

A good apple orchard pays the farmer. But, says one, I know a farmer right there at Grimsby who cut down a good apple orchard only last winter. True enough, but did you never know of a man giving up stock breeding or bee farming in disgust? There are always men to be found who grow impatient and give up, just at the point where they are within reach of success.

I do not think that we, as members of this Association, should go about the country advising farmers generally to plant out their farms to apple orchards, or even to plant large commercial orchards. The expense connected with raising a large apple orchard to bearing size is far greater than some people are willing to admit. A writer in *Popular Gardening* figures out very carefully on paper the cost and value of an apple orchard and makes out that one acre would bring \$313.15 over expenses during the first ten years. He plants 100 trees per acre, and by seeding down to clover estimates his expense for cultivation during the ten years at about \$10. He placed the cost of the annual pruning at 50 cents and the rent at \$50 per annum, considering that three-quarters of the acre may be profitable cropped. Now if any one here has cleared \$300 per acre from his apple orchard during the first ten years, I think he is a notable exception. My apple trees may be stubborn, but they seldom bear any fruit worth gathering before they reach the age of ten years, and my Northern Spy orchard is seventeen years old and it is only during the last two years that it has yielded me any returns worth speaking of. Baldwins and Greenings may, under exceptional circumstances, yield some returns within ten years, but even these varieties do not as a rule, and indeed should not, because for the first ten years after planting the orchard should be encouraged by frequent cultivation and manuring, to make as much wood as possible and not be expected to bear fruit. Neither do I think that we are wise, as members of this organisation, which holds so high a position in our land, and whose utterances are looked upon as worthy of public confidence, in following the habit of many who now-a-days picture only the bright side of fruit culture, giving glowing statements of its profits and concealing its losses. I am prepared to make free confession here to day of both sides with regard to my apples. I can show fancy figures received from my shipments as good as anybody's. I have here account sales of my apples sold in 1887 and 1888, from which you can see that my choice Gravenstein and Kings have sold in London, England, as high as \$5 and \$6 per barrel. And I can tell you of further fine sales that so encouraged me that last season I shipped my whole crop, some twelve hundred barrels, to that market; but the last sales took all the gilt off the season's business, for they reached the metropolis when the market was glutted and one car load was sold for the freight; another, containing russets and other prime varieties, sold so badly that a claim was made upon me from my English salesman of \$35. The provoking part of all was that a week after mine were sold at \$1.50 to \$2, or about the amount of the charges, prices suddenly jumped to \$3 and \$4. Now I have no doubt many others here present can relate a story of similar unfortunate experiences. Mr. J. B. Osborne, of Beamsville, once shipped 1,300 barrels of apples to England and lost \$1,300 on them; and a neighbor of mine, Mr. C. S. Nelles, shipped all his prime winter apples to London, England, last December, packing carefully and well, and might as well have tossed them over the bank in lake Ontario. Let us speak out, gentlemen, on these points. Confess our failures. Men in other lines of business do not talk constantly about their enormous profits, it would not be politic; and if we are found constantly magnifying the profits of fruit culture, we will be placing ourselves in a false position before the public; they will get the idea that we are nurserymen who have fruit trees to sell, instead of fruit growers who have fruit to sell.

But does all this discouragement frighten us out of our business? By no means; for while it is unwise to advise everyone to rush into apple culture for profit, the specialist would be a fool who would give up because of one or two season's failure. And I think also that the farmer who has a good orchard of fine varieties, just in bearing condition, and who is disgusted because of the difficulties and low price of apples, and who cuts down such an orchard and grubs it out for the purpose of devoting the ground to some farm crops, is assuredly "penny wise and pound foolish." He is throwing away invested capital and reducing the value of that land from \$100 to \$200 per acre. Why an apple