

Fruit Growing in Manitoba

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NOTWITHSTANDING the many failures that resulted from the early attempts to grow fruit in Manitoba, and the general belief which at one time prevailed that fruit growing would never be successful here, it can now be positively stated that considerable progress has been made in the direction of successful fruit culture in the province. Manitoba has been passing through very much the same experience as the border state of Minnesota in the matter of growing fruit. Indeed, the early experiences in Minnesota were perhaps quite as unfavorable as here. The early settlers in that state, who came mainly from the eastern states, brought with them the same varieties of fruits that they had been used to cultivating in their eastern home. Failure resulted from the fact that these fruits were not adapted to the northwestern state in which they had located. Manitoba's early settlers came also from the east, and they made the same mistake of trying to grow the same varieties, with the same treatment and cultivation as they had followed in the east. Minnesota now produces large quantities of fruits, including apples and plums, as well as small fruits, but in tree fruits at least, the varieties now largely grown have been originated in that state. They are home born and bred varieties. The same course will have to be worked out in Manitoba before the best results are attained.

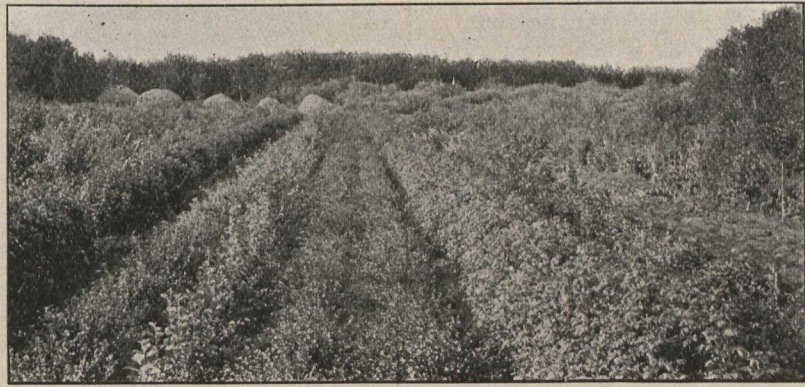
In small fruits, a large measure of success has been already attained in Manitoba. In fact, we may safely say that we have passed the experimental stage in growing many varieties and species of small fruits. It has now been clearly demonstrated that there is nothing to hinder any person from growing all the fruit in currants, gooseberries, raspberries, strawberries, and so on, that will be required for home use. A few large commercial fruit farms, also, have been successfully carried on, but the great scarcity of help and high wages makes it a difficult matter to conduct a small fruit farm on a commercial scale. Help such as is required for this class of work is practically unobtainable. Only adult male help can be had and that in limited supply. Indeed this scarcity of help curtails the growing of fruit even for home use on the farm, as the overworked farmer will not undertake anything that is likely to add to his burden, if it can be avoided.

In currants, gooseberries, raspberries and strawberries, success may be readily attained. All that is necessary is to find out what are the varieties best adapted to the country, and the mode of

cultivation best suited to the requirements. It will not do now, any more than it would have worked in the early years, to select at random the varieties grown in the east. Neither will it do to follow the same mode of cultivation as is practised in the east. The necessary knowledge, as to varieties and cultivation, however, is now within the reach of any one who wishes to learn. This knowledge has been acquired and worked out by the untiring efforts of our foremost horticulturists, and has been disseminated by our horticultural societies and in other ways, so that it is not now necessary to start blindly when beginning the work. The knowledge which has been gained as to varieties and best mode of cultivation, constitutes perhaps the bulk of the progress that has been made in fruit growing in Manitoba.

to this region, also is a useful fruit, though not as valuable as the true cranberry. It does well under cultivation, and we have occasionally seen these bushes growing in the settler's garden. The bush cherry is also very productive under cultivation, and is promising.

In tree fruits, the work is still in a more or less experimental state. Experimental work has been confined mostly to apples and plums. A few cherries have been produced and one pear tree reached the fruiting stage, but these have only been as novelties and not with really any hope of making them a profitable feature. The only plums that are of any value are a few of the very earliest ripening Americanas. Some success has been had with plums of this class. The future of plum growing lies in the direction of improv-



Young Stock on Grounds of Buchanan Nursery Co.

When the country becomes more thickly settled, the supply of help will increase, and the farmers will be in a position to give more attention to matters of this nature. Then fruit growing will be more largely indulged in.

There are many varieties of wild fruits, native to various sections of Manitoba, that produce large crops. These include the plum, raspberry, strawberry, red and black currants, Viburnum or high bush cranberry, Juneberry, cranberries (different forms of the low or vine species), cherries, and so forth. Several of these are undoubtedly useful for cultivation, and being native to the country are, of course, perfectly hardy. Some of the wild plums are of good quality, and no doubt in time this native fruit will be greatly improved. The presence of cranberry marshes of wild fruit would also indicate that the growing of this fruit may become an important industry in time. Some of these wild cranberries are of extremely fine quality. So far, we know of no attempt to cultivate the cranberry. The Viburnum, or so-called "bush cranberry," which is indigenous

ing our native stock, which combines hardiness with the early ripening habit. Most of the named varieties of the Americana class of plum do not ripen early enough to make them safe here, even if they possessed the necessary hardiness.

Apples have been experimented with largely and, considering the class of stock with which it has been necessary to carry on the work, we have no reason to feel disappointed with the measure of success attained. In fact, when an occasional tree proved fairly hardy from among the large number of trees brought in from the east or the United States, it made the outlook hopeful for a time when home-grown trees, propagated from these few hardy specimens, could be obtained. Plants and trees, like persons or animals, certainly show special characteristics. It is true that an occasional tree will show a hardiness and vigor of constitution quite in advance of others of the same variety. The hope of the future, therefore, lies in propagating from these exceptionally hardy specimens. We will undoubtedly produce new varieties of apples and hybrids, just as they have in Minnesota,