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## The Rural Canadian.

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### THE FRUIT-GROWERS' ASSOCIATION.

The summer meeting of the Ontario Association was held this year at St. Catharines on the 30th and 31st ult. About fifty members were present, and the discussions were of an interesting and instructive character. The subjects related chiefly to the best methods of cultivating fruits, and the most profitable varieties for marketing. The opinion was almost unanimous in favour of the proposition that fruit-growing pays in Ontario; but with the qualification that varieties must be chosen with regard to localities, and that skill and knowledge are required in planting out and caring for orchards, gardens and vineyards. It was shown that more money may be made of one or two acres in currants, gooseberries, raspberries and blackberries than many farmers in the Province make of their hundred acre farms. The same remark is true of apples, as instance a statement made by Mr. J. P. Williams, of Bloomfield, Prince Edward county. Mr. Williams has an orchard of twenty acres, and he has already this season sold two hundred barrels of the Red Astrachan variety in the Montreal market at prices ranging from \$4 to \$5 per barrel. With a full crop of apples he would realize at average prices about \$3,000 from the produce of his orchard, taking one year with another. This is very encouraging to fruit-growers, and with the fine soil and climate of many portions of Ontario, there is little doubt that fruit-growing might be conducted profitably on a much larger scale than has hitherto been attempted. This is especially true of the Lake Erie counties, and since the United States Congress has placed fruits on the free list—the amended tariff went into operation on the 1st of July—their opportunities have been widely extended. The canning industry is also a great boon to fruit-growers.

### NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Much has been written on the subject of dirty farming, but obviously much more must be written and done before satisfying progress is made in cleaning farms of their noxious weeds. The Canada thistle is perhaps the worst of these, and it seems to be steadily spreading over the face of the whole country. Yet it is not a difficult task to kill off the Canada thistle. A good summer-fallowing of the ground, followed by a thick crop of clover, will usually exterminate it. Clover is indeed a fell destroyer of noxious weeds, especially the Alsike if sown in a suitable soil. But the trouble is that a great many farmers either don't know how to deal with this pest, or are too negligent to grapple with it. Instead of seeding the infected ground with clover, they either abandon it to the thistle or put it under a grain crop. The one is about as great a mistake as the other, and with a new crop of seed ripening every season, it does not take long to cover an entire neighbourhood. The downy seeds are carried by the winds for miles in every direction, and so it comes that the good farmer is made to suffer for the carelessness of the bad. It is true that there is a law to prevent the spread of Canada thistles, but unfortunately it is too generally a dead letter. And the reason of the law's failure is this, that there is no proper system of inspection. The overseer of highways may be anxious

enough for his own sake to check the evil, but he is naturally averse to prosecuting his neighbours in the courts, or to enter upon their lands and destroy the thistles at their cost. What seems to be necessary is the appointment of one inspector for a township, whose duty it shall be to rigidly enforce the law. Nor should the operations of the law be limited to Canada thistles. There are many other weeds hardly less injurious, among them being wild-mustard, ox-eyed daisy, wild oats and rag weed. A law that would apply to these and all other noxious weeds, as well as black knot and any other contagious disease affecting fruit trees, would doubtless do much good. But in any case it is useless to continue the plan of inspection by the overseers of highways. One official for a township—and his appointment should be obligatory on every Council—would give more satisfactory results. Clean farming deserves to be encouraged and protected.

### MARKET PRICES.

The prices of grain, the produce of this year's crop, are not yet definitely fixed. The coarse grains especially barley and oats, are not likely to go much higher than they now are, the yield being large and the quality fair. Corn is likely to increase, for both in Ontario and in the United States, the product is almost certain to be considerably less than last year. But, with respect to wheat, it is difficult to make any safe prediction. It has been known for some time that the yield is short of last year's by many millions of bushels, both in Europe and America; and yet the market continues sluggish and prices almost unchanged. Trustworthy reports show that in Ontario the deficiency this year, compared with last year's crop, is 14,000,000. In the United States it is less than last year's by fully 70,000,000 bushels, in England by 11,000,000 bushels, and in France by 80,000,000. In Russia also the fall wheat is a failure, and it scarcely reaches an average in Germany and Austro-Hungary. These figures show a total deficiency, compared with last year's crop, of 175,000,000 bushels. With such facts known to the world it does seem strange that the price of wheat should not advance. It may be, indeed, that there is an uncertainty as to the actual produce, or perhaps that the large dealers are "bearing" the market with a view to future operations. We shall be surprised, however, if there is not an upward movement in the course of the next six weeks. The results of the thrashing season will soon become known, and from information which is now reaching us from different parts of Ontario, it is almost certain that the deficiency will turn out to be greater than has been estimated.

### ONTARIO CROP REPORTS.

The following is a summary of the report just issued by Mr. A. Blue, Secretary of the Bureau of Industries:—

#### WHEAT.

The area under wheat this year is 1,676,545 acres, the estimated produce 26,759,439 bush., and the average yield per acre 15.6 bushels, but later returns will probably reduce this estimate. Last year the area under wheat was 1,775,337 acres, the produce, 40,921,201 bushels, and the average yield per acre 23 bushels. The total area of fall wheat sown, as returned by township assessors for this year, was 1,178,289 acres, of which 88,734 are reported as having been ploughed up or re-sown. The breadth of spring wheat sown is nearly the same as last year.

The return made by farmers on the 15th of June showed that they had in reserve at that date 5,453,485 bushels of old wheat, or fully six months' supply for the whole Province. The quantity held by millers and stored in warehouses has not been ascertained, but it is not large.

#### BARLEY.

The area of barley is less than last year by 91,000 acres, and the estimated produce by 3,670,000 bushels. In the western counties of the Province it was injured by the excessive rainfall of June and the first half of July, and the bulk of it is not a good sample. In the counties of York, Durham, Northumberland, and Prince Edward a large acreage has been reaped and housed in excellent condition.

#### OATS.

The acreage under oats is larger this year than last year, and the crop is reported to be an excellent one in all parts of the Province. Like other cereals, it is about two weeks later than usual in ripening. The estimated product is 5,626,000 bushels more than last year, and the average yield is nearly 40 bushels per acre.

#### RYE.

Rye is only moderately good. The winter variety fared better than the fall wheat, but the spring rye was injured by rains and the stand was light.

#### PEAS.

Peas has been a good crop in the northern and north-eastern counties, but in the West Midland and Lake Erie counties it was scalded or drowned out by the rains. The area is somewhat less than last year, but the estimated produce is 775,000 bushels more.

#### CORN.

Corn was planted late, and the wet weather of June and July did great injury to it. In some sections of the Lake Erie counties, where this crop is chiefly grown, it was drowned out by the heavy rains, and excepting on high lands its condition at the beginning of the month was generally very poor. The area of growing crop has doubtless been considerably reduced by the unfavourable weather. The bean crop is in a more hopeful condition, as also is buckwheat. The total area under corn, beans, and buckwheat is shown by the tables to be 313,013 acres, against 276,297 acres last year.

#### HAY AND CLOVER.

The crop of hay and clover is doubtless the largest ever grown in the country, and the bulk of it has been well cured and safely housed. The area was 2,359,521 acres, and the estimated produce 4,127,419 tons, against 1,825,890 acres and 2,090,626 tons last year. It will be remembered that last year the clover was almost completely ruined by winter exposure and spring frosts, which fully accounts for the smaller area and the lighter yield as compared with this year. The second crop of clover was making fine growth at the beginning of the month, but more recent information gives ground to the fear that in many localities the seed will be destroyed by the midge. This new pest is rapidly extending to all parts of the Province.

#### ROOTS.

Roots made slow progress in the early part of the season, in consequence of the excess of