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The New Experiment Station in the Niagara District

THE establishment of the new fruit and vegetable experiment station in the Niagara district marks an epoch in the horticultural development of Canada. It should become the most important station of its kind in the Dominion, and ultimately one of the best on the continent. The older stations have done good work, but have been handicapped by their locations and, therefore, greater things may be expected from the new one. It is located near Jordan in the centre of the best fruit district in Canada. It will be of value, not only to the Niagara district, where it is located, but it should be an important factor in the advancement of fruit matters all over the Dominion, but particularly to portions of British Columbia where conditions are closely similar to those in Southern Ontario.

The ground for the new station comprises about 90 acres, and has been given to the Ontario government by Mr. M. F. Rittenhouse, of Chicago, who was born and brought up near Jordan. While otherwise well suited to its purpose, it has two defects: it lacks the protection of the mountain, only two and a half miles away, and as a consequence, its crops are a week late in season; and, in the judgment of a representative of *THE HORTICULTURIST* who thoroughly examined the soil, it lacks a sufficient quantity of light soil to be ideal for experimental work with peaches and other tender fruits. This latter objection can be overcome by the purchase of additional land of that character. It is understood that Mr. Rittenhouse has given the government an option on an excellent farm of this type, across the road from the farms already donated.

Except, as already stated, that it lacks the protection of the mountain, the farm otherwise is ideally situated, being almost in the centre of the Niagara fruit district. It is located on the extreme north-east corner of the township of Clinton in the county of Lincoln. The farm faces on the line between Clinton and Louth townships, and has a shore line on Lake Ontario of about one-quarter of a mile.

It is about 12 miles from St. Catharines and 24 miles from Hamilton, or

about midway between Hamilton and the Niagara river. Although, at present, somewhat difficult of access, there being no railway station within three miles, it is expected a station will be established where the railway tracks pass the farm about half a mile away. The projected electric railway line from Toronto to Niagara Falls, also, probably will pass near the farm.

It is interesting to note that the town line between Louth and Clinton, if extended across the lake, would run directly up Yonge street, Toronto. In other words, the new station will be directly across the lake from the city.

STRONG AND PROGRESSIVE

I congratulate you on the very interesting and profitable horticultural journal you are publishing in *THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST*. I prize it as highly as any periodical coming to my desk. You deserve the patronage of every progressive citizen of Canada. Few people appreciate as they ought the value of a paper that is as progressive and so strong and forceful as is *THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST*.—A. N. Brown, Middleport, N.Y.

In the vicinity of the Rittenhouse farm are a number of excellent fruit farms, worth from \$150 to \$250 an acre. The land for the station consists of two farms that were given to the government by Mr. Rittenhouse, in two instalments.

AREA OF THE STATION

The original offer comprised some 46 acres of land, after deducting the lots for the school and school gardens and a strip along the road required for road purposes. In the second gift, known as the Harris farm, there was originally about 50 acres, but the lake has worn away a small portion of it, causing the shore road to encroach slightly upon the original area; this, together with a strip required to widen the road to 66 feet on the east side, lessens the area

to about 44 acres. Together, the two farms comprise about 90 acres.

When Mr. Rittenhouse's first offer was made, he agreed also to give the government an option on an 88-acre farm, owned by Mr. A. H. Culp, Jordan Harbor, and located just across the road from the original Rittenhouse farm. Mr. Rittenhouse had obtained an option on the farm from Mr. Culp at \$150 an acre, and agreed to turn it over to the government at \$100 an acre, any time within the next three years. Mr. Culp's farm is sandy in character, and is one of the best fruit farms in the locality. When the first 50 acres, given by Mr. Rittenhouse, were being examined by Mr. C. C. James, Deputy Minister of Agriculture; President Creelman of the O.A.C., and others, it was suggested by some one that it would be much more convenient to have the land for the experimental farm in a block extending from the Rittenhouse school to the lake. After Mr. Rittenhouse returned to Chicago he thought likewise. With Mr. Rittenhouse, whose generosity is unbounded, to think is to act. A few days later he visited St. Catharines and bought the Harris farm for \$4,500, and presented it to the government.

CONTOUR AND SOIL

On the first farm of 46 acres, the contour of the surface is uneven. There is a variety of soils. In the south-east corner, by the school, are about two and a half acres of light sandy loam about two feet deep. This is the best soil on the farm, and it is to be regretted that there is not more of it. There is, also, a sandy loam strip of about six and a half acres running through the farm, from north-east to south-west, on the north-west side of the ravine. This strip, although sandy in character and excellent for peaches and small fruits, is rather shallow, being only about one foot deep on the average, and it rests upon hard pan. In the ravine, there are about four acres of black muck, rich bottom land, and valuable for experimental work in vegetables. West of the ravine there are one and a half acres of bush. In the north-west corner of the farm there are about four and a half acres of stiff