HORTICULTURE

Fruit Crop Report

A. McNeill, Chief Fruit Division, Ottawa.

Weather conditions have been fairly favorable for plums, peaches and grapes, but not for pears and winter apples.

Apples.—Early and fall fruits are nearly all harvested. Winter fruit ripening prematurely and dropping, reducing the crop already below medium.

Pears.—Are ripening rapidly and

Pears Wrapped and Packed for Shipment

There is a good market for reasonable quantities of Ontario pears in the western provinces. Those grown in Ontario are better in flavor than the pears usually imported into the prairie provinces from the western states. They must be graded and packed honestly. Small shipments are not profitable. Ship with other fruits so as to make carload lots. Co-operation is necessary.

are of good quality. Exports to Great Britain larger than usual.

Peaches.—All are harvested but a few late varieties. Prices have been below the average.

Plums.—Are nearly all harvested except in northern districts.

Grapes.—A full crop of excellent quality. Prices lower than for several years.

Tomatoes. — Have ripened too rapidly for the canning factories, but are of excellent quality.

Cranberries.—Are a good crop. There is a demand for the Canadian berries in the United States.

Insects and the fungous diseases.—These have developed slightly this month. Pink rot has developed to a serious extent.

Winter apples in the United States depreciated in quantity and quality.

Prices for Canadian pears and apples in Great Britain have been good, and shipments larger than usual.—Sept. 30.

Demand for Canadian Cider

W. A. MacKinnon, Canadian Trade Commissioner, Bristol.

From time to time Canadian Trade Commissioners have reported on the opening for good Canadian cider afforded by British markets. It has been pointed out that only a first-class article will meet with a ready and constant demand here, and that even then the best Canadian cider might have for a time to find its chief use in blending with English cider.

The industry here, as is well known, has been brought in certain counties to a high degree of perfection, and is assisted by experiments carried on under the auspices of the National Fruit and Cider Institute. These experiments have involved the trial of a great number of varieties of apples (and concurrently of pears for the making of Perry) and an infinite number of blends in varying quantities; in fact it seems to be accepted that the choicest commercial ciders are always the result of blending, though some varieties of apples produce by themselves a most acceptable beverage.

FEARS SHORTAGE OF CIDER

The Board of Agriculture has recently issued a bulletin on "Cider Orchards," from which the following is an extract:

"The future welfare of the cider-making industry depends upon a large increase in the planting of fresh orchards during the course of the next few years. Probably the majority of the existing orchards have long passed their best days and are now dying out; and few are being planted to fill their places. In unfavorable seasons the supply of fruit is by no means equal to the demand, with the result that prices are high and it is difficult to manufacture pure cider at a reasonable profit. The present state of affairs points to a regular and more serious shortage of cider fruit within a few years, and this, unless something be done, means a decline of the industry from the position it now occupies."

WOULD INCREASE THE DEMAND

It would appear from this that if Canadian cider makers enter seriously and scientifically upon the task of supplying British markets with a first-class product, the demand is likely to increase rather than to fall off, even in years when the English crop and quality are satisfactory. It may be well to repeat that the practice of cider drinking is on the increase in this country. It would not be difficult for any Canadian manufacturer to obtain samples of some of the most popular makes of cider, as known in Devonshire, Somersetshire and other famous cider counties.

Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association

The executive of the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association, together with the delegates from the branch associations, held a meeting on the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto, at which Mr. Thos. Delworth, of Weston, Ont., gave a verbal report in connection with the committee appointed to test seeds. He had seen the Seed Commissioner at Ottawa and also the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and had asked for legislation to prevent the selling of inferior seeds; that seedsmen be required to print on the outside of their packages the percentage of seeds that would germinate, and that, if this percentage is not reached, there should be redress at law. The Deputy Minister thought that the disclaimer which seedsmen print on their packages would protect them whether the seeds were of other varieties and kinds or of low germinative power. Most of our vegetable seeds were imported. Some of these could be grown in Canada. Why not have all grown here that is possible and be inspected while growing? Some seed firms are commencing now to grow them here and are asking the government for a bonus on Canadian grown seed. He thought the work of the seed department at Ottawa could be extended to cover inspection of vegetable seeds. A great deal of money is sent out of Canada every year to purchase foreign-grown seeds.

The committee had visited Guelph and Jordan Harbor and found the work at the former place more practical that in previous years. They are now testing peas and tomatoes. He thought that these tested seeds should be available for the use of the vegetable growers of the province. They were agreeably surprised with the character of the soil at Jordan Harbor which was excellent for vegetables. The only drawback was the difficulty of getting there, the station being too far away.

Mr. C. C. James, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, gave a short address touching on the investigations being held by Mr. McMeans, at Guelph and other practical men in Essex and Prince Edward Counties, into onion and tomato growing, which were intended to help the vegetable growers. There was much to be learned about both these vegetables. Large quantities of American-grown onions are brought into Montreal and the department is enquiring into the reasons for this as that market should be a good field for Ontario-grown onions. In Essex their representative was experimenting with fertilizers on onions with good results.

It was decided to hold a one-day annual convention, on Thursday, November 12th, the directors' meeting to take place the evening previous at 8 p.m. The following is the program:

MORNING SESSION

9 a.m.—President's Address. 9:30 a.m.—Discussion on President's Address. 9:45 a.m.—Report of Secretary-Treasurer.

10 a.m.—Address on "Onion Growing Industry," by A. McMeans, O. A. C., Guelph.

AFTERNOON SESSION

2 p.m.—"Notes on Irrigation." by Professor Macoun, C. E. F., Ottawa.

2:30 p.m.—"Onions," by A. McKenney, Essex.

3:30 p.m.—"Tomatoes," by Mr. Turney, O. A. C., Guelph.

4:30 p.m.—"Combatting Insects and Fungous Foes of Vegetables," by Professor Jarvis, O. A. C., Guelph.

Soil Moisture and its Control

F. T. Shutt, M.A., Chemist, Dominion Experimental Farms.

For five years we conducted experiments in the matter of soil moisture control in the orchards of the Experimental Farm at Ottawa, and similar experiments on the Experimental Farm at Nappan, N. S. The results and the conclusions therefrom, are to be found in extenso in the annual report of the Chemical Division of the Experimental Farms. I need not now, therefore, enter into any detailed account of this work. A few of the more important data and deductions may suffice.

Let us consider, first, the case of an orchard in sod. In 1902, one of our series consisted of two adjoining plots, the one cultivated throughout the season. The other one was in two-year-old-sod. The soil was light and sandy. The rainfall throughout the summer was ample and well distributed. The samples of soil for moisture determination were taken every two weeks, beginning April 19, and represented a depth of 14 inches. These two plots started out with practically the same moisture content, 15.5 per cent., but as the season advanced and the grass grew the demand on the soil moisture in the sod plot became greater and greater. This became evident very soon after May 1. By May 15, there was 50 per cent. more moisture in the first 14 inches of the cultivated plot. At the end of July the difference had increased to almost 100 per cent., or, in other words, there was nearly twice as much moisture in the cultivated soil. The percentages on May 31 were 17.3 and 0.8 respectively. This represents a difference of nearly 200 tons an acre. Throughout the whole growing season differences of a marked character, and always in the same direction, were to be observed. The data are of a most decisive nature, pointing to the heavy call on the moisture of the orchard soil by sod at a time when the trees are most in need of it. It was not until October 18, the close of the season, when vegetable growth had ceased, and there was a liberal rainfall, that the two plots approximated once more in their moisture content.

(Continued next week)

Photographs and articles are always welcomed for publication in these columns.