

vegetation is rapid and luxuriant. The soil is generally light and warm, responding quickly to good tillage, storing the warm sun by day, and absorbing the heavy dews by night. The rock also absorbs heat in summer which has much influence in keeping off early frosts and tempering the cold and drying winds of spring. The numerous lakes also serve to make the air moist and the climate more equable. In winter the snow falls to a great depth remaining till spring, as soon as the snow disappears vegetation commences, and is very rapid, as the snow usually extracts all the frost from the ground before it disappears. These lands have been mostly located as free grant lots, and generally by men who have worked at lumbering, the majority of whom have no taste or knowledge of horticulture. On the contrary they seem to have a most inveterate desire to annihilate anything like a tree. In waging war against the giants of the forest they seem to have overlooked how easy it was to spare many beautiful trees and shrubs (which will take a lifetime to replace), because Muskoka is the home of very many handsome trees and shrubs.

No resident of Muskoka need send to the nursery for trees wherewith to decorate his lawn or garden, while such shrubs as the Dogwood, Juneberries, Arrow-wood Black Alder, High Bush Cranberries, Striped Maple, Mountain Maple, Witch Hazel and a dozen other sorts may be had for the digging; but where there is no taste there is no knowledge. It is the few who have had a desire for these things and more especially the wives of the settlers who have persistently tried to grow the fruits they formerly enjoyed in their "Old homes at the front," that we owe much of our success at the present time, and it is much to their credit that they have shown us the possibilities of Muskoka as a fruit-growing district. Still the great majority are "regarding the winds," although many have planted a few trees in the most careless manner and without any enclosure other than the rude structure which encircles the barn and house in the same field, the trees grow well the first season, but after the cows have browsed and scratched themselves against the stumps the first winter, because the trees fail to grow the poor settler utters vengeance against that (best of missionaries), the tree agent for selling trees that do not bloom the following season. These are troubles and prejudices it takes time to overcome in a new country: but now the most dubious are convinced that apples of the best quality can be grown in Muskoka of such varieties as Duchess of Oldenburg, Yellow Transparent, Wealthy, Haas, Tetofsky, Walbridge, Alexander and many of the standard winter sorts, together with several hardy seedlings of great merit. Our long warm days and cold dewy nights develop all the beauty of form and coloring possible, and there is room for the product of many orchards in the district to supply the local demand at good prices, and no man need be afraid of the venture who will make a judicious selection of varieties.

The much abused Champion grape grows to great perfection here. Our soil seems to almost change the variety, the skin gets thin, the pulp juicy, sweet and sprightly.

All the early Rogers, Concord, Jessica, and Brighton, ripen well in the open air.

Currants and gooseberries grow here to great perfection, and on our warm soil mildew is unknown except in some damp and shady nooks.

Strawberries need little or no protection in winter as the snow makes a more effective protection than any other. For home use I find the Manchester, Bubach and Jessie are all that is desired.

Raspberries, blueberries and blackberries of the best quality grow wild and can be had for the picking.

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