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## THE WESTERN FRUIT MARKET

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IT is highly desirable to establish a market for southern Ontario fruit in the north and west. From North Bay northward and westward, through the newly-opened and opening districts of northern Ontario, through Manitoba, and on to the western territories, is a great expanse of country that is being rapidly settled, that in a few years will be populated by millions where now are thousands, and that in all probability will never produce in sufficient quantities the standard fruits of southern Ontario. There the market is, and, so far as it is supplied at present, it is principally supplied by western fruit from British Columbia, Oregon and Washington Territory.

To the opening of that market for Ontario fruit there are two main obstacles: the character of our fruit, and transportation. The summer fruits produced on the western coast differ materially in their shipping qualities from the fruits of Ontario. The extreme dryness of the summer climate on the Pacific coast produces fruit much less juicy than are the fruits of Ontario. Then, western fruits can always be picked in dry weather and packed and shipped dry. Ontario fruits, on the contrary, being on account of the great humidity of our climate more juicy internally and more liable to be moist externally, are much more subject to injury in shipment and to various diseases. This is, of course, more especially true of

the earlier and softer fruits. The writer saw a carload of California fruit unloaded and sold at Ottawa on July 6. There were peaches, plums, cherries and tomatoes. The fruit had come by freight in an Armour refrigerator car, and from the time of picking to that of unloading 11 days had elapsed. All the fruit that could be seen, and presumably the whole carload, was perfect in condition, without bruise or decay of any kind being visible.

This highly gratifying result is due in large part to the dryness of the fruit externally and internally. But intelligent and skilful picking and packing had done their share. It was evident that the fruit had been picked at exactly the right stage of ripeness, for upon arrival it was neither green nor soft nor over ripe: each box of fruit was of uniform ripeness, and therefore must have been selected; all the fruit was carefully packed in the famous California box packages, and the peaches were individually wrapped in paper.

The experience of California fruit growers and shippers has demonstrated the necessity for all this care in selecting and packing such fruits. With our juicier fruits we can reasonably do no less if we are to capture our share of the northwest market.

As to transportation: express rates, while not prohibitive, are exorbitantly high and