

GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

B. C. Fruit-growing.

Some interesting facts regarding the fruit industry in the Prairie Province were brought out at the recent meeting of the British Columbia Fruit-growers' Association. The growing commercial importance of the industry is evidenced by the increased shipments by freight and express, as the following figures show: There were carried by the C.P.R. during 1902, 1,469 tons of fruit, while in 1903, 1,987½ tons were carried; an increase of 35 per cent. The Dominion Express Co. carried in 1897, 70 tons of fruit; in 1901, 378 tons; in 1902, 483 tons; in 1903, over 676 tons. The establishment of a fruit cannery in New Westminster is assured, which will employ forty to fifty hands during the season. This will give growers a market for their surplus fruit. At the present time British Columbia fruit practically rules the markets as far east as Calgary. The markets of the Northwest, though vast and valuable, are very scattered; Winnipeg is the great wholesale center, and is of such importance that it enters into the calculations of fruit-growers all over the continent, consequently the competition there is keen.

B. C. apples have sold for splendid prices in Glasgow, Scotland, but the extra freight charges from the West to Montreal make the venture unsatisfactory.

That the British Columbia growers labor under disabilities similar to those of the Eastern fruit men is shown by the following list mentioned by President Metcalfe in his opening address:

First—The lack of co-operation on the part of our growers in shipping, marketing and maintenance of prices, the purchase of packages, paper, spraying materials, and redress of grievances.

Second—We suffer as fruit-growers from the general lack of knowledge or want of confidence as to the benefits of spraying.

Third—We need canning and evaporating factories to take our surplus fruit—the ripe and lower grade varieties that will not ship long distances, varieties that are subject to the attack of fungous diseases—thereby relieving the markets of these qualities of fruits, and leaving the higher grades and better fruits to sell at increased prices.

Fourth—We suffer from the lack of a proper distribution of our fruits in the different markets we are shipping to.

Fifth—We also require better facilities in transportation and lower rates. The express rates are excessive, and the care and attention given to the handling of fruit on and off express care are careless and unsatisfactory, and ought to be discouraged and corrected.

Here is work for the new Railway Commission.

Productive Strawberries.

W. T. Macoun, Horticulturist, Central Experimental Farm.

The strawberry is, undoubtedly, the most popular fruit in Canada. It is also one of the most, if not the most, profitable fruits to grow. There is, however, a great difference in the productiveness, firmness, appearance and quality of different varieties, and the profits in growing this fruit will depend largely upon the kinds grown. At the Central Experimental Farm nearly 400 named varieties have been tested during the past sixteen years, and a large number of unnamed seedlings. This long and wide experience with varieties makes it possible to recommend certain kinds which have proven superior to others. After having discarded a large number of varieties, a three years' test was made with 110 kinds. Taking the average for the three years, the most productive variety, the Mele, yielded at the rate of 12,709 pounds per acre, and the variety 25th on the list, Arkansas Traveller, yielded at the rate of 7,629 pounds to the acre, a difference of 5,080 pounds per acre between the best and the poorest of 25 varieties. It can readily be seen how important it is to plant productive varieties, providing the fruit is salable. Among the best varieties, both as regards productiveness and other points of merit, are Buster, Glen Mary, Sample, Warfield, Greenville, Bisel, Marie, Bederwood, Lovett, Barton's Eclipse, Bubach, Daisy, Afton, Williams, Thompson's Late, Enhance, Stevens' Early, Howard's No. 41, and Mele, the last-named variety having proved the most productive of all. It is, however, a little under size and rather soft. Further information regarding these varieties will be found in the reports of the Horticulturist, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

"The 'Farmer's Advocate' was good when published twice a month, but now that it is published weekly, it is far ahead of any other journal I have read that I know of. R. LEE."

NOVA SCOTIA FRUIT-GROWERS.

The Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association held their fortieth annual meeting in Bridgewater, Lunenburg County, thus continuing the policy inaugurated last year of moving the yearly convention about from place to place. The policy seems to be a good one in arousing a more general interest, though many think that the meetings should not go out of the Annapolis Valley.

President Spurr, in his annual address commented on the exceptional crop of fruit produced in 1903. It exceeded in quantity and quality anything ever produced before. In his own district, twenty barrels of merchantable fruit from a single tree was no uncommon thing, and, up to December 1st, over 300,000 barrels had been shipped to the English market.

Mr. W. A. McKinnon outlined a plan for power spraying, which the Department of Agriculture intend to carry out in the coming season. Six orchards have been selected in the eastern part of King's County, comprising somewhat less than 4,000 trees. An outfit for power spraying will be placed in this district, and the orchards sprayed four times. The owners agree to pay the actual cost of such spraying up to five cents per tree for each application, the Government guaranteeing that it shall not cost the owners more than that. Mr. McKinnon also urged the need and value of co-operation among fruit-growers in buying all sorts of supplies and in selling their fruits. Goods can be obtained cheaper, and fruit disposed of at better advantage.

Mr. A. McNeil spoke on apples for the commercial market. He says: "Don't choose a novelty!" Ten to one it isn't as good an apple as the standards, and, if it is, it won't sell as well. Plant what your neighbors are selling. If of two varieties you like No. 1 better than No. 2, but your neighbors are selling No. 2, you follow suit! Don't imagine you are going to lead trumps because you have something new. He would make keeping and shipping qualities and appearance more important than quality as tested by the palate. He suggested choosing about four varieties, and recommended as a list suitable for Nova Scotia, the Nonpareil, Baldwin, King, Spy, Golden Russet, Greening, Blenheim, Gravenstein, Ben Davis.

Mr. G. H. Vroom, of Middleton, Fruit Inspector for Nova Scotia, gave a demonstration of apple-packing, taking a barrel of Baldwins, pouring them out upon a packing table, and then repacking them, discussing each step as he proceeded. First—nail head; tighten, nail and clinch bilge hoops. Most injured barrels are due to poor nailing. Second—Put in a pulp-head, preferably one with name and address, etc., printed on it. Put in no excelsior. It has no business in an apple barrel. Third—Lay the head. He would not try to select apples for the head representing all the different sizes in the barrel, but would have them of uniform size; not the largest, but of good size. According to the Fruit Marks Act, the head may be fifteen per cent. better than the contents of the barrel, but must not be more than that. He would also clip the stems from the apples on the head, as otherwise, they bruise the apples and cause decay. Fourth—The barrel was then filled, using a basket shaped like a scoop, from which the apples pour easily without bruising, and giving frequent shakings to settle them into place. The Fruit Marks Act allows only ten per cent. of wormy or defective fruit. This is not intended as a loophole for dishonesty, but to allow for defective fruit which gets in accidentally, and packers make a great mistake who deliberately put in a peck or more of inferior fruit. The excuse made is that the law allows it, and that this mass of poor fruit is just as good as better fruit to press upon. But in the Liverpool market, where sample barrels are emptied out, these culls are seen upon the top of the heap, and, naturally, prejudice buyers; while, so far as the law is concerned, if one intentionally puts in the ten per cent. of defective fruit with those which get in accidentally, he will far exceed the authorized percentage, and will be open to prosecution. Fifth—When the barrel is full, put in a false head, padded with a heavy felt, and shake thoroughly, preparatory to pressing. Then "tail off" the barrel by placing a layer as smooth as possible on the surface; shake again; put on the press, and nail the head, using four-penny nails, one in each corner of each piece of the head, or about ten in all.

Mr. J. D. Sherwood spoke of shipping apples in boxes. He ships only the choicest specimens; wraps in tissue paper; uses a box 10 x 11 x 20 inches, inside lined with every row and every tier of apples tight, and packed in a layer of excelsior on top to fill out space. Choice apples shipped in this way, will pay, and pay well, but it is no use to think that you can ship a crop of inferior apples in boxes and get good prices for them. It will prove disastrous.

Mr. W. A. McKinnon discussed causes of failure in beginning fruit growing. He would use the best part of the farm for the orchard; would buy of local nurseries if possible; would soak trees thoroughly if they arrive

dry; would wait a year rather than put trees into poorly-prepared soil, and would avoid close setting of permanent trees. He thought thirty-five feet each way was a good distance.

Mr. R. W. Starr gave a most interesting address on "Pioneers of Horticulture in Nova Scotia," devoting most of his time to the late Col. Charles Ramage Prescott, who settled in Cornwallis about 1812, and undoubtedly did more than any other one man to establish fruit-growing in the Province on a paying basis. His most important work was in the introduction of varieties, and the following sorts, among others, were introduced by him: Gravenstein, Ribston, Blenheim, Emperor, Pomme Grise, Fameuse, Baldwin, Rhode Island Greening, and Spy.

Capt. C. O. Allen discussed "Marking and Marketing." He would have "Nova Scotia" on every barrel as an advertisement of our apples. Where one X and two X's are used to denote No. 3 and No. 2 first, respectively, he would put a circle or a diamond about the mark to prevent the addition of another X by unscrupulous dealers. He urged the importance of neatness in marking, and would have the stenciling plain and not too much of it on the head of the barrel. The names should be parallel to the seams of the head, and on small stencils there should be a wide margin to prevent smooches on the head outside of the stencil. He said that the Ontario barrel holds about twenty pounds more than the Nova Scotia barrels, and he thought we should have uniformity in this respect. As the Nova Scotia barrel is the legal barrel for the Dominion, it would seem best to adopt that, but if Ontario will not come down to us, we should go up to her standard.

Mr. W. S. Blair discussed conserving soil moisture, and showed several diagrams illustrating the difference in growth of trees in sod, cultivated or in grain.

A resolution was introduced and passed, asking the Minister of Agriculture to call a national convention of the fruit-growers of the Dominion, who should meet at Ottawa and discuss matters in which all are interested, such as uniformity of barrel alluded to above, freight and express rates and classification, transportation problems, etc.

Another resolution was passed to the effect that as the establishment of the Agricultural College at Truro will lead to the closing of the Horticultural School at Wolfville, therefore, resolved that this Association urge the Government to establish an experimental farm somewhere in the Annapolis Valley.

There was a good exhibition of fruit, a very interesting feature being the plates of cranberries from local bogs, which were exceptionally fine, and which have been grown from plants selected from the wild bogs of the locality, the most prolific plants being chosen.

Prizes were awarded as follows:

COUNTY PRIZES.

Lunenburg County—First, J. E. Lantz, Mahone; second, Andrew Wilde, Bridgewater.

Annapolis County—S. & M. Newcombe, Upper Granville.

Queen's County—Geo. H. Hardy, Milton.

Yarmouth County—S. A. Porter, Deerfield.

S. & M. Newcomb received the diploma offered by the Association for the best exhibit from any county. First prize for collection best ten commercial apples went to J. Elliott Smith, of Wolfville, and the prices for the best collection six winter varieties went, first to C. C. Slocum, Middleton, and second to S. & M. Newcombe, Upper Granville.

CASH PRIZES—BARRELS AND BOXES.

Hon. Geo. H. Murray, for best barrel Nonpareil grown in King's Co., \$5.00—J. Elliott Smith, Wolfville.

B. W. Chipman, for best barrel Nonpareil grown in Annapolis Co., \$5.00—E. T. Neiley, Middleton.

J. W. Hebb, for best barrel Nonpareil grown in Lunenburg Co., \$5.00—Wm. Hebb, Bridgewater.

C. E. Kaulbach, M. P., for best barrel King of Tomkins grown in Lunenburg Co., \$5.00—Lazarus Lavender, Waterloo.

H. H. Archibald, for best barrel of King of Tomkins grown in Annapolis Co., \$5.00—E. T. Neiley, Middleton.

Hon. W. H. Owen, best barrel Northern Spy grown in Lunenburg Co., \$5.00—I. S. Hebb, Bridgewater.

W. K. Stoddart, for best barrel Northern Spy grown in Annapolis Co., \$5.00—Robt. Stoddart, Falkland Ridge.

Dugald Stewart, M. D., for best barrel Baldwin grown in Lunenburg Co., \$5.00—Dan'l Wilde, Newcombville.

G. A. Hubley, for best barrel Ben Davis grown in Lunenburg Co., \$5.00—E. Manuel Hebb, Bridgewater.

A. L. Wile, for best barrel Golden Russet grown in Queen's Co., \$5.00—Stephen Mack, Mill Village.

David McKay, for best barrel Golden Russet grown in King's Co., \$5.00—J. Elliott Smith, Wolfville.

A. F. Davison, for best barrel Bishop Pippin or