

grapes. For the number of vines in bearing there was not a heavy crop of grapes this season, yet prices were dreadfully low, the profits very small, in some cases *nil*, when the cost of setting out and labor, etc., of properly attending to a vineyard is taken into account. Undoubtedly of late years the home consumption of grapes has greatly increased, but it seems to me that for the present it has about reached its limit and no fresh outlet is opening up for their disposal; indeed, the French treaty, by injuring our native wine trade, has rather decreased our market, and there seems but little hope of selling our grapes to advantage on the British market, consequently when the new vineyards now planted out come into bearing our prices will be further reduced and profits will be non-existent. Now I must say that I think that this Association is somewhat to blame for the overplanting taking place in this Province, for we have gone into new districts and aroused their enthusiasm for fruit growing which has too often taken the form of wildly planting out orchards without the least enquiry whether there was not sufficient planted already or no. This has happened in many cases, and in that respect I think that this Association has been a distinct injury to fruit growers. Fruit growing enthusiasm is all very well, but unless we fruit growers look forward to being supported in an eleemosynary institution it is bad business. In short, we are cutting our own throats.

Now it may be a fine thing for the public that every available spot of ground in Ontario should be producing fruit, but from the growers' point of view it is not business. Indeed, it reminds one of what the French General said of the Balaclava charge: "*C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*"

Another great factor in the matter of overplanting is nurserymen and their agents. Fruit growers have suffered much from nurserymen—in the past from frosted and diseased and over-priced trees, not to mention the mulberry, Russian apricot, prunus Simoni and other frauds, and in the present by being induced by plausible agents to overplant by specious tales of the fabulous profits of fruit growing, which exist entirely in their imagination. These latter remarks apply mainly to farmers and others who have had no previous experience in fruit growing, and I think it is time that this Association should inform such persons that fruit growing is a business of itself, that it is already overdone, and that they had better not undertake to enter a business of which they know nothing, and are only induced to enter upon the plausible representations of agents whose only desire is to sell their trees—and after that the deluge. This Province has a close season for deer and other game and for fish; why not have a close time for fruit planting? i.e., a period of some years during which no fruit trees should be planted, excepting certain of the small fruits, such as strawberries. During that period let the nurserymen turn their attention to the production of flowers, ornamental shrubs, forest trees, and of course mulberries and Russian apricots and trees of like nature. There would then be a chance for consumption to overtake production and for the grower to receive a living profit in the future, otherwise I am afraid that the term fruit grower may become synonymous with that of pauper, and that most of us will end our days in the workhouse. A few of us may survive to afford an example of the truth of Darwin's, or rather Spencer's, doctrine, of the survival of the fittest. But it will be an unpleasant process and we had better avoid it whilst we may.

Mr. ORR: I would like to ask Mr. Pattison if he considers there was a full crop of apples in Ontario this year?

Mr. PATTISON: I consider there was a heavy crop in most parts of Ontario.

Mr. ORR: As far as I understand it, there was not five per cent. of a crop all through central Ontario from Cornwall to Windsor. The whole crop of plums was in the Niagara district and along Lake Huron and Erie shore. Through the greater part of Ontario there was no crop of plums.

Mr. BOULTER: In central Ontario we had no plums at all. If the production in the Niagara district made the price what it was in Ontario, what would it be if we had plums?

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