

The SECRETARY.—I was at Caledonia station the other day and saw a lot of strawberries that were being shipped in from Buffalo, which were there an hour waiting to be transferred, and the boys and everyone else were helping themselves through the openings. Now, what are we going to do about it?

Mr. WELLINGTON.—We ought to take some concerted action.

Mr. RACE.—I wrote a letter to the express agent telling him I intended to bring the matter up at the next meeting of this Association with a view to having a deputation sent to the government to see if some legislation could not be enacted whereby we could recover damages for this kind of thing. I said that at the present time there was no law that I could put in operation without going to too much trouble and expense. That letter was sent to the head office and I saw the letter sent to the agent in reply to it. It was, to go and see this man and settle his claim at once and have the agitation checked. So it is evident they do not care about having any agitation of that kind. I think their fear of such a thing is the very best proof that we should make a move in that direction.

A MEMBER.—I think the difficulty in making private consignments might be got over by having some kind of package in place of the open baskets. Of course that would not do for the open market, where dealers like to have them covered with material that gives a good appearance, but I think peaches shipped to private individuals might be sent in crates, which could be had at a trifling expense.

Mr. ALLAN.—That would only be an inducement to the Express companies to throw them about. We had a thorough illustration of that at the time of the Colonial Exhibition, when our stuff was sent over in boxes.

Mr. RACE.—I propose that a deputation be appointed from this Association to wait upon whatever government has power in the matter and to see what can be done.

The SECRETARY.—I think we might get something done. I move that a committee be appointed to interview the government in regard to the matter and see if some legislation bearing upon the question cannot be devised. I suggest Messrs. Race, Allen and Cline as members of the committee.

Mr. MORTON.—I apprehend very great difficulties in any scheme such as is asked for. There are only two remedies against the company, a civil one or a criminal one. I very much doubt our getting legislation pointing to a criminal liability, and as for a civil liability it might be said that we have already the same remedy as any other individual. The difficulty at the present time is to prove that the fruit was stolen. The Company, in a case of this kind, would stand on strict legal ground and everything would have to be proved—that the fruit was in perfect condition when shipped, that the damage took place on the way, etc. I have grave doubts as to whether the government would interfere in the matter, but of course it will do no harm to point out the evil.

Mr. CLINE.—I knew a shipper who took a receipt for every package and he did not have any trouble; there were no missing baskets, or, if there were, they were paid for; but it is a good deal of trouble if you are not at the station early enough for the agent to look at it and see that the packages are all right.

Mr. MORTON.—If that is the case then the shippers are more to blame than the express company. By neglecting to get that receipt he is simply putting a premium on dishonesty. I think the shipper should avail himself of every existing means of avoiding the effects of dishonesty, and when he has done that and still suffers it will be soon enough for him to complain.

Mr. WELLINGTON.—That is all very well as to the packages, but it does not apply to the abstraction of a few of the best bunches of grapes from a basket. I do not know what the present legislation is, but I think something might be framed to make the punishment of this pilfering a little more easy than it is. I think the case is a proper one to be investigated by a committee.

The Association then adjourned to meet again in the evening.