

## FRUIT GROWING CAPABILITIES OF ONTARIO.

The capabilities of our Province for fruit growing are very great, and perhaps no department of industry has made more rapid and universal growth than this during the past ten or twenty years. In one of the recent returns of the Ontario Bureau of Industries the present acreage under orchard and garden in Ontario is estimated to be about 201,000 acres, which seems a noble showing, yet it is small when we consider the area of occupied land, which is over 21 millions of acres. The proportion then in orchard and garden combined is about  $\frac{1}{100}$ th of one per cent., and if we leave out of consideration the proportion under garden culture, the orchard proper would probably not exceed three-quarters of an acre in every hundred. Years ago many fears were expressed that the fruit market would soon be overstocked. With constantly improving shipping facilities, and new territory opening up, with our fruit drying and canning companies, which secure us the civilized world as a market, even for the fruits which are most tender and perishable, no further anxiety need be felt on this score.

Of all the counties in our Province, Middlesex has the largest quantity of land devoted to horticulture, having 12,000 acres out of a total occupied area of 758,000 acres, or about  $\frac{1}{60}$  per cent.; but some smaller counties have a much larger proportion. Lincoln has 7,800 acres out of 189,000 acres, or about 4 per cent.; Wentworth,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; Welland,  $2\frac{1}{10}$ ; Prince Edward,  $2\frac{1}{10}$ ; Norfolk,  $2\frac{1}{10}$ ; Durham,  $2\frac{1}{10}$ ; Oxford,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Halton, Waterloo and Haldemant,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; York and Elgin,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Essex, Peel and Northumberland,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Kent,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Oxford,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Perth and Ontario,  $1\frac{1}{10}$ ; Huron and Lambton, 1 per cent. The remaining counties have smaller proportions, varying from  $\frac{1}{100}$  to  $\frac{1}{10}$  of one per cent.

## APPLES.

Most of the standard varieties of apples can be successfully grown over all that portion of Ontario west of a line drawn from the south-east extremity of the Georgian Bay to Lake Ontario, also east of this in the counties bordering on Lake Ontario and the River St. Lawrence. North of this area the climate is too severe for many of the tenderer sorts, but a few of the hardier varieties will succeed in most localities.

## PEARS.

Pears can be grown where the tenderer varieties of apples succeed, but they thrive best in the milder portions of the Province, especially in the neighbourhood of the lakes. In Huron, Lambton, Essex, Kent, Elgin, Norfolk, and in the Niagara peninsula they succeed well; they also thrive and do fairly well in many other western counties. In Essex, along the margin of the Detroit river, there are some of the largest and oldest pear trees on the continent, trees which will measure from seven to nine feet in circumference, range in height from 50 to 75 feet, and bear in good seasons from 15 to 25 bushels per tree. These trees are seedlings which are now upwards of a hundred years old, and as far as we have been able to learn are free from blight. Through the kindness of a friend residing in the neighbourhood, I have obtained during the past season samples of the fruit of several of these seedlings, and find that they vary considerably in size, from that of an ordinary Seckel to about double that size. Most of them are of very fair quality, with a granular flesh, more or less melting, sweet or slightly sub-acid, with a pleasant sprightly flavour, useful for the table and excellent for canning. These are doubtless the product of seed sown by some of the early French settlers, brought with them from their native land. It is hoped that from these seedlings a race of pears may yet be obtained hardier and longer-lived than any of the varieties at present cultivated, which will be almost if not entirely exempt from blight. Although pears are grown over a large area in Ontario, a considerable proportion of those found in the market are from the counties of Welland, Lincoln and Wentworth.

## PLUMS.

Plum culture is usually subject to two very severe draw-backs—the curculio and the black-knot. In the northern part of the County of Grey, adjoining the Georgian Bay

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