

OUR HIGH GRADE FRUIT IN ENGLISH MARKETS.

Now that such earnest attempts are being made to place our very finest fruits in first-class condition on the English markets, it is encouraging to read such testimony as the subjoined, which was addressed to Prof. Robertson.

To Professor JAMES W. ROBERTSON, Commissioner of Agriculture, Ottawa, Canada:

SIR,—I duly received the sample cases of Canadian apples and pears, and a box of peaches which you sent me, and as your representative for the distribution of the fruit in this country informed me that you would be pleased to have my opinion on same, I herewith send you a report which is disinterested, and can therefore be depended upon with the utmost confidence. I am in a position to speak authoritatively upon this subject, as an expert from a market point of view, being the only fruit trade journalist who has, for just upon a quarter of a century, made choice fruit production, packing, and distribution a special study, that is, in the United Kingdom.

APPLES.

The apples were Snows, and when opened, the fruits were found to be in prime condition. Not one was unsound. They were wrapped separately in paper, and had been packed in layers and in rows. A better style for good fruit could not possibly be conceived. The fruits were medium in size. Possibly we want a larger sample on our markets, though the quality was excellent, and I was very much struck with them altogether. The package was rather small for apples. When the parcel came to hand, there was a large supply of ordinarily grown English apples on the market, and this would tend to affect prices. Still, for a large circle of buyers, the small package should form a good attraction. Large quantities of such fine eating apples, packed in these handy boxes, would secure a free sale directly their quality became known to the general public. I mean in the original package. I do not feel inclined to say absolutely that a bushel box would be better, but perhaps both sizes would prove advantageous to the trade generally.

PEARS.

Then as to the pears. They had been put up in the same size of box as the apples, and each fruit had been wrapped in a small square of paper. They were absolutely sound and in grand condition. I kept some of these pears for two weeks, and when fully ripe the flavor was delicious. They were Beurre d'Anjou. From these samples it is clear that Canadian exporters can easily put

high quality pears upon the English markets, and at the right time, too. I am satisfied that for quality, size, clearness of skin, and condition, that they will readily compare with the best Californian and French fruit. A better pear than these Anjou never entered the English markets, and I am confident that a big future lies before the Canadian pear trade in the United Kingdom. I was immensely pleased with these fruits and the prices realized, justifies the commendation I give them. With care in grading they would prove a very serious competitor to the French fruits, as the sample cases under notice were put up in better style, and the fruits were certainly cleaner skinned, and much more dainty as eaters, than the foreign ones referred to.

PEACHES.

Then as to the peaches. These were Elberta. The fruits had been partly covered with paper in which a strip of wadding had been included, so as to protect the fruits from bruising. Under this method, when the lid of the box was taken off, and the layer of wadding removed, the tops of the fruits would be exposed to the view of the buyers. Here the specimens were in fairly good condition, but not what could be termed perfect, the flesh of some being a little discoloured. All in the box I had were, however, eatable, of excellent size, and like the apples and pears, had been well and evenly graded, an important feature in the fruit trade here. The color was good, but the flesh was too fit, if I may expressively put it thus, that is, they needed to be sold in a day or two at least, not being in keeping condition. They were not so juicy as our forced peaches, but the flesh was firmer, and as an advocate of fruit-eating, I claim that these Canadian Elberta peaches are magnificent, and I should like to be able to live on them without anything else for a month. They are very delicious, possess a nutritious flesh, and should prove a great boon to the consumers in all of our cities and towns.

COMMENTS.

My report will be found most encouraging to those on your side who have taken a great interest in the development of the Canadian fruit industry, though the praise given to the packages and their contents is due to merit, and well-deserved. The Canadian fruit growers are to be congratulated upon having the fruit export trade, including packing, shipment and distribution, dealt with in such an admirable manner by the officials of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa. It is my decided opinion that at present the Canadian fruit exports are better put up and more efficiently handled than those from any other colony shipping to the United Kingdom, including Tasmania.

SAMPSON MORGAN.