

CHAPTER II

SOIL—ROCKS—WATER—TIMBER

SOIL.—In British Columbia pretty nearly all soils alike will grow fruit-trees. The superiority of the fruit of British Columbia is due very largely to a factor which counts for much more than soil—namely, the climate. Not that all soils are of equal value; far from it. Naturally, some are better adapted for producing good fruit than others. The best soil, and the soil which prevails over by far the greater part of the region, is a red or chocolate-coloured sandy loam, generally rather light in texture, fairly well supplied with mineral constituents, but lacking in nitrogen. It is soil that is easily worked, and consequently is inexpensive to manage and keep in proper condition. After a good crop of young red clover, or similar leguminous plant, has been ploughed in, this red loam acquires the proper texture, or degree of associated friability and compactness, that is best suited for orchard trees. (See further, in Chapter VIII., under section on Clover Crops.) The roots are able to work in it with great ease and rapidity, and it promotes the formation of the network of small and delicate fibrous roots and rootlets which have so much to do with the actual production of the fruit.

Another variety of soil which gives excellent results is