

Our every effort, too, to advance our personal though unselfish interests, will go far I am persuaded, to render Ottawa and the Ottawa Valley the praise of the Dominion and the peerless queen of beauty of our Province of Ontario.

Fruit and fruit interests may be considered by some as in a backward state in this eastern district; but, let me ask, in what districts have these interests not been backward and lagging, till advanced by the energy, and forwarded by the taste, of some disciple of art and student of nature? However backward, we are not supinely to fold our hands, and indifferently allow other interests besides ours to make rapid strides in the onward march of progress, but our duty is evidently to devise means and make use of every plan to further horticulture in a district like this, capable of sustaining its millions of population, and with verge and scope enough to form a State, having for its highway the magnificent Ottawa River for its main, and the diverging streams of beauty on its right and left for feeders.

The originators of and the co-labourers for the advancement in all material prosperity of a country like this, may not at present reap the fruit of their doings; posterity, however, will adequately recognise their efforts, and crown their brows with a diadem of immortality.

Let us, then, members of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario, arouse ourselves, and let the motto of our Society be more legibly emblazoned on our banners than it has yet been—Forward, and Onward!—prosecute with diligence and assiduity the great work which we have on hand—let us more emphatically than ever recommend the sowing of the best seeds of our best fruits—encourage the raising of new and hardy varieties—inculcate the use of the best arts of cultivation—study the changes of nature—extend our observations and labours, till the Ottawa Valley and all the unfruitful places in our Far West rejoice and blossom.

It must be admitted—the fact is not to be denied—that many difficulties occur in the carrying out of our benevolent and patriotic objects. There is the weighty indifference of multitudes of people, who see no beauty in and have no admiration for the benefits accruing from our favourite cultivation; the disappointment to fruit growers from having unintentionally planted varieties not true to name—the desolations consequent on the ravages of the borer and blight—the dire evils springing from the winter cold, and the baneful effects of the scorching heat of our almost tropical summer.

The two last mentioned causes of difficulty in fruit culture have been especially prominent and prevalent since our last annual meeting. Indeed, we question if ever fruit growers had to contend with more malign influences than those which have prevailed during the past winter. The season was exceptionally severe, and some noticeable and remarkable effects resulted to almost all vegetation from its severity. The apple, pear, plum, cherry and grape suffered greatly. There are few horticulturists but have to lament the destructive inroads made on their orchards. Scarcely an orchard escaped the biting blast. It matters little the aspect—trees on southern slopes suffered as much as those on northern exposures. Nor were other varieties of trees exempt. The hardy oak, the luxuriant maple, the stately pine, and the lowly shrub alike suffered, and this not in one district, but almost everywhere. Confessedly hardy varieties were more injured than certain others that were previously known for their tenderness. Philadelphia raspberry was cut down, while in its neighbourhood the hornet stood the winter pretty well. Grape vines in southern exposures were scathed, while the same varieties in northern aspects passed through the ordeal scathless. The strangest and most paradoxical results have been noted. Important lessons follow. At Drummondville, we learned that the mulching of the tender varieties of the peach had preserved them. In fact, the severity of last winter has abundantly taught the beneficial results of mulching. Trees well mulched suffered comparatively little—left exposed, they scarcely survived. The practice of mulching must soon become general, and this both in winter and in summer. In winter it is needed to protect against the withering cold, in summer as a shelter against the intense heat. My own experience is strikingly illustrative of the benefits of mulching. For years I mulched either with manure or turf—for the last two years I have applied fertilizers in both cases on the surface. During the past summer and spring branch after branch of my beautiful and fruitful pear trees have gone. My occupation has largely been to