

# The Canadian Horticulturist

Vol. XXXVII

MARCH, 1914

No. 3

## Reality vs. Fiction in the Fruit Business

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PERHAPS there has been no branch of horticulture so much boomed and advertised as fruit farming. By this I mean tree fruits, particularly apples. The public are gulled and misled in many cases (I don't say all, mind) by flowery written advertisements, highly drawn pictures of the imagination from the pen of a man who has probably never in his life seen an apple nearer its native state than in a grocery shop window. But—he has land to sell!

These advertisements do an enormous harm to the fruit industry at large, as they make the reader expect his fortune made in a few years at the business. The gulled one is persuaded to put his hard-earned money into some of these enterprises only to find his fortune does not come as soon as he was expecting. Thus disappointed and disgusted, he does not forget to let other people hear of it (usually with emendations) and in so doing does a lot of harm to some other man's really meritorious proposition.

Now, if this same man had been told in the first place in an honest and straightforward way, the real standing of the fruit industry, he would not have looked for a fortune lying in wait for him to pick up, but would have been contented with a reasonable thing; that is, a good thing, and some money put aside for a rainy day. In this way a good booster of the fruit industry would have been made, instead of a backbiter.

As an indication of how some of the literature of these land sharps is worded the following will give an idea of how the reader is led to expect an Eldorado, viz.:

"Do you wish peace and prosperity?"

"Your answer is 'Yes.'"

"If you are earning less than \$2,000 a year, would you like to double it?"

"Again your answer will be 'Yes.'"

—THEN—

"Our land is only (some small figure) 'per acre. Suppose as a working basis 'you buy only six acres of our land. Figure on one hundred trees to the acre; 'total, 600 trees. These will bear when 'from four to five years old. When eight 'years old you should get at a low estimate five boxes to the tree. This is, 'then, for six hundred trees at five boxes 'boxes per tree, three thousand boxes 'of apples. These you should sell for 'one dollar and a half per box, making 'four thousand five hundred dollars for 'your season's apples. Does this look 'good to you?"

### INFORMATION SUPPRESSED

So far so good, but—, what they don't tell you in their literature is, first, that your apples won't be all No. 1 apples; second, that there is a certain cost attached to the marketing of said apples; third, no allowances are made for off-seasons, bad prices, diseases, and so forth. That these things have to be found out by the grower is all the more

to be censured. When experience teaches these things to the farmer he is naturally disgusted at having his ideals hattered, when, had he been told in the first place he would have been prepared and on the look out to "beat the game."

### THE TRUE SITUATION

I shall endeavor to give a rough estimate as to the real cost of marketing six acres of apples in full bearing eight year old trees, figuring on a full crop and no disease. I will tell of the different works that have to be done during the year before the crop, and also the labor involved in marketing the same. But it must be borne in mind that in no two districts is the cost the same, nor is it possible to give an exact estimate in any case. In this illustration it is based on marketing the fruit on Vancouver Island, in vicinity of Victoria.

First, then, is pruning. This will have to be done in the fall, after the sap is withdrawn, or in the spring before it has risen again. This may be done by the owner of the orchard, so that he need not deduct any money from the amount received at the end of the year, as it is part of his living.

After this the first spraying of the year has to be attended to. This is done by a mixture of lime, salt and sulphur. This is sold in handy form now by manufacturers in British Columbia at about six dollars for a thirty gallon barrel. This only needs diluting with water in pro-



The Ontario Fruit which carried off the Premier Honors Last Summer at the Convention of the International Apple Shippers Association held in Cleveland, Ohio. It competed against fruit from Oregon, Washington, Colorado and other states