

THE HAPPY VALLEY

If prosperity be the gauge of happiness, then we may call the Annapolis Valley the Happy Valley. There is probably no other spot on the earth so prosperous relatively just now as this section of Nova Scotia. To a very large extent the Valley is keeping business alive in the Maritime Provinces at the present time; for other parts of the provinces are feeling the reflex influence of the good times that the fruit growers and farmers between Windsor and Annapolis are experiencing. This is the out tanding piece of cheer that the people in the Maritime Provinces have just now while there is so much of the counsel of despair in the world generally.

That our fruit growers should be able to ship an immense crop of apples very profitably in a year of unusual plenty is a remarkable fact. New York State had an immense crop of excellent apples last autumn, which under ordinary circumstances would have been a very bearish influence on the British market; but scarcity of labor and high cost of barrels in that State counteracted the effect of such an abundance, so that forty per cent. of the New York State crop remained unharvested, the fruit growers there finding that it would not pay them to pick and pack the fruit. Somewhat similar conditions prevailed in Ontario, but the quality of the crop there, because of neglect of the orchards during the war period, was not so good. New York and Ontario are very important factors in the apple trade and of course the developments above referred to have played into the hands of our fruit growers.

This is one aspect of the case. On the other hand our fruit growers, being well organized, through the United Fruit Companies, succeeded in making a very favorable contract with British importers, so that it has been possible to dispose of the entire apple crop of the Annapolis Valley on very favorable terms. Had the fruit growers of New York and Ontario been as well equipped in the selling end of the business, it might have been harder for our fruit growers to make as good a showing as they have done, but as it is, considerable credit for the present satisfactory state of things must be given to the close co-operation that exists among the fruit growers. In the benefit of this we all share. As we have said before the reflex of the fruit growers' prosperity is felt in other parts of this section of Canada.

Then there is the "potato phase" of this story of the Valley's present prosperity. By means of the same organization an export market has been found (principally in Cuba) at very profitable

prices for a good-sized crop of potatoes. While potatoes have gone abegging in other potato-producing sections of Eastern Canada and in the State of Maine, the Valley potatoes have gone to export markets at fair prices. All this was arranged by the same agency that made such an excellent thing out of apples for our fruit growers.

It must be said that while there has been some good luck in the present situation as it affects the fruit growers and potato growers of the Annapolis Valley, there has been a great deal of good management. We think it can be said that foresight was a factor of considerable importance leading up to the present happy state of affairs. While many other fruit growing sections neglected their orchards during the war period, largely because of the high price of materials and a lack of faith in the future, the Annapolis Valley fruit growers, realizing the value of the asset they have in their orchards, and believing that the future would justify their care, kept on spraying. And it did not cost them so much as it would have cost growers in other fruit sections, because, by the same good management exercised in selling their crops, our fruit buying co-operatively they have been able to bid for the lowest possible price and getting it have had an economic advantage over their competitors. As a matter of fact, this is not the only economic advantage they enjoy, for barrels cost them about two-thirds what they cost the fruit growers of New York and Ontario, and this also is to some extent the result of good management, as many of the fruit growers actually "grow" their own stave stock.

We think it can be said that the present situation justifies the United Fruit Companies. Some merchants may protest that the co-operative buying of flour, feed, fertilizer and spraying material takes out of their hands a certain amount of business that they would handle in the ordinary course of events, but after all it is only on these few heavy commodities that they lose business, and it

is narrow-margin business at that; there is plenty of other business to do, and if this co-operative plan works for prosperity it makes for increased business on more profitable and more easily handled lines. Then there is the consumer who complains that he has to pay a dollar or two per barrel more for his apples than if there was more competition among fruit growers in selling. But how many barrels per year does the average consumer buy? And is his own prosperity not increased or at least made more secure by virtue of the success of our fruit growers? Once more, we repeat that their prosperity is reflected in the lot of every one of us. Yes, it was a good day for the Maritime Provinces when the fruit-growers came together in the United Fruit Companies and it must be admitted that at the present time they are the best prop we have shoring up our business structure.—Maritime Merchant.

CHILDREN AT THE MOVIES

(From the Minneapolis Journal.) A recent questionnaire in six Chicago high schools shows that eighty-seven per cent. of the three thousand students attended the movies from one to seven times a week. These students spent nine hundred and twenty dollars a week at the movies, or forty-six thousand dollars a year. Most of them were frank to admit that they preferred the thrillers with gun-plays and hair-breadth escapes. The results of such a questionnaire might, no doubt, be duplicated in other cities. Movie-going is a habit that has a large hold on both young and old. Probably the movies now constitute at least ninety per cent. of the nation's entertainment.

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TURN O' THE YEAR

Katharine Tynan, in Poems
This is the time when bit by bit
The days begin to lengthen sweet
And every minute gained is joy—
And love stirs in the heart of a boy.

This is the time the sun, of late
Content to lie abed till eight,
Lifts up betimes his sleepy head—
And love stirs in the heart of a maid.

This is the time we dock the night
Of a whole hour of candlelight;
When the song of linnet and thrush is heard—
And love stirs in the heart of a bird.

This is the time when sword blades green,
With gold and purple damascene,
Pierce the brown crocus bed a-row—
And love stirs in a heart I know.

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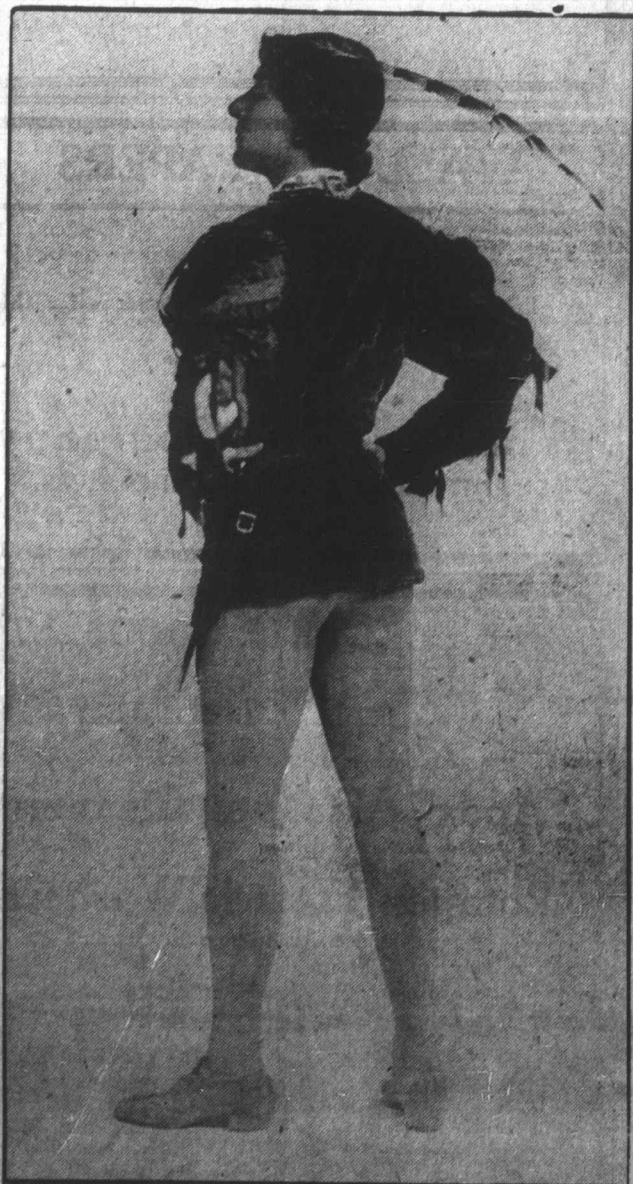
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