

considerably more than one hundred years old. The land being fertile, all sorts of agriculture can be profitably carried on, and during the period of Reciprocity potatoes sold at high prices, very often as much as one dollar per bushel being obtained.

Potatoes can be produced with very great ease in the Valley, and were for a time a source of large profit, many farmers growing wealthy from their production and export. The splendid marshes along the banks of the rivers make it also a cattle-raising country, and excellent specimens of fat beef have for years been sent out of the Valley for market. It was not until the year 1863 that any genuine interest was taken in fruit-growing. Most of the farmers had some apple trees on their farms, which supplied their own wants and afforded the means of supplying the Halifax and St. John markets. In 1863 the Fruit Growers' Association was formed, with Mr. R. G. Haliburton, a son of Judge Haliburton—"Sam Slick"—as President, and Mr. D. H. Starr, as Secretary. This society had a very small beginning, but its avowed aim was to stir up the farming population to a sense of the importance of the fruit industry, and to show that it could be carried on to a much greater degree. That Association has continued ever since, and during the whole period of its history there has been a steady and marked increase in the production of fruit in the Valley, as a few statistics which I shall give amply demonstrate. It must be understood that in most cases the figures that are given are only approximate, but they may be relied upon as being very nearly accurate, and have been verified by the highest fruit authorities in the Province. The probable acreage in fruit culture in the whole Valley in 1860 was about 2,500 acres. Most of these orchards, however, were old and not properly cared for, and were producing in a very limited way and only a few varieties, and an inferior quality of fruit. The total acreage at present is estimated at 12,800 acres, with at least 8,000 acres covered with young trees which have not yet begun to bear. The product in barrels in 1860, as nearly as can be estimated, would not exceed 30,000. The product for the year 1893 will be at least 300,000 barrels, and is necessarily increasing at a

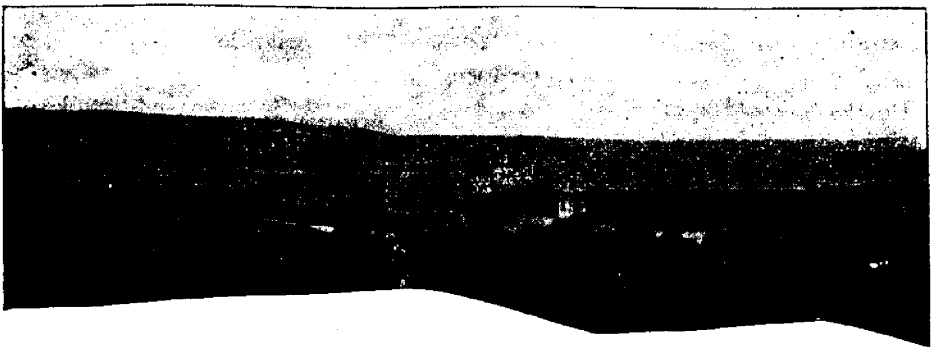


FIG. 390.—BLOMIDON AND MINAS BASIN, FROM WOLFVILLE.