

Ontario Fruit Growers Meet in Annual Convention

THE subject of the over-production of fruit was never before so seriously considered as at the annual convention of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association, held November 19 to 21 in the Dairy Amphitheatre of the Canadian National Exhibition grounds. President W. H. Dempsey, of Trenton, referred to the menace of over-production in his opening address.

"The crop in storage this spring," said Mr. Dempsey, "sold at prices far under cost of production in many cases. This was the result of over-production. While last year's was not a full crop by any means, it was heavy enough to cause a slump in prices. All our selling organizations seemed to be helpless in the face of an over-crop, and the prices and profits in which we have so long believed, failed. This year with a crop almost a failure, prices have kept within reason."

Mr. Dempsey then voiced this caution: "We begin to feel that the apple business may soon be over-done, and caution seems necessary on the part of our fellow-investors and on ourselves who already know the business."

Mr. Dempsey believes that peach growers are in much the same position as the apple growers and should make further plantings with extreme caution. Cherries, too, have ceased to advance in price, which is one of the first indications of over-planting. Berries, he said, were high only because of dry weather, which cut the crop in half.

SOME VARIETIES OVER-PLANTED

The subject was referred to again and again during the convention. Prof. J. W. Crow, of the Ontario Agricultural College, admitted the truth of Mr. Dempsey's contention, but with qualifications. Some varieties, he said, had been over-planted, and as an instance he mentioned the Baldwin, one of our best commercial varieties, but one now being produced in as great quantities as the markets can stand. The lowering of tariff duties on apples going into the United States and the lowering of our own tariff walls that may follow consequent upon the demands of Canadian consumers, makes the planting of Baldwins and similar varieties even less advisable, as United States growers are heavy producers in this line. Prof. Crow, however, was not pessimistic. He predicted a great future for the fruit growing industry in Ontario if we will make the production of strictly fancy varieties our specialty. Such varieties are the Snow, McIntosh, and Spy. These varieties are always at the top of the market, and we can produce them in Canada to better advantage than any other country in the world. We will not only have a large and growing home market for these varieties, but an unlimited market as well across the line.

Mr. McIntosh, the originator of the McIntosh apple, was present when Prof. Crow was speaking, and in endorsing his views, said that this fall he had sold in Montreal well packed McIntosh Reds at seven dollars fifty cents a barrel. Mr. Dempsey himself suggested that a great market for first-class Canadian fruit could be found right in our own cities if our people were educated to appreciate the home-grown article. "Toronto people," said Mr. Dempsey, "are paying long prices for foreign fruit of inferior quality to that which they can secure at home."

Mr. Robt. Thompson, of St. Catharines, one of the largest handlers of fruit in Can-

ada, stated most emphatically that he did not believe that there was any danger of fruit growers outrunning the demand for their products. "There are consumers enough in Canada," said he, "to use all the tender fruits that can be grown from Toronto around the head of the lakes and to the Niagara River if all the suitable soil were planted." Mr. Thompson's remedy for apparent over-production in apples last year and in peaches this year is proper distribution. He said that a splendid market could be found in the smaller towns of Ontario and the Eastern province if their needs were intelligently studied and consistently supplied. Speaking from a long experience with Western markets, Mr. Thompson refuted the idea that Ontario fruit is not popular in the West. He said that if one-half of what was published about dishonestly packed Ontario fruit in Western markets were true, that we would have lost that market long ago.

Mr. G. E. McIntosh, the Association's transportation agent, reviewed the transportation situation as it affects the fruit grower. His investigations and conclusions were much the same as those given in his report of last year. Mr. McIntosh expressed his belief that both freight and express tariffs were all the traffic would bear, but he did not consider these the essential points. The real grievances of fruit growers he defined as follows: Lack of railway equipment; inefficient terminal facilities; uncertainty as to rapidity of transit; rough handling; pilfering; and neglect in icing cars or heating them according to the season.

In concluding his remarks—a portion of which appears elsewhere in this issue—Mr. McIntosh made the following recommendations:

First, that an effort be made to have navigation companies handling freight and operating upon Canadian waterways, placed under the jurisdiction of the Railway Commission; second that power be given the Railway Commission to adjudicate claims against railways or express companies not settled in 60 days; third, that the Commission be given jurisdiction in the fixing of penalties for rough handling and pilfering; fourth, that fruit inspectors be also cargo inspectors; fifth, that the express minimum be reduced from 20,000 lbs. to 15,000; sixth, that the railway companies allow free transportation both ways for men sent in charge of heated cars; seventh, that the railway companies be asked to provide a special fruit service from central shipping points in Ontario to Winnipeg during the shipping season.

These recommendations met with the approval of the members and were incorporated in their resolutions. It was decided to print Mr. McIntosh's address in pamphlet form and distribute it among the members of the association, the members of Parliament, and all others who might be interested.

PEACH DISEASES

Two addresses of great educational value were delivered by Mr. L. Caesar, Provincial Entomologist, who is always a popular speaker at fruit growers' conventions. In discussing "Little Peach and Peach Yellows" Mr. Caesar reported a continual and rapid decrease in the number of trees destroyed each year through these diseases. In 1911 sixty thousand trees were destroyed and in 1913 the number had dropped to six thousand. Mr. Caesar appealed to all fruit

growers to assist him in ridding the province of these diseases. The speaker attached but little importance to the so-called cures for Little Peach and Peach Yellows, claiming that the only effectual remedy was eradication by digging and burning the diseased trees.

Mr. Caesar's second address was of wider interest. His subject was "Apple Scab," and in it he gave a survey of conditions prevailing in reference to the disease in the entire province. He called attention to the susceptibility of such varieties as Snow and McIntosh and the immunity of Blenheim, Duchess, and Golden Russet. As a general rule the worst attacks of scab can be warded off by proper spraying.

These addresses will be given almost in full in future issues of *The Canadian Horticulturist*.

DEMONSTRATION ORCHARDS

Intensely practical and interesting was the review given by R. S. Duncan, B.S.A., of the demonstration orchard work being conducted by him in the counties of Northumberland and Durham. Mr. Duncan described in detail the methods adopted for the regeneration of five neglected and apparently worn-out orchards, and then compared the profits made from these orchards both before and after the trees came into the hands of the department. Mr. Duncan made special reference to a two and one-half acre orchard on light, sandy soil. For three years the receipts from this orchard had been three hundred dollars, two hundred dollars, and one hundred dollars respectively. In the succeeding three years, with proper attention, receipts from the same orchard were seven hundred and fifty dollars fifty cents, four hundred and ninety-nine dollars eighty cents, and four hundred and ninety-three dollars and fifty-eight cents. By proper methods the percentage of number one apples was increased from thirty to sixty per cent. to eighty to eighty-seven per cent. Similar results were noted in the other four orchards. The increased profits the speaker attributed to good pruning, cultivation, fertilization, and spraying.

"The Pre-cooling of Fruit" was the subject of an address for which A. B. Stubenrauch, of the United States Department of Agriculture, was slated, but he failed to turn up, and his paper was read by Mr. R. R. Graham, of the O.A.C. The writer based his remarks on experimental work conducted by the United States Bureau of Plant Industry. He pointed out that pre-cooling, while of itself an important measure for the preservation of fruit in good condition, was of real practical value only when it went hand in hand with care in picking and packing the fruit. In fact, most of the paper did not discuss pre-cooling at all, all stress being laid on the necessity of careful handling. As an example of how carefully fruit may be handled, Mr. Stubenrauch made mention of the practice of some far Western growers who wear gloves when handling their apples.

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In British Columbia a systematic effort is now being made to place British Columbia canned fruit on the English market. Little attention as yet has been paid to this phase of fruit marketing by the English fruit brokers and wholesale dealers. By the time that the canning industry has been well established in that province, it is hoped that an interest will be awakened in the Old Country.