

Your Committee also set itself the task of finding an expert packer, but here there were many difficulties in the way. First, I may say, that first-class packers are hard to procure, their services being required in the South, and well paid for. Then, after negotiations were commenced, the reports of the probable plum crop were by no means assuring as to quantity, and the Committee had to make many inquiries in the different districts as to the prospects of the crop. After, however, getting replies from many growers, and seeing for ourselves, we decided that the crop would certainly warrant the services of the expert packer, and we also hoped that we would be able to send to Winnipeg the experimental car.

Accordingly, we obtained the services of Mr. A. T. Bassford, of Vacaville, California, who had excellent credentials from the Earl Fruit Packing Company, J. W. Lelover & Co., as well as Pinkham & McKevitt.

He arrived in Victoria on August 12th, and at once went to work, holding meetings at the following points in the Province:—

PORT HAMMOND.—Small attendance, it being wet and fruit scarce.

HATZIC.—Poor attendance. Rain fell all day, and the fruit was in consequence in no state to pack.

CHILLIWACK.—There was a good attendance here and much interest taken; apples, pears, plums and cherries were packed. The meeting accorded a hearty vote of thanks to the Fruit Growers' Association for the work they were carrying on.

NEW WESTMINSTER.—Owing to the river boat being late, the meeting had to be postponed until the evening. A few attended and showed much interest, while one or two joined in an animated discussion on the conditions surrounding the shipments of California plums in comparison with those here.

LADNER'S LANDING.—Very small attendance. Two of the largest growers were, unfortunately, out of the district.

EBURNE.—The local people seemed to have made no arrangement for their meetings, consequently there was no one present.

AGASSIZ.—Very fair meeting, but comparatively little fruit.

ABBOTSFORD.—Very small meeting, probably partly owing to the rain.

FORT LANGLEY.—The same may be said of this meeting.

SALMON ARM.—Poor attendance and practically no fruit.

KELOWNA.—Only fair attendance, but great interest taken by those present.

VERNON.—Only fair attendance, owing to the rain.

ARMSTRONG.—The same may be said of this meeting.

CHILLIWACK.—The expert packer again visited this district, with two of your Committee, and answered many inquiries regarding the packing of fruit and loading of cars; interest being thoroughly aroused, the growers of this district evidently meant to make the most of Mr. Bassford's presence. It was still wet. Messrs. Webb and Peers gave valuable assistance as a local committee.

SAANICH.—A very fair attendance. Fruit packed.

METCHOSIN.—Good attendance and great interest taken, apples, pears and plums being packed.

DUNCANS.—Very good attendance; apples, pears and plums packed.

NANAIMO.—Small meeting.

SALT SPRING ISLAND.—A small attendance, caused by the many attractions of the local fair.

During the time these meetings were being held the weather was exceeding wet but warm, and at more than one point Brown Rot was found to be prevalent.

Your Committee took the utmost pains to thoroughly sift the *pros* and *cons* connected with the sending of the experimental car to Winnipeg. For this purpose Chilliwack, as being the point from which the bulk of the car of fruit would have to come from, was visited twice. After consultation with many of the largest growers there, and after receiving a report from the expert, your Committee decided not to go behind their advice and determined not to send out a car of plums on the Association's initiative. Accordingly, on the 7th of September, the following circular was sent to all interested:—

"I am in receipt of communication from Mr. T. Wilson, from Winnipeg, who reports that the demand for plums is active at that point, and prices running as high as \$1.40 per case, wholesale, for plums well packed and arriving in good condition. If these prices are maintained, it will permit of the shipping of plums by express and should yield good returns to the grower. This is an important point, as, owing to the wet weather, the Californian

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