

Our membership has increased from the little group of 30, in 1868, to over 2,000, and we have the proud satisfaction of being the largest horticultural society in America, if not in the whole world; while the culture of fruit throughout the country has made corresponding advancement. Our towns and cities which were formerly largely supplied from the neighboring republic are now abundantly stocked with fruits of our own growing, and many sections of our country to which apples were sent from the States and Niagara district thirty years ago, are now exporting thousands of barrels annually to the old country, and even to the United States, and that of a quality, too, which can not be excelled or even equalled in the whole world. And by careful hybridizing and judicious selections, varieties have been found that will succeed in many sections where it was thought fruit could not be grown, and, if experiments and plans which are now under way succeed, and I have every confidence that they will, the day is not far distant when every inhabitant of Ontario, if not of the Dominion, who has land capable of being tilled, if he cannot sit "under his own vine and fig tree" may at least, if he choose, raise enough of some kinds of fruit to supply his own table.

Great improvements have been made also in the methods of handling fruits and in packages. Thirty years ago, when I used to attend the Hamilton market, berries of all kinds were brought in in pans and pails, and dipped out with the hand or with ladles into measures, often in a condition ready for jam. Apples, pears and sometimes peaches if not too soft were marketed in grain or meal bags, which had frequently not been very well shaken—the bags I mean—the fruit had plenty in being got off the trees and over the rough roads in lumber wagons—there were no express offices between St. Catharines and Hamilton, or that place and Toronto, I think; but now we have attractive baskets and packages for every kind of fruit and it is carefully conveyed in spring wagons to the railway station where express agents are ready to receive and forward it to its destination. But, notwithstanding the progress of fruit culture there have been many discouragements and hindrances to contend with. Blight, fungus, mildew, yellows, black-knot, frost and insects of various kinds, often step in and cut off our crops and blast the hopes of fruit growers, and they have to be ever on the alert to protect themselves from these enemies. The methods and experiments in combatting these evils, brought out in discussions at our various meetings and communicated to the public and others, through our *Horticulturist* and Annual Report, have been of incalculable benefit. There has not only been a great advance in fruit growing during the last thirty years but also a great advance along all other horticultural lines, particularly in the rural districts. There is more taste displayed in laying out and beautifying grounds, in planting trees, shrubs and flowers; in making homes attractive, than previously, and we believe that the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario has done much in the development of this taste and in bringing about these excellent results. The year that has just passed, has been a very discouraging one to many of us, particularly to growers of apples. Although the spring opened with an abundance of bloom and there was every indication of a bountiful crop, there came a cold east storm which blasted the fruit and entirely destroyed it through the middle and southern portions of Ontario, except in a few sheltered and favored locations. The counties of Huron, Bruce, Grey and a portion of Simcoe were the only ones which had any apples of any account to export. The same storm nearly destroyed the

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