

or quality of the fruit. They do not seem to like the apple-case, because in my opinion, there is no chance for waste and all sorts of things to be deducted. (Hear, hear, and laughter). But that is not the business I have gone into. I have tried it to a limited extent, but I do not intend to give the commission men on the other side the opportunity to take advantage of a good thing when they get it. (Hear, hear). The system I follow is to arrange with several firms in London or Liverpool or Glasgow, to take my cases or samples at a fixed price—and that is the only way you can do the case business. Those cases by the hundred cost 40 cents apiece, with the pasteboard interiors. I buy up the right to fill cases in the orchard, and we always calculate $2\frac{1}{2}$ cases to a packed barrelful. The case holds over a bushel and less than a bushel and a half. I have three sizes of squares, three sizes of cases. My largest size square takes a large Wealthy; then the next takes a fair-sized Fameuse, not the largest size. The second size is the one I like to work with, and when they are turned out of the case every apple is the same size, and they are just the things that Londoners wish for their dinner table. There is no trouble about packing in cases if you can arrange your agents on the other side. I heard Mr. Woolverton or somebody speak about the necessity of having an agency on the other side.

The SECRETARY: That is to be discussed to-morrow; we have been speaking of it.

Mr. SHEPHERD: A firm has been started lately called the Canadian Produce Consignment Company, 18 St. Swithin's Lane, London. I received a letter from them the other day—they had ordered a few cases from me—in which they say: "Your apples are the only ones I have come across on this side that are packed so as to command a full value on the market." He is talking about the first-class market of London amongst the rich people who are willing to pay first-class price for a first-class article. He says further: "I have on many occasions during the time that Sir Charles Tupper was High Commissioner here, drawn his attention to the fact that Canadian produce in most cases fails to obtain a fair market price and ready sales from bad quality of packing. Unless the bulk that is shipped is equal to the early samples of shipments, the ruling price becomes the speculator's bid based on the worst samples." I had not heard of the company until I received this letter, but the gentleman at the head of it is a Canadian, and I fancy if the company is worked on the right basis it is going to be a very good thing for the fruit growers of Canada.

The SECRETARY: You did not tell us whether there was any advantage in shipping in cases, and the prices.

Mr. SHEPHERD: Not to ship to a commission man. I would not advise anybody to do it. This year 7s. 6d. was the highest I got for any case, and shipped in a small way 10 cases. The way I came to ship to these commission men was because I wished to fill up the freight space for which I have a contract with the Allans, and thus secure the special freight rate. 7s. 6d. is not enough to pay for fruit in cases—the expense is too great. About 10s. a case would pay very well; but 7s. 6d. is the highest I got this year from commission men.

Mr. BURREL: Are you satisfied with the case-packing system?

Mr. SHEPHERD: I am satisfied that for delicate fruit like Fameuse it is the only way to put them in first-class condition on the other side. You cannot put them into a barrel. I don't care how carefully you pack that barrel, when you press down the head you must press every apple to a greater or less extent, and when the Fameuse has been bruised it will rot when exposed and in a few weeks they will be all gone; but going in cases they are carried without any bruising. My brother, who resides in Surrey, wrote me last year that in the end of February the Fameuse he had in his boxes were just as good as he ever had in Canada.

The SECRETARY: Kept in ordinary condition?

Mr. SHEPHERD: Just kept in the carriage house outside. Of course there they had no frost; but it shows they keep as long if they are carried in good condition as they would keep here.