

The Farmer's Advocate AND HOME MAGAZINE.

THE LEADING AGRICULTURAL JOURNAL IN THE
DOMINION.

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1. THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE is published every Thursday.

It is impartial and independent of all cliques and parties, handsomely illustrated with original engravings, and furnishes the most practical, reliable and profitable information for farmers, dairymen, gardeners, stockmen and home-makers, of any publication in Canada.

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the consumer should have been able to get peaches for from 55 to 60 cents. At this price the market would have taken almost double the quantity. No one questions the quality of a luscious, red-cheeked peach from the Niagara District. People eat all of them they feel they can afford. It is a question of price to the consumer. The grower does not get too much. Why, in the same book from which we got the foregoing figures as to price received by the producer we saw entry after entry of lots of eleven-quart baskets of Irish Cobbler potatoes which sold for 60 cents per basket. In fact, the bulk of the grower's crop of these extra early potatoes sold at this price. Think of it—potatoes selling for just double the price of peaches in the fruit belt. There must be something wrong. As one enthusiast puts it "There is a nigger in the woodpile." Who gets the extra 20 cents to 50 cents per basket over a reasonable profit for handling fruit? A campaign is now in progress to find out. We hope it succeeds, and feel sure that if it does the consumer will get cheaper peaches this year than in the past and the growers will not suffer but will greatly benefit from the increased demand and wider market. Let us eat more of our own tender fruits when the growers see that they reach the consumer at a price which is only enough higher than the producer's selling rates to show a fair profit to the dealer or whoever may come between. Fair play all around means a market for the 1915 crop, whereas peaches to the consumer in Ontario at more than three times the price the producer receives for them means a poor market and the loss of bushels of Canada's best fruit. What are you going to do about it?

With the destruction of the Lusitania and her 1,300 passengers disappears about the last pretence that civilization alone has done any better than cover demand savagery with a glittering veneer.

Fruit Growers Have Three Problems.

Canadian fruit growers have three problems to solve: they must keep their capital investment within reasonable limits, they must have efficient organization and they must agree as to packages and brands. With reference to buying land it must be remembered that a site for growing fruit should not be purchased at town-lot values, for high-priced land means high interest rates and these insure costly production. Because the California Fruit Growers' Exchange is a powerful organization, shipping an enormous quantity of fruit, its members do not feel the galling pressure of the fruit combines that to weaker societies appear so formidable. Because neighboring fruit districts outside of Canada, have well-known packages and brands, which mean something, they are able to make inroads upon our markets that are sure to be felt and are being regretted at the present time. There must be cheaper production and more efficient organization before fruit growing in Canada comes into its own.

In 1895 there were imported into Canada 2,798,256 pounds of "prunes and plums, dry unpitted", having a value of \$75,232, but in 1914 these figures had grown to 10,592,068 pounds valued at \$550,175. These products affect our market for plums but stranger still, fifteen years ago, 25,417 bushels of fresh plums were brought in while in 1914, 151,650 bushels valued at \$267,563 were imported. The months of July, August, September and October form the period that Canadian plums are marketed but the same period also sees the incoming of the heaviest importations from the United States even in the teeth of a 30 cent-per-bushel customs duty. While these great increases in imported plums have been taking place the number of plum trees have been decreasing in Ontario. Between 1901 and 1911 bearing plum trees decreased by 48.1 per cent. while the total decrease amounted to 561,697 trees or 33.3 per cent.



Western Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*).

What is true of plums is also true of many fruits which may be grown to perfection in Canada. The fruit growers of this country should set about to change the appearance of the Customs Records at Ottawa. In 1901 there were 105,297 pounds of fancy sweet cherries imported from the United States while in 1914, 1,072,300 pounds with a value of \$119,021 were brought in. In spite of this one nursery stated that it would probably only sell trees for filling in blanks to the 1915 trade. The impression is abroad that cherries are planted quite as extensively as conditions warrant and if this be so we should at least supply our own market. California pears sold on the Toronto market last fall when home-grown stuff was putting up ineffective competition and apples from the Yakima Valley sold in the immediate vicinity of the orchard that produced the sweetest apples of the world only a few months previous.

The total number of fruit trees in Ontario decreased by 1,835,118 trees or 13 per cent. between 1901 and 1911, yet vineyards, peaches and cherries increased. However, complaints may sometimes be heard regarding the stability of the fruit industry and these complaints will continue to be heard so long as the cost of production is maintained at a high level by large capital investments and so long as the consumer pays double or more what the grower receives for his product. For general farming, land without

buildings seldom commands a higher price than \$100 per acre and fruit growing does not return profits in general that justify large increases on this amount. If they should, large areas, quite suitable for the purpose, will be devoted to fruit and the production therefrom will tend to cleave the price down so low that the \$500-per-acre land will return small profits. Conditions adjust themselves according to supply and demand and since by literature and demonstrations, information can now be easily obtained there is no great barrier in the way to success provided soil and climatic conditions are right. The effect of land speculation is being felt in the West and it will be an influencing factor wherever it may operate.

Cost of production and organization in the United States have received greater attention than in Canada. With one or two exceptions the co-operative associations in this country are in their infancy and are making very slow growth with regard to efficiency. Where they are ostensibly most useful they are competing one with another with various brands, packages and methods and they are devoting their efforts more to outsell their neighbor than to reducing their cost of production and selling, thus hampering their own usefulness and allowing the enemy to gain valuable ground. There is a huge gulf fixed between the producer and consumer; span it and there will be no more talk of overproduction in Canada.

Nature's Diary.

A. B. Klugh, M.A.

This has been one of the earliest springs that we have had for some years. The Large White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) and the Red Trillium (*Trillium erectum*) were in full bloom on the southern shore of Georgian Bay on May 1, whereas in other years they have just been coming into flower in this part of the country on May 8. On May 2 the leaves of the Sugar Maples were one and three-quarters inches in length, while in many other springs they have not been thus far advanced by the middle of May.

It has been my experience however that an early spring does not mean an early season all through the summer. Things get evened up a little later on. In a series of observations in one part of Ontario I found a great difference in the time of blooming of the spring flowers in different seasons, but by midsummer an average had been attained. I remember particularly the case of the Purple Fringed Orchis, which came into bloom on July 10 in three successive years, though the dates of flowering for the spring plants had been very different.

It is interesting to notice the distribution of plants even in a comparatively limited area. In the vicinity of Kingston the only species of Spring Beauty is *Claytonia virginica*, which has narrow leaves, on the southern shore of Georgian Bay the only species is *Claytonia caroliniana* which has much broader leaves, in the vicinity of Guelph both species occur, though the latter is the more abundant. In cases where the rock formations are different in different districts we expect a change in the flora, we do not look for the same plants in a granite region that we expect in a limestone area, but in the case of the Spring Beauty all three places mentioned are limestone country. Many plants are decidedly local in their distribution. Near Guelph the Blood-root is a very abundant and characteristic flower of early spring, so abundant indeed that one would expect it to be common in similar and not very remote places in the Province. But this spring I travelled nine miles west and eight miles north from Kingston and only succeeded in finding one little patch. A friend tells me that in the immediate vicinity of his home on the Ottawa River there is but one small patch of this species.

I have lost an old friend. No, not a human one but a living one just the same—a large and beautiful Elm which stood in a little clearing on a point on Georgian Bay. The heavy blow a year ago split it asunder, and there it stands with a remnant of a trunk and its giant limbs spread out on the ground like the ribs of a broken umbrella. This old tree has seen many changes. It was a full-grown tree when the first settlers came to this part of the country. It has seen a village arise and then a town within a couple of miles of it. It has looked out across the water on the founding of large industries, industries which boomed then faded and are now abandoned. Now it too has passed, going the way of all life.

One of the commonest plants in flower just now on the Pacific Coast is the Western Blackberry (*Rubus ursinus*). This species is extremely abundant both on the mainland and on Vancouver Island. The fruit is shaped like the Eastern Thimbleberry, and is sweet and of good flavor when perfectly ripe, though it is decidedly acid