

THE MICHIGAN FRUIT GROWERS.



T the request of our Directors, I attended the meeting of the State Horticultural Society, of Michigan, held in Port Huron, on the 18th and 19th of last month, and herewith append you a few notes of their proceedings. The meeting, though not quite as large, in point of numbers, as I expected to see (being held outside of their great fruit growing district), was from beginning to end a very enthusiastic one, and their papers and discussions were all of a very interesting and practical character. The first paper, by L. B. Rice, of Port Huron, on Fruit Growing on the Western Shore of Lake Huron, brought out the fact that while fruit growing on the western side of the State was the most important industry, that it had been almost entirely neglected in the eastern portion of the State, although there were many sections that were well adapted to it there. Branches of a peach tree were shown in a healthy condition, which was 24 years old, and had passed through several winters when the thermometer was 15 to 16 degrees below zero, and one when it went 32° below. In discussing the degrees of cold a peach tree will stand and bear, several instances were given where fair crops had been obtained after a winter of 16° below zero. A paper by T. T. Lyon, Director of the Horticultural Experimental Station, at South Haven, on the testing and introduction of novelties, showed that not more than one in a hundred of new fruits exceeded, or even equalled, the old standard varieties, although some of them, for the first year or two, might appear to be valuable. His advice to fruit growers was: 'Though every wide-awake man might test a limited number for himself on a small scale, yet for general planting "let novelties alone." It was estimated that there was money enough wasted on worthless fruits to support the poor of the country. The value of an experiment station, I think, was fully shown here. One paper was upon top grafting tender varieties, such as Baldwin, King, Greenings, etc., upon hardier sorts, Tolman Sweets, Liscom, Northern Spy, etc.; and it was contended that they could be grown successfully much further north by so doing. An illustrated lecture by Prof. Gulley, of the Agricultural College, on Budding and Grafting, was full of instruction to amateur fruit growers present. There were other papers of interest, and reports of the amount of fruit shipped from different points. One township of 5,000 inhabitants sold over \$100,000, worth last year, or \$200 for every man, woman and child. The possibilities of pickles were shown in the shipping of \$40,000 worth to Chicago in a single season. The work of making a display of fruits at the great fair was also discussed. Committees have already been appointed and the work marked out, and Ontario will be left behind in this matter, if we do not begin to work soon. The State has already given a grant of \$4,000 for this work, and they expect another appropriation next winter, if necessary. I was most cordially received and royally entertained during my visit, and much regret was expressed that other members of our Society—whose names they had on their programme—were not present.

St. Catharines, Ont.

A. M. SMITH.