

THE APPLE IN CANADA, ITS CULTIVATION AND IMPROVEMENT.

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The continued popularity of the apple throughout the world is well shown by the enormous quantities of this fruit consumed annually and by the very extensive plantings made in recent years. So many trees have been planted that many persons are in doubt as to the wisdom of planting any more and others believe that too many have been planted already. Time alone will tell whether these persons are correct in their judgment or not. The writer is one of those who believes that if the methods of distributing the crop are improved rapidly enough it will be a long time before there is actual over production. It would require many million more barrels of fruit than are being produced per annum to-day to give every man, woman and child in Canada and other countries all the apples that they might be expected to consume were they able to obtain them at a reasonable price when they wanted them. So many apple trees die every year; so much poor fruit is produced every year; so many orchards are neglected every year and so many persons are discouraged every year; that the man who grows good fruit should, taking one year with another, continue to make a fair profit. The man who has some other crops to depend upon in a season when good apples are very plentiful and prices low, will of course be in a better position than he who depends solely on the apple for his income.

As the market becomes flooded with great quantities of apples the merits of the different varieties will become better known; the differences between Fancy, No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3 apples will be better appreciated and apples will be sold more on their intrinsic values than they are to-day. Let every apple grower therefore see to it that he plants only the best varieties and where these are already planted, that he cares for his trees well, packs and markets his apples in the best manner and is not content until the fruit he puts on the market is of as bright colour, as free from blemishes and as high in grade as it is possible to be.

The best flavoured, most highly coloured and longest-keeping apples are produced in Canada and, if the Canadian apple grower does his part well, Canadians should have a large share in supplying the markets of the world with this wholesome fruit.

The origin of the cultivated apple is unknown. It is supposed, however, that it had its beginning in the wild apple of Europe (*Pyrus Malus*), but there is no evidence to show when the improvement began, nor when the fruit reached the size, colour and quality of what is considered a good apple to-day. It is known, however, that at the beginning of the Christian era, the Romans cultivated a few varieties of apple which might compare favourably with some that are grown at the present time. Although the apple is mentioned in Holy Scripture many years prior to that period, the word evidently referred to another fruit, or other fruits, and not to what is now called an apple.

While the range of successful culture of many other fruits is comparatively limited, the apple has a very wide one in the temperate climates of the old and new worlds and is able to accommodate itself to conditions under which many other cultivated fruits would not thrive. It is, however, in the temperate parts of America that it reaches the highest state of development, where there is an ever increasing area devoted to this fruit. Named varieties of apple are very numerous, being, probably, over