

ditions—the figures being for rural districts only:

	1851.	1861.	1871.	1881.	
6 Lake Erie Counties	10,964	18,537	38,068	53,388	
3 Lake Huron Counties	988	3,589	18,697	29,418	
2 Georgian Bay Counties	733	1,666	10,253	18,839	
7 West Midland Counties	10,909	19,478	43,859	57,632	
9 Lake Ontario Counties	20,981	28,452	55,683	76,177	
11 St. Lawrence and Ottawa Counties	7,731	8,388	20,568	28,788	
4 East Midland Counties	2,704	7,832	10,409	15,383	
4 Northern Districts	16	159	1,966	
Totals	55,010	87,958	197,696	281,541	

These statistics furnish us with a succinct history of fruit-growing in the Province, and they are of still greater value in this respect if studied by counties. In the County of Middlesex, for instance, the area in 1851 was 2,388 acres; in 1861 it was 5,030 acres; in 1871 it was 11,908 acres; and in 1881 it was 15,576 acres. In the County of Bruce the area increased from 38 acres

in 1851 to 8,401 acres in 1881, and in Grey it increased in the same period from 56 acres to 10,408. As evidence of progress, these figures are very valuable, assuming even that they are correct in a relative sense, and if the same rate of progress be maintained in the next thirty years, Ontario's position will be a proud one among the fruit-growing countries of the world.

The statistics of acreages, as collected by township assessors in 1883 and 1884, are given by county groups as follows:

	1884.	1883.
6 Lake Erie Counties..	39,952	40,084
3 Lake Huron " ..	19,952	19,907
2 Georgian Bay " ..	11,577	12,224
7 West Midland " ..	41,628	42,800
9 Lake Ontario " ..	55,112	57,358
11 St. Lawrence and Ot- tawa Counties	14,320	14,760
4 E. Midland Counties..	9,780	9,950
3 Northern Districts ..	516	363
Totals	192,837	197,450

The greatest discrepancy in the areas of these two years occurs in the Lake Ontario counties, and is largely owing to the recent extension of the limits of Toronto; the annexed lands being chiefly occupied as nurseries and market gardens. In the West Midland counties the returns of decreased acreages are confined almost wholly to the counties of Brant and Perth. With reference to the Northern Districts, it should be remarked that no returns have been received from settlers in the unorganized municipalities, but their total is probably less than 1,000 acres.

As I have already intimated, it is yet too soon to say definitely which statistics are the most reliable—those of the census enumerators or those of the assessors; but in calling attention to the wide difference which the returns pre-