British Columbia Official Interviewed.

R. H. Palmer, fruit commissioner and freight rate commissioner of British Columbia, was busy early this week superintending the arrangements for the exhibit of British Columbia fruit at the Western Horticultural exhibition. The stage of the Auditorium rink was assigned to British Columbia.

Mr. Palmer says that everything in the line of fruit is good in British Columbia this season, the yield will be about five times as much as we had last year, and we could market fully five times as much as we have for export.

I cannot say at present whether we shall ship to Winnipeg this year, it depends entirely on the consumption of the Northwest Territories. The present outlook is that that trade will more than absorb all we have to supply, particularly in the matter of apples.

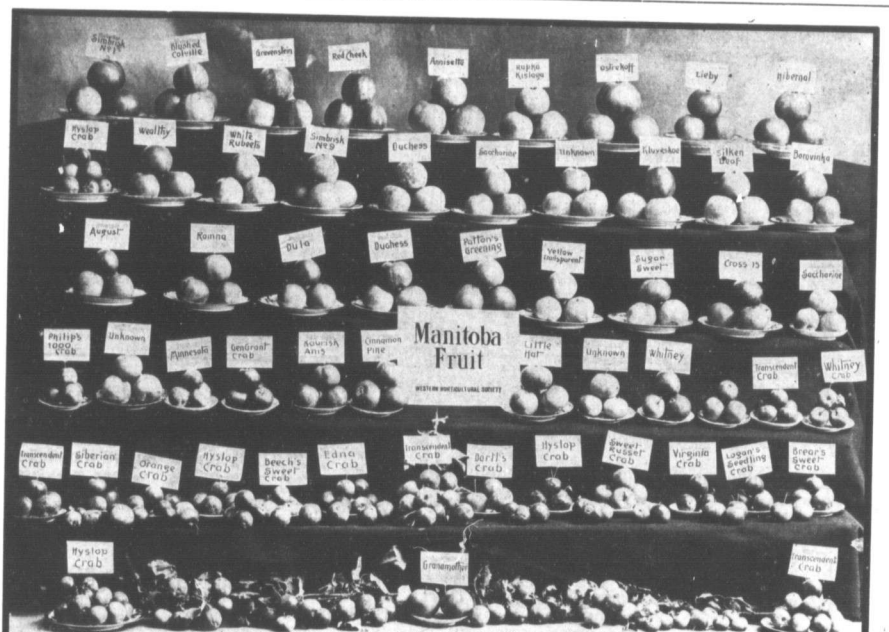
We had a fine market in the Territories last season and the increase of population since then has of course extended it.

The crop of peaches has been especially fine this year. Of course the acreage at present in peach orchards is small, but it is rapidly increasing in the Southern Okanagan district and also in the Similkameen Valley, which is admirably adapted for peach culture, but which is not as yet accessible by rail, but we hope it will be in the very near future.

We shipped a large quantity of strawberries to the Northwest this season, but I do not think any came east of Moose Jaw. We found almost too ready a sale for them as buyers would take anything called a strawberry, and this is apt to make careless growers. However, we trust by another season that we will have larger quantities to ship and that buyers will show more discrimination. We have several small valleys in British Columbia that seem to reproduce identically the same conditions as prevail in the famous Hood River and in some of these men are already experimenting with Clarke's seedings, the variety of berry so successfully grown in Hood river. It is difficult to make people believe how profitable the raising of fruit on even small allotments can be made. Some idea may be gathered from the fact, personally known to me, that, one man sold $1,000 from one and one-quarter acres of ground.

We are following the plan of last year and sending an expert through the province to give instruction in the proper methods of packing according to the California standards. One difficulty we labor under this year is shortage of help. The fruit comes in with a rush and it is very difficult to get a sufficient number of pickers and packers.

Asked as to the outlook for butter in British Columbia, Mr. Palmer said —"A great deal of Dominion government N. W. creamery butter is going on the British Columbia market, chiefly for the northern and mining camp trade, and I understood from Mr. Marker, dairy superintendent at Calgary, that prices had been very satisfactory. Our own output of butter has greatly increased this season, several new creameries having been erected, and the season has been longer, the pasturage having remained green and lush right through the summer, which is unusual. The price cutting among local creameries that was so disastrous to trade in the spring arose from a desire on the part of the various creameries to capture the Victoria market. The three creameries on the island have practically captured their home market, and I do not think it will happen again. But our local made will undoubtedly increase and, of course, fresh made brick creamery will always command first place for local consumption.



Apples Grown in Manitoba, as Exhibited in Winnipeg on August 30, Last Year.

The Salmon Pack.

Coast papers give the following news of the salmon pack this week:

Mr. R. W. Winch places the salmon pack of Puget Sound at 250,000 cases. Mr. Winch explains that totalled up the sixteen canneries on Puget Sound would aggregate a pack of about 300,000, but when it is taken into consideration that the majority of the pack of each cannery will be half pound tins the aggregate would not represent more than a quarter of a million for commercial statistic purposes. The Pacific Packing & Navigation company put up 130,000 cases; the Carlisle Packing Company, 8,000; Chuckanuck Packing Company, 5,000; and Fadlalgo Island Packing Company, 35,000. Twelve other canneries make up the balance of the pack. The figures for the Fraser river are given as 250,000 cases also. Puget Sound canneries in years gone by did not pack a quarter of the Fraser river pack. They, however, improved every year to year until last year, when they led the Fraser river. This year is the first year they have fallen off in comparison with the neighborhood of 230,000 cases, which, for northern waters, is considered very satisfactory. But it is on the Fraser and on the Sound that the big shortage will be felt. The total pack on the Fraser river is not expected to exceed 280,000 cases. Contrasting this with what was put up last year on the Fraser, and it will be seen at once that the season has been a very poor one.

Last year the pack on the river was 990,252 cases, while that on the Sound for the same season is given as 1,105,000 cases, as against 300,000 cases, the estimated output of the canneries this year. The Sound canneries have taken considerable alarm over the manner in which the run has set this year, and officials of the different establishments have been exploiting Canadian waters to quite an extent during the last week. It is stated that the English market has already been supplied of the sockeye pack. The sockeye run is over and cohoes are being taken in the Puget Sound traps.—Victoria Colonist.

The Victoria Times says: That the price of salmon will advance in the near future is the expectations of probably every canner in the province, or in fact on the coast. One who is prominently identified with the business said this morning that he expected to see quotations increase a dollar a box. After the Eastern, Australian and home markets have been supplied there will, he stated, be comparatively few fish for shipment to the United Kingdom, and probably the fleet, chartered will suffice to carry all.

The conditions which now indicate these facts can be judged with some degree of exactness, for it is pretty generally conceded that the run of fish is nearing an end. Indeed, at one point in the province—Rivers Inlet—fishing operations have already been suspended for the present year, while on the Skeena and Naas rivers the packs are about complete. At least, it is sufficiently so as to be closely approximated. The pack, according to a conservative estimate, will be in the Fraser river pack. The sockeye run is over and cohoes are being taken in the Puget Sound traps.—Victoria Colonist.

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The Columbia river fishermen have, it is true, fared well during the season, but it is calculated that it will require all that has been put up there and on the Sound to supply the American market.

The Stewart River Development Co., with a capital of $500,000, are applying for incorporation, with power to develop and supply water by gravitation in that district.