



CHAPTER II.

FRUIT CULTURE.

Fruit Growing Capacity of Ontario.

"As a Province, I should say we are able to grow any fruits that are grown in the temperate zone." That short sentence, extracted from the evidence of Mr. D. W. Beadle, one of the most eminent pomologists of this continent, briefly, but comprehensively, describes the fruit growing capacity of the Province of Ontario. One district or section may be more favourable to fruit production than another; in some, certain descriptions of fruits cannot be so profitably cultivated as elsewhere; in others the intelligent culturist makes his selection between different varieties, but—these distinctions admitted—it can be broadly and confidently asserted that, in the area comprised within the scope of the Commissioners' investigations, there is no fruit known to temperate climes that may not, somewhere or other, find sure and profitable cultivation.

The Area Embraced in the Evidence.

Starting from the Niagara River, the testimony, oral and documentary, under this head, represents the Niagara District, the Lake Erie counties of Norfolk and Elgin; the peninsula lying between Lakes Erie and St. Clair; the Lake Huron and Georgian Bay region; the inland counties of the south-western peninsula; the district of which Toronto may be regarded as the centre; the range of counties lying between Toronto and the eastern boundary line; the inland northern district around Lindsay and Peterborough; the Ottawa valley from Arnprior to the City of Ottawa; and the new outlying regions of Muskoka and Manitoulin. It will be desirable, in the first instance, to recapitulate briefly the statements in which the fruit growing capacity of the several sections above named are referred to by witnesses, or in reports forwarded to the Commissioners.

The Fruits of the Niagara District.

Mr. Beadle says:—

"I represent here to-day what is known as the Niagara District. I suppose it embraces the peninsula between the two lakes, from Hamilton to the river, but more particularly the area lying below the mountain. I have had opportunities