

THE ANNUAL MEETING, 1895.

The annual meeting of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario was opened on Wednesday, December 11th, 1895, in the town of Woodstock.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Mr. Murray Pettit, of Winona, President of the Association, occupied the chair, and delivered the following address:

The season through which we have just passed will long be remembered by horticulturists as one of unprecedented frosts and drouths in almost all portions of the province. As a result the fruit crop has been more or less damaged, and in many cases ruined. The almost entire absence of fungus diseases have in a measure compensated the loss, and our markets have been fairly well supplied with a much better quality of fruits than in former years. The result of the drouth has been like a mathematical demonstration of the saying, "Good drainage, good cultivation, and plenty of manure, will enable land to stand almost any amount of drouth and still produce crops." I regret that I am unable to give any statistics in regard to the past season's crop, as it is impossible to gather anything reliable, even from local sections of the province. It is unfortunate that in this age, when every line of business is more or less dependent for success upon statistical data, that we have no better means of acquiring this information. During the past year many new horticultural societies have been formed, through the enthusiastic work of our old director and co-worker, Mr. Beall. These societies bring people together for the comparison and the enlargement of views. The local societies gather and formulate the experience and wisdom of the community. It is then brought to this Society to carry on and complete, and from one end of this province to the other to-day can be seen the deep imprint of organized horticultural activity. It is seen in the bending orchard, the burdened vineyard and fruitful garden. Fruit growing is becoming one of our great industries, whole farms are being planted and given the most scientific care and cultivation. Thousands of homes are fully supplied with fruits and flowers from their own gardens, and there is yet grand work to be done through organization. Should we allow the far-off valleys of California to supply the demand at our very doors that our own fruit should supply, annually taking thousands of dollars from this Dominion to support the fruit growing industries of another country while we are looking anxiously for markets? Does it not teach us that we must produce more good fruit, and less of an inferior quality; that we must cultivate, spray, fertilize and thin, pick, grade and pack better? When we notice the yearly growth of competition in the fruit markets, it becomes clear to us that the time has come when we must grow such varieties of the various fruits as we find succeed best in the various sections; in other words, we must make specialties of growing only such kinds as we can bring to the highest state