

EXTENSION OF FRUIT GROWING.—I.



FIG. 1090.—MR. E. D. SMITH, WINONA, ONT.

The following paper was given by Mr. E. D. Smith, at a large gathering of farmers, at Stoney Creek, last February. It is a strong, enthusiastic paper, and our readers may wish to know something of the writer. Mr. Smith is a Canadian, who had large early experience in farming, but in 1885 coming into possession of land 85 acres of the paternal estate, he turned his attention to growing fruit and fruit trees. A pushing energetic man, of unusual business ability, his undertakings have proved successful, and his name is well known throughout Ontario. Mr. Smith has now growing 125 acres of solid nursery stock, at Helderleigh (views of which are shown in Figs. 1091 and 1092) on land all thoroughly tile drained 30 feet apart, and he gives each crop about 30 tons of well rotted stable manure, or other composite manures.

As a fruit grower he is no less enterprising. He has now over one hundred acres in fruit, all thoroughly drained. Of this about fifty acres is in grapes, (a view of which is shown in Fig. 1093) and the rest in a great variety of other fruits.

Mr. Smith keeps several teams of horses, and grows all the hay and oats needed, upon his own farm. In addition to the manure from his own stables, he buys compost from Toronto, and supplements the whole with bone dust, and about 2000 bushels of ashes annually.

But it is a buyer and shipper of fruit at Winona station that Mr. Smith is most widely known. He has made his name and the name of Winona famous among fruit dealers far and wide through the enormous amount of fruit which he has distributed, and in this way he

has given enormous impetus to the planting of fruit and fruit trees about Winona.

In the following article, however, it is evident he speaks from the standpoint of a grower and seller of trees than that of a fruit grower, and while we credit him with perfect honesty in his statements, we know many fruit growers whose experience of the last few years has led to utter discouragement.

AFTER such a season of low prices as the one just passed, the subject of my paper becomes a pertinent question.

“Has the planting of fruit orchards, vineyards and berry fields for commercial purposes been overdone?” You will notice that I say “commercial purposes” because I judge there is no one so bold as to say that planting for home use by the householders of this broad, fertile Dominion has been over done, especially when we know the tremendous importance it is to the health and vigor of our people to have an abundance of ripe fruit, and at the same time know that thousands of homes all over the country still have little or none of their own to gather, and when such is the case seldom buy any.

Now it is no more fair to assume the year 1896 to be a guide as to prices than to take the year 1895. The high prices of the latter year were brought about by the crop being short in many sections, though extremely heavy in others; this will not likely occur more often than in the past, when it has averaged once in five years for the last twenty seasons.

The low prices of 1896 may never occur again, as they have never occurred in the past, although we have had, almost, if not quite, as heavy crops in proportion to the markets opened up and the facilities for handling the product. Had we had the crop of 1896 ten years ago we could not have given it away at a price to pay, and so should we have no larger