, ironclads fail to resist the slightest frost, and prodigious bearers decline to bear anything. Plenty of other instances might be brought forward in support of my discovery; but why take up more of your time? The more you study the matter, the