

the soil was not congenial to its growth. If we sow and do not reap, this Association would become exhausted and its usefulness gone. It is by practical experience we arrive at a correct solution of the obstacles that present themselves, not in horticulture alone, but in all the various departments of agriculture.

A new enterprise has of late been trying to revolutionize the whole system of Nature, by the explosion of powerful substances, to cause the rain to fall upon the earth. Man often taxes his ingenuity to accomplish some great result, when perhaps the simple method lies at his very door. Gather up the crumbs—crumbs of practical experience—which can be obtained in quantities all over this land, along our highways, down our lanes, in our vineyards and orchards. Since this Association was organized, some thirty-three years ago, the most wonderful strides have been made in the science and practice of fruit culture. I, sir, once lived in the very garden of Canada; I live there still, but as years roll on, its boundaries keep widening out, until to-day they can only be circumscribed by the producer's knowledge and skill in the science and practice of his profession.

Some imagine this Association should agree and pronounce on what varieties of fruit we would advise for the intending planter. We can in some respects, but in their suitability to the various sections of a great province, like Ontario, with its various formations of soil and climatic influences affecting them, few men can determine with any degree of certainty. When our experiences and observations are noted down and compared, we often find good reading matter between the lines, as well as on the lines.

The matter of marketing and handling our fruit is a subject which should claim our best attention. Some twenty odd years ago, when this Association was organized under most favorable auspices, but laboring under many disadvantages, little was known as to varieties, their hardiness or adaptability to the different parts of this province. Markets were limited, facilities of transportation still more so. It was with doubt that almost any man except an enthusiast, approached the subject; but the little band stood bravely by the ship—she did not carry much canvas, but it was of good material—and to-day we rejoice in their success. They led the great army of producers on to victory in production, until to-day we stand amazed at the magnitude of its proportions, requiring more canvas, more seamen to man the sails and guide the ship laden with those productions, into the ever increasing markets of the world. The fruit growers of Ontario are to-day looking to this Association, their Association, to advance by every possible means the best interest of that branch of industry. How shall we best accomplish that object, in order that the producer may reap the full reward of his labor? Should we not first consider in relation to this matter the product, that, no doubt, cannot be excelled in *size, form, color or quality* by any country on the face of the globe.

Next, in importance, is the handling of that product from the tree to the market. We may grow the finest fruits the eye of man may desire, but if they are not properly picked, packed and placed upon the market in proper form, our best hopes of financial success can never be fully realised. Have we not fully arrived at that point where the magnitude of the interest demands our most serious consideration? Take up any catalogue of sales you like and the proportion of *slack, wet and wasty* is far greater than it

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