

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS, 1874.

The revolving year brings us again in Annual Convocation. Like the members of a large and attached, though scattered family, we rejoice when the opportunity is given us, on the occasion of our reunion, to enter into friendly discussion with each other in regard to those matters that closely refer to our chosen culture. We rejoice that such discussions have always been carried on with the utmost good feeling. The members of our fraternity, while tenaciously holding their own opinions, have ever been ready, indeed, in some instances, with great patience, to listen to the views advanced by others. This is as it should be. We may learn some useful hint from even the veriest tyro in horticulture, and crude views have often been modelled into useful shape by the skilled hand of some one better informed. We trust that this mode of conducting our business meetings may long characterize our gatherings, and that the well-informed and the sagacious may bear with the immature and often erroneous views of the younger members.

Gentlemen of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario, I trust that you will bear with me, while I again strive to discharge, to the best of my ability, the onerous duty of again presenting to you some views on the common objects bearing on the well-being of our Association. And should the picture not be so well painted, and the subjects of the picture not so well grouped as you could wish, attribute it, not to any want of desire on my part, to gratify you, but simply from my inability to do justice to my theme.

The past season has not been a very advantageous one for the interests of the fruit-grower. Most of the products of the garden have been a short crop. This has arisen from various causes. In early spring, the nights continued, long into the season, very cold and bleak; and the days even were little suitable for the setting of the fruit. In consequence, the setting was accompanied with difficulties, and in a large proportion of cases, proved an almost total failure. The greatest promise of fruit was apparent, the previous fall having been everything that could be desired to mature and prepare the fruit buds. In the vernacular of horticulturists, the young fruit blossoms damped off, and left but a diminished crop for the cultivator. This has been especially the case with the staple fruit product of our country—the apple. Few people ever saw a greater show in blossoms, and at one period there was a general expectation of an abundant crop. The result is a full corroboration of the adage, "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip." In favoured spots, it is true, there is a fair average crop, but this is not general. The Niagara District, as usual, comes out at the wide end of the horn. Here and there in sheltered spots, under favourable circumstances, in many portions of the country, I have found orchards bearing abundantly.

We conclude, on the whole, that the apple harvest will prove a light one.

What is true of the apple, is equally true of the pear; more true unfortunately. Pear trees in spring gave the utmost promise of an abundant crop, but the result is altogether disproportionate to the promise. I have only about half the number of varieties fruiting this year which I had last year, and not a tithe of the quantity. It was well for us, and for our reputation as fruit-growers, that the crop of fruit a year ago was so good and plentiful, as had the Boston Centennial been in 1874, we should have made but a sorry appearance. We may congratulate ourselves, therefore, in the law of compensation; we have less at stake this year than we had last, and may with the greater equanimity bear a lessened crop. Pears, almost all over the country, are poor. Indeed, our faith and likings have received some rude shocks during the summer, inasmuch as one friend after another has assured us of their determination to substitute vines for pears. We have frequently been so pushed with these desponding utterances, that we have only been able to make a poor defence. The outlook is against us. We have had more blight this season than during all the years in which we have cultivated pears. Blight—terrible blight—curculio—trees failing—leaves failing—fruit failing—hope failing—hope, which comes to all, almost failing—leave scarce a wreck behind.

Replant must be our motto. Encouragement must be derived from the fact that young trees give the best fruit. Replant, I say, on the principle of a friend of mine, who, in his domestic economy every year preserves his young poulets for laying purposes, as he affirms that their eggs are sweeter and more delicate than those of the old hens. We ought to replant too, I think, to pursue an improved plan of cultivation. I am persuaded from what I see in my own culture, and in that of many of my neighbours, that we all over-crop. Let us plant young trees and prevent, by thinning, their over-production, and depend upon it our trees will

be longer lived, and I am persuaded they will be less strained. We are all fail for no other reason than that in many cases its season of fruiting respect is especially mature the shell plum crop has suffered from curculio. It was Dewey, of Hart's United States. I believe in, that the accountably disappointed, or invasion up towards Ontario at Clifton. The destructive, or it

There is an along the southern my co-labourer, I growth of plums blight, no gummi for Rep by Pop, "little Turk," and Clarkes, who whole the plum crop faithfully carried has succeeded in harvest by persist

Peaches are quota this year. fruit, at first from mitted that, owing flavoured. A ques that there is a good pears? First, the and full—the winter more southerly local account for a good

The grape makers will mark age. The dry weather other fruit trees. could be desired, attacks the seed has berry. In our estates. What is ca felt in some parts some vineyards the Concord have also above our average.

The smaller fruit dwindled down to yet it felt the malignant and profitable will be long remembered strongly hold the