

and that is the one shown in the illustration herewith.

The Progress Fruit Packing Co., Ltd., was formed by ten farmers, all within a mile of the packing house, who combined in order to market their fruit co-operatively. They subscribed at the rate of fifteen dollars per acre of orcharding, and built a house that is a credit to the neighborhood, and will be an asset for many years to come.

The orchards in that district are, with two exceptions, very young, in fact, they are just beginning to bear. They are planted to apples, pears, plums, prunes, cherries, and all kinds of small fruit. The packing house is used, however, only for the five fruits mentioned, as each man packs his own strawberries, raspberries, loganberries, and currants. All the other fruit is taken to the packing house, where four expert men in charge of a foreman are kept busy throughout the season. These men each pack fifty crates of plums or prunes in a day, and sometimes more. The crates contain twenty pounds each. Of apples and pears they can pack considerably more.

No distinction is made in the fruit from the different orchards, as after it is packed and credited to the grower, it is all mixed together, and the packing company's label attached to every crate. The foreman in charge of the packers examines every crate, and then nails it down so that there is no possibility of any of the fruit getting away in a bad condition.

Much of the fruit is shipped to the prairies by express in preference to freight, as although the cost is greater, the fruit arrives in so much better condition when sent that way. The Progress company makes a specialty of supplying cherries by express. The olive cherry is the principal one grown, it being rather acid. This fruit is much preferred by the buyer to the old-fashioned sweet cherry.

Next to the cherry in popularity among growers is the prune and those varieties of plums which resemble the prunes in all the essentials, yet are finer fruit. In the middle of September of this year, the first full carload of prunes was shipped from Victoria to Regina. Five tons of these were put up by the Progress Packing Co., and the other five tons were supplied by the Victoria Fruit and Produce Exchange. Prunes lend themselves very well to being transported long distances as they are so firm and ripen so slowly.

It is probable that many prairie dwellers know the prune only from having eaten the dried fruit. If they eat the ripe fruit as it comes direct from the orchard, they would realize that they never really tasted a prune before. It is very luscious, a great improvement on the plum.

The experience of the Progress people during the past season in running their packing house is proving a great impetus to the other districts, which are already discussing the advisability of following the example of their neighbors. In the Cowichan district, north from Victoria thirty or forty miles, there is a movement on foot to do this, and as there are a number of fine young orchards growing up in that district, it is probable that they will carry out their plans. There are also several places in the neighborhood of Victoria, notably at Gordon Head and at Saanich, where packing houses are needed, as well as on Salt Spring Island. Steps are being taken to build before next season, and doubtless there will be several by the time the next fruit harvest arrives.

B.C.

H. F. PULLEN.

Making a Forcing Bed

A reader asks us for information as to the making of forcing beds; or, as they are sometimes called, hot beds. An authority on this subject in our own province answers as follows:—

In making hot beds I would not advise putting in the manure in the fall. The writer has tried this on a few occasions, but never successfully. If the manure is drawn out in the fall and placed in a pit, it will freeze solid during the winter months; and it will be from the 1st to the 15th April, generally, before this has thawed out sufficient to cause fermentation and heat. The better plan is to dig a hole or pit, about two feet in depth, let it be two feet longer and two feet wider than the frame that is intended to cover it. This, of course, should be dug this fall if intended to be used the coming spring. Fill up with dry straw or any dry litter that will keep the snow from filling in during the winter. Then about the 10th March, if the spring is favorable, remove straw or set on fire, and commence to fill in with manure from horse stable. Allow the manure to accumulate in the horse stable for three or four days at a time, as in this way sufficient heat will be found in each portion drawn out to keep from freezing if well trodden down. Keep drawing a fresh supply until you have from two to two and a half feet in depth.

Do not use too much dry litter or straw. I like to shake out one third or one half of the long straw, as the shorter will pack closer and retain the heat much longer. It is better, perhaps, to have the back of the bed (which should be North) about two or three inches higher than the front, with an even slope and surface. See that the

whole pit is thoroughly trodden and packed. In this way the sink caused by the heat and fermentation will be even.

Cover the whole bed with a layer of leaf mould about one inch in depth. Then a layer of the same depth of fine sifted soil, well pressed or trodden down. Then on top of this place the frame, which should be from 16 to 18 inches deep at the back, and from 10 to 12 inches deep in front, with even side sloped; have each partition the same width as storm windows used.

In selecting soil, do not dig it from holes or pits, but get surface mould on any plot or garden previously used. If the manure is above the pit, cover over the edges with about the same depth of soil used inside the frame. Put the storm windows on and keep it covered up closely for from three to five days; then throw open and leave open for a day. Rake over the surface of the soil inside of the frame, and this will destroy the weeds if any are in the soil.

In sowing cabbage, cauliflower or tomatoes, I mostly get a round stick and press heavily on the surface of the soil till the stick has sunk from one-quarter to three-eighths of an inch in depth; leave about one inch space between each drill, sow seed thinly, and then cover evenly with fine soil. I like to sow seed thinly, as in this way plants will be found to grow much stronger.

This height of frame will leave about one foot of space between the surface of the soil and the glass, a little more at the back, and a little less at the front. The front of the frame should be at least six inches lower than the back.

In giving air, raise the front of storm window till about level with the back, so that the atmosphere may be changed daily by the admission of air.

The essential for having fairly long and even bottom heat is to have the bed well trodden. I have retained heat in this way from five to six weeks.

Always use manure from horse stable if possible; the next best is from the pig pen, but this is only a poor substitute. Never use the manure from a cow stable for a hot bed.

S. LARCOMBE.

Nelson Fruit Fair

A middle-aged man of perhaps forty years strolled leisurely along the wagon road that skirts Kootenay Lake, pausing occasionally to admire the many beautiful and productive orchards that adorn the shores of the West Arm. Passing by one of more than usual interest, he encountered the owner, and they were drawn into conversation, and in the course of their talk, the traveller intimated that he had passed through this section more than a dozen years ago, and that he had considered the fertile benches and lake front that he now looked upon with delight and admiration as being almost valueless and available only for grazing purposes. In a brief way I have told the story of the rise of the fruit-growing industry in Kootenay.

Somewhere about a dozen years ago, a few pioneers began to experiment with fruit and vegetables on the shores of Kootenay Lake. Although they encountered numerous difficulties on account of their inexperience, their efforts have been crowned with unusual success. Five years ago they held their first fruit fair. It was only a small affair, the products of Nelson and immediate vicinity only being represented. Now it has grown until in this sixth annual fair we have a representative fair of the whole Kootenay country, and at which the products of the many and various industries of Kootenay were on exhibition.

There were two exhibits about the fair that, more than anything else, will illustrate what the district is capable of doing. One was a scion of all this year's growth, ten feet four inches long. This was brought down from near Kaslo, and has already been referred to in connection with the Kaslo fair. The other was the fact that the Wealthy apples, which carried off the first prize, were grown on trees planted just three years ago last spring.

What do you think of a squash weighing one hundred and sixty pounds? This was the weight of a real monster on exhibition from New Denver. No evidence was to hand as to what method of cultivation produced this result. But, the result was there.

Some giant cabbages from Fruitvale also had their share of attention. A collection of unusually large potatoes were much admired. A collection of tomatoes from the Lower Arrow Lake demonstrated what can be done in growing this vegetable. They were of good size, and there were samples of both red and white. There were also a number of good samples of corn, and from Columbia Gardens there was on exhibition a corn stalk measuring thirteen feet two inches in height. All told, the strictly vegetable exhibit was a splendid one, and could hardly be surpassed anywhere.

The Shaughnessy Cup was open to competition for the best display of products from any one ranch, grown and produced by the owner. This was won by Mr. James Johnstone, President of the British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association, and the exhibit included ham, bacon, cheese, butter, pickles, and practically all kinds of vegetables and fruits.

The most interest centred in the award of the District Challenge Cup. There were five districts competing. For some reason or another Creston did not send an exhibit. The cup was won by Kaslo district. This is the second time for Kaslo to win this honor, as she won the cup two years ago. It is also the second honor for Kaslo this season, as at the Kootenay Lake Fruit Fair, held at Kaslo, she also won the Grand Challenge Cup. The competition was very keen, and the judges were not a little puzzled in making the award.

His Excellency Earl Grey was present on the last evening of the fair, having come up in a launch from his ranch at Boswell, and he expressed himself as highly pleased with the character of the Kaslo exhibit, it having been preserved in its entirety for him to see.

The fair management are to be congratulated upon securing the services of Mr. J. L. Porter, of Hood River, as one of the judges. In reply to a question, Mr. Porter expressed himself as both surprised and delighted at the excellent character of Kootenay fruit. When asked how it compared with Hood River, he replied that that was hardly a fair question, as the Kootenay at present was where Hood River was fifteen years ago. "You have only a few scattered orchards as yet, and we have thousands of acres in orchard. I would say, though, that I see no reason why, with proper care and attention to the trees, that your district should not in the future be able to make progress along a horticultural line in no less degree than Hood River."

The Winter Banana apples on exhibition were the subject of more than ordinary interest. This was largely because of the very favorable reports on this variety by the Dominion Fruit Division, and also on account of the exceedingly high price that was paid to Hood River growers for this variety last fall. It may not be uninteresting to your readers to mention that this variety brought twelve dollars a box on the Portland market. In a few short weeks this was noised abroad and given wide publicity through the nursery catalogues, and in a few weeks more there was hardly a nursery on the Pacific slope but had sold their entire stock of Winter Banana. The growers who are fortunate enough to have planted this variety are much pleased with it, and the nurserymen report that they are experiencing an unprecedented demand for this new apple, whose flower is so not unlike a banana that it has been given that name. The samples on exhibition at the fair were up to the standard in size, flavor and color, and were much admired.

Another new apple of considerable interest was the Cox's Orange Pippin. This is being grown in Kootenay chiefly because of the unprecedented demand on the London market for this variety. There is some doubt among growers as to the advisability of growing an apple that finds a good market only at a point so far away, and all the disadvantages of transportation have to be taken into account, yet it seems to be in unusual demand this season, so nurserymen report.

The most enthusiastic Kootenay growers do not claim that their district is a good all round peach section, but the peaches on exhibit this year, especially those from Grand Forks, deserve special mention. They were more than the average in size, of good color and excellent flavor. One grower from this section expressed himself as being so well satisfied with their success that he purposed planting next year five acres of peaches.

The Kootenay Jam Factory, a new industry, had a well assorted exhibit. The owners hope in a short time to so extend their operations as to embrace fruit canning as well. There is a large home market for this product in the mining camps, and it will be several years before even the home market can be supplied. Earl Grey was so impressed with the character of the exhibit that he ordered a case for himself.

The exhibit of forest production by the Mountain Lumbermen's Association, which was placed to the right of the entrance in the main building, was a fair criterion of what the Kootenay produces along this line. With the development of the prairie provinces and an ever increasing market, the lumber interests of Kootenay will be no mean factor in its upbuilding.

Taken altogether, the fair was a decided success, and marked another step forward. One prominent gentleman, a resident of one of the winter camps, and who had never visited the fair, intimated that the fruit exhibit was a revelation to him and a practical demonstration of the fact that, while he had always considered mining the only industry in Kootenay worth while, another and very important one had sprung up without its progress exciting his notice. There is no booming in the fruit and land line, but things are going along in a quiet, progressive way that means much. The growers, who after all, by the interchange of ideas, will gain most from the fair, expressed themselves as being well satisfied with the results attained. A well assorted exhibit is being sent to the Provincial Fair at New Westminster, and the result of the awards there will be awaited with much interest.

E. W. D.