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THROUGH THE

A Trip Through the Niagara Peninsula by Mr. W. M. Robson

LEIGH FARM - THE WONDERFUL FRUITS OF THAT SECTION-A DE LIGHTFUL TRIP.

The following is part of a letter from the pen of Mr. W. M. Robson:

For some cause the train stopped at St Catharines, probably in deference to the Work done by experienced city, as it is the only one on this peninsula, or perhaps on account of the importuning of some ladies that wished to stay over there, I don't know. Willingly I accepted the alternative of stopping off, and making my way up to this famous manufacturing and fruit-growing centre, St. Catharines, which is said to have received its name from a singular coincidence in connection with its early history. The wives of three of the then prominent men were called Catharine, and each afterwards is said to have claimed the honor of this cly's being called after her. But history says to William Hamilton Merritt, the projector of the Welland canal, it owes its progress and prosperity. banks of the old winding canal, high and Conveyancing in all its forms healthy, with all modern equipments, comforts and conveniences of an up-to-date city. In addition it has famous mineral springs possessing great medicinal propertles, which attract visitors from different parts of the States, where it is known by the significant appellation—the Saratoga of Canada. In this city I found several strolled in and around the suburbs. Noticing the industries, some of which are famous for the quality of their product. Nature has been both bountiful and capricious, for she has dealt with a lavish all of our valuable timbers are indigenous there and grow to immense proportions. The individual instruction and thorough training But its greatest excellence and advantages are in its fertile soil, modified climate and favorable situation. For under such conditions all the most delicious fruits can be grown. Pears, plums, grapes, peaches, quinces and small fruits are in abundance. The peach, grape and quince attain a size and perfection of flavor not to be surpassed in America. And on this peninsula

> bear abundantly. The surrounding landscape is picturesque, and rich in historical associations Orchards and fruit gardens are intermingled with fields of Indian corns, and remnants of grand old woods. In a word, all the conditions seem to be here, to make life enjoyable, and, as I am inform ed with the singular exemption from extremes of heat and cold, desolating floods and tornados. And this beautiful country with such a wealth of horticultural achievments and fruit-growing possibilities is part and parcel of Canada which has been

and Muscat have done well, and produce logic :

splendid burches in favorable seasons.

district can be paid ? But I could attempt

to araw on my imagination and picture

in this neighborhood in a bountiful season.

of globular fruit, rink and white, sun-

painted cheek . f the richest golden hues

gliore me inrough the green foliage. Im-

guation might go back to the fabled

gardens of the Hesperides, only to awake

to the realization of this famed "Edenic"

garden of Ontario, where the English

cherry and nut-bearing trees flourish and

trees drooping gracefully with their load

designated "Our Lady of the Snows." After tea I drove out with a friend to A. G. Hull and Sons' central nursery. The route was a continuation of surprises at the quantity and quality of fruit and he clean and orderly methods of cultivation. On arriving we met with a very cordial reception from Mr. Hull. After a few introductory words we sought the great attraction-the orchard. Here we were astonished and captivated for a time by the number of fine specimens given us Plumbs, pears and peaches were in abundand of the finest quality. By this time we had got among the grapes. Here was another revelation. The Kniffin system is strictly followed. The soil and situation seemed to be favorable to this mode of treatment, for the fruit was a marvel of productiveness, beauty and size. Mr. Hull told us that his grapes We guarantee these Paints to be made from | had captured the coveted red ticket at Genuine Coi as of great covering power. They London for years. I have seen grapes growing in the States and Canada, but to

Next morning I boarded a fast vestibule train and was soon landed at Grimsby station. Stepping off, I felt a sensation of relief that I had succeeded in gaining For sale by McLennan & Co., Lindsay. the point of my pre-conceived route. In

this pleasant mood I walked on towards INES, GRIMSBY, WINONA, HEDER- that grand awe-inspiring feature—the what I did see was par excellence in ceived a pleasant greeting. My object beautiful tribute paid to Montgomery by

And here the langest tarries."

In passing along I realize at every step paradise for the horticulturist.

The public highway running from Ham This city is beautifully situated on the liton to Grimsby has the electric trolley system. I had visited Mr. A. H. Pettit, a gentleman with whom I was acquainted and a worthy decendant of the U.F. loyalists, who journeyed here in search of a "promised land." Although they did not find the "Eshcolian bunch of grapes" they found the conditions which have been well developed by the present occupants. Mr. Pettit is an extensive old friends, and spent a very pleasant fruit grower and a gentleman highly retime with them. During the afternoon I spected. He has filled many honorable rublic positions very acceptably. entering I found him in his fruit house busy packing the famous Gravenstein apples for the early English market. We walked through his orchard which ed hand in this region. In forestry nearly mostly devoted to apples, peaches and berries. Our stroll through was to me a continuation of surprises. To see such uniform productiveness, row after row of great mound-like trees, drooping gracefully everywhere with their load of the finest fruit, perfect in size, shape and color, was a great treat And it is not to be wond ered at, with such an ideal soil. It is rich, moist, deep sandy loam. Such land and such a situation seem to reach the highest ideal of perfection for fruit growit is said the thermometer has never been ing. As if to demonstrate this my comknown to fall more than three degrees panion called my attention to a large below zero. Here fig trees grow and bear apple tree that was robed in fresh green fruit in the open air. They are laid down follage and was bearing a fair crop of and covered with earth in winter. Under fruit. This tree, he said, is over 100 similar treatment the mest delicious grapes years old. It was a rare sight, and a fitsuch as the Black Hamburg, Chasselas, ting reminder of O. W. Holmes famous

"Little of all we value here. What higher reture to this fruit growing Wakes on the mora of the hundredth

Without both feeling and looking queer. the hundreds of scree of peach orchards In fact there is nothing that keeps its

> So far as I know, but a tree and truth. This was certainly verified in this grand old tree. In walking on towards the lake Mr. Pettit pointed out a place that bore traces of a vacated homestead and in tone of veneration and respect he said "That is the place where my great grandfather built his first home. It's a sacred spot, that affection loves to perpetuate, and render inviolable." Mr. Pettit pointed to a party of Indians and their wives, whom he keeps through the whole of the

fruit season for the purpose of gathering it. He spoke in praise of their efficiency. After spending a very pleasant time in conversation with Mr. Pettit I started for my next halting place-Maplehurst fruit farm and experimental grounds, the home of our indefatigable editor of the Horticulturist, and also secretary of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association, Woolverton, M.A. I found Maplehurst delightfully situated just at the base of this verdure-clad mountain, with the convenience of a platform and small station right in front of the lawn. On entering the grounds the first attraction is the home of our secretary, a stately and beautiful residence of modern design with all the latest improvements. On meeting Mr. Woolverton I was invited into the sanctum sanctorum. I found myself In the midst of many fine specimens of apples, gooseberries and other fruit that had been sent by different parties, some as samples of new fruit, etc., and also interesting material of different kinds to give inspiration to the work. It was soon proposed to walk through the fruit crchards, which include apples, pears, peaches and cherries. We first entered a spacious fruit house where several young ladies were engaged in sorting and pusting up peaches for the market. On passing down the broad grassy roadway, on both sides were planted many new and choice fruit trees labeled for experimental purposes, all thrifty and several bearing fine specimens of fcuit. This was a very interesting object lesson as

"The tree is known by the fruit it bears, The lord or peasant by the garb he

was due, we stepped across the lawn and due. the electric car was there. With a pleas- As we were whirling along towards some new beauty marking this land a ant good-bye I embarked for my next Hamilton I noticed that the products halting place, Mr. Geo. W. Cline's the changed to market gardening productions, great plum specialist and his reputatson but the quality and quantity sustained its is deserved and persistently maintained. reputation. Hereat Hamilton my horticul-But this is not his only fruit, for he has tural trip ends, and I trust it is pardonable extensive vineyards and apple and peach for me to say a parting word of advice to orchards. The car stopped right opposite all horticultural societies and lovers of Mr. McCline's and I stepped off and dir- fruit and flowers, to arrange for an ected my steps to a large building. On entering I found it a fruit house and a ient, over this route, from Hamilton to number of men were busy putting up Grimsby. I am sure they will have a rare plums. On enquiring for the proprietor was told by his son that he was taking a short vacation at the park. I said I had called to ask the privilege to look over his famed plum orchard, which was kindly granted at once by this young man who said he would be pleased to accompany me and that we would ride, as he never walked when he could ride. I soon found that the distance and the nature of the ground justified such an expression. Soon we were winding in and out around and about stretches and rows of medium sized thrifty plum trees, loaded with fire luscious frnir, both new and standard kinds. Occasionally coming out on a table land on the mountain side, we got a rangy view over a charming picturesque and fruitful valley. Indeed it is said that from the top of the mountain you can get a view of the most magnificent scenery on this continent. Again we are pursuing our way through what seemed to be a narrow place for a vehicle and frequently had to lift heavily laden boughs, with fruit and sparkling rain drops from the late shower. The route was a perfect maze to me, but an apt illustration of the old adge, "Necessity is the mother of invention," and by the application of skill adapted to the requirements, it has transformed this otherwise tedious and tiresome round into a pleasant and very enjoyable ride. I asked the young man what the approximate yield would be. He said : "We estimate our plum crop to produce between 13000 and 14000 baskets of plums this season." On the best authority I was told that, that crop of plums was sold for over \$4000 dollars in

> I then started for my next acquaintance, Mr. M. Pettit, Winona. In passing along this delightful road everywhere is to be seen orchards, gardens, vineyards and cherry patches, interspersed occasionally with corn or pasture fields, it was literally a valley abounding in the richest and rarest of Canadian fruits that grow to perfection here. In my admiration and enthusiasm I felt the full force and significance of the little American girl's discovery, that Mr. T. H. Race tells of who with her parents were driving through this section of country when she suddenly cried out, "I know papa why you said they are all mean men that go from Canada to the States, for nobody but a mean man would leave this beauti. ful country." I next arrived at the Mountain Valley orchard farm made famous by its extensive vineyards. The grape is a specialty here and is said to exceed all others in extent. But it is not an exclusive crop, for Mr. Pettit has many acres devoted to apples, pears, peaches and berries, I am informed. In walking through the shrubbery up to the house, a fine large structure built on elevated ground commanding an extensive view and convenient to road and electric line, I was anticipating a pleasant recognition, but on enquiry I was disappointed to learn that Mr. Pettit was from home on busi-'Tis ever so in life,

"For pleasures are like poppies spread, You seize the flower, its bloom is shed. Philosophically I made the best of it As the afternoon was very hot, I gladly accepted a seat in a shady nook, and whiled away the intervening trolley time by conversation and observation. Time quickly passed, and the rushing car appeared and stopped for a passenger.

I soon boarded for my next point, which was to be E. D. Smith's, proprietor of the Hederleigh Fruit Farm and Nursery. Winona. Now, riding in the electric cars __13-3.

At this point, Mr. Wolverton was call- has a pleasant and refreshing effect in the village that is so picturesquely situat- ed to the telephone. On leaving he rural districts. We have now arrived at ed, adjacent to lake and mountain. Here wished me to see his pear orchard, some or near the Hederleigh farm. I find I was impressed with its clean, orderly distance further on down the road. In that unlike some of the others I have and thrifty appearance. Another striking this attempt I was caught in a thunder visited, it is some distance in from the characteristic was the size and architect. shower, and had to beat a hasty retreat. line. On alighting and enquiring, ural beauty of many of its public build. But my situation had not been forgotten, group of buildings were pointed out a ings in comparison with its extent, evi- for soon the ubiquitous bicycle was speed- field or so from the track. I started and dence of the advanced conditions that are ing toward me, and I was soon under the soon arrived at the office, a substantial so in keeping with this favored location. protection of a huge family umbrella, for building. On entering I found Mr. E. But objects of interest rapidly presented which I felt grateful. This shower inter- D. Smith full of business, surrounded by themselves to my attention, for above and fered with the pleasure I anticipated in several clerks, all active. After waiting little beyond loomed up majestically looking over the entire grounds. But a few minutes I was recognized and refamed mountain, clothed in all its beauty respect to kinds, culture, bearing capa- was readily surmised and out we started of summer foliage, stretching along for city, arrangement and in point of yield. over the grounds going through long miles, giving protection to the valley be I was told that the estimated apple crop stretches of trellised grape vines loaded low from the cold bleak wind that is so would be about 3000 barrels and 200 of with beautiful bunches of fruit and also damaging to us in our higher latitude. pears together with an unprecedented plums, pears and apples in abundance. As if to make "assurance doubly sure" crop of cherries. From one tree there All indicated culture and care, with a nature has further supplemented this pro- was gathered 360 quarts of beautiful proper knowledge and application to their tection by the great ameliorating and yellow spanish cherries. It is difficult several requirements. We next threaded modifying influence of Lake Ontario for persons living in less favored localties in and amongst the young nursery stock. whose broad expanse of waters washes the to get an adequate conception of the It was represented in great quantity and shores and limits of many of those fruit quantity of fruit produced in the Niagara varieties, all the way from the young farms, extending as they do from the peninsuls. The situation is the choicest, budded or grafted stock to the required mountain side to the lake. Surely such the soil the richest, for centuries have de- shipping size. If I had not been a fruit a combination of benign influences would posited in this valley their rich sandy enthusiast I would have tired ere this, of justify the application to this district that sediment, surely for this end and purpose such repetition of sight-seeing, but I en. After thoroughly enjoying my visit and joyed the whole of it. I had however to the thoroughly generous hospitality of hint that I wanted to catch the next car "Here simmer first unfaulds her robes, Maplehurst, the west bound trolley car for Hamilton and the time was nearly

> annual trip in the fruit season, if conventreat and an enjoyable time. I think this sec ion ought to be designated the Mecca of the truit-lovers and growers of Canada. W. M. ROBSON, Lindsay, Ont.



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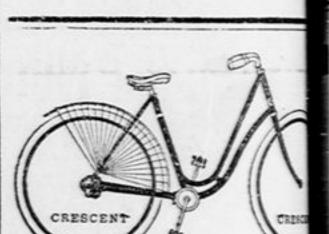
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