

*Macdonald College*

## THE ECONOMICS OF FRUIT GROWING

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### FELLOW MEMBERS:

While I deem it a great honor to preside over your meetings I also feel that I am somewhat out of place in the chair. I am not a practical fruit-grower, hence I have never run up against the many problems of the practical grower. I have never had the arduous pleasure of packing ten or twelve barrels of apples from a tree—each barrel netting \$2.00—and bringing in a hundred-fold profit. On the other hand I have never had the sadness of seeing a fine crop of fruit devoured by codling worm, and curculio, or a prospective orchard, costing many years of labor to bring it to the bearing age, destroyed by borers, cankers and mice. You will understand, then that so far as fruit-growing is concerned I have never lost many hours of sleep through excessive joy or sadness.

On account, therefore, of my inexperience with practical orcharding I found it difficult to choose a suitable subject for discussion at this meeting. It occurred to me, however, that perhaps I could not do better than call attention to a number of factors in fruit-growing that require attention by our orchardists. My experience during the past twenty years in the orchards of Ontario and Quebec as an experimenter in the control of insects and plant diseases, my work as a biologist, and my interest as a consumer should entitle me to a respectful hearing on your part.

### Why do we plant Apple Trees?

This question often comes up in my mind as I go through the province and see the pitiable condition of most of the apple trees grown on the farms. Even in so-called fruit-growing districts the same question might very well be asked. According to the census of 1911 there were 1,252,856 bearing and 859,812 non-bearing apple trees in this province, and the estimated crop for 1910 was 1,500,000 bushels, or less than 1½ bushels per tree! Professor Hedrick of the Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, N.Y., stated to us two years ago that the average production for ten years of his experimental Baldwin orchard near Rochester was 4.33 barrels per tree.

Let us come to our own province. Mr. Waddell of Vicars told us not long ago that last year he sold 425 barrels of apples from his 4-acre orchard of 200 trees, or an average of 2½ barrels per tree. Mr. Martin of Mont. St. Hilaire, where another Provincial Experimental Station is located, told us