

Prince Edward Island Letter

Rev. Father A. E. Burke, Alberton

FOLLOWING closely on the demand made at Ottawa, Inspector Richard Burke, who, unfortunately, has not been retained on the permanent list of fruit inspectors, much as he is needed in that capacity here, will give a series of 12 instruction meetings over the province, four in each county, in the month of June. Mr. Burke was obliged to interrupt this very important work last season, at a time, too, when we needed it worse than ever in our horticultural history. We had gone through a crucial period; great breakdowns were everywhere discernible in our plantations owing to the extraordinary snowfall of the winter of 1905. The people had only started in the orcharding business. A fit of economy struck the department, or some unwise counsel prevailed in the case.

When Dr. James W. Robertson was General Commissioner, knowing P.E.I. better than any other official at Ottawa, and being desirous of helping her in the restricted matters in which she could successfully engage, there was no trouble in getting the assistance required to promote agricultural interests, from dairying to fruit growing. He loved the Island, and knew she could give a good account of herself in the new field. In the Normal School Hall at Ottawa recently, when all the provinces of the Dominion were represented, the Minister said one thing of P.E.I. apples which we were glad to hear. He said P.E.I. apples may be smaller than those of some of the other provinces, but they are the best colored and best flavored in the world. He might have added, too, that they are the longest keeping apples grown—and this not because they are often of the Ben Davis class!

The change which followed Dr. Robertson's

relinquishment of government work has not been to our advantage. The whole official horticultural work of Canada has been in some way degraded. It cannot be restored properly to its rightful place and set out on the almost infinite field before it, until its chief has direct appeal to the minister, and until there is a Horticultural Commissioner at Ottawa, as well as a Dairy Commissioner, a Seeds Commissioner and a Live Stock Commissioner.

The meetings which Inspector Burke now undertakes should be of great benefit, not only in repairing and enthusing horticulturally, but in ascertaining the actual state of things, and suggesting the means which must be introduced in order to make this fruitful little province what it easily can be made—an orchard from end to end.

We notice a great deal of erosion of fertile soils this year—a great loss of the fertility of field, which the flood unimpeded carries away to the ocean. The planting of trees in needed localities will greatly help this, and the planting of apple areas at proper distances from evergreen windbreaks will indirectly help this work, as well as directly turn in the dollars so essential to successful husbandry everywhere.

There will be considerable planting out of trees this spring as usual. There is no use in doing so if they are not protected against cattle by proper fencing and fertilized like any other crop. Good money is actually thrown away in buying trees to be stuck out in the open, unfenced, unprotected and uncared. Leave the tree-planting till you are ready for it, and get good and ready at once. There is nothing which will do more to make your life enjoyable in this beautiful place than a plantation of apple trees intelligently tended.

The Winnipeg Market

J. J. Philp, D.F.I., Winnipeg

WHEN one begins to contemplate the wonderful strides that the City of Winnipeg is making, one begins to realize that the reality has the realms of romance practically skinned alive. Probably this is not an elegant phrase, but it is true. Winnipeg at the last census had a population of 40,369. By the estimate of the assessment commissioner (and he is very conservative), there are in this city today not less than 97,000 some hundreds of a population, an increase in five years of almost 150 per cent., or in other words, where there were in 1901 two people here, there are now five.

The bank clearings have reached a point where they are the largest in the Dominion; the taxable property increased last year to the extent of \$10,000,000. A year ago it was said that there was a great many more houses being built than was needed; this year up to date the increase is almost double that of last year, and still the patient householder has not received any notice that the burden of rent under which he is laboring, and which is in most cases fully one-third of the average man's salary, is to be reduced.

That the fruit interests have advanced along with the others goes without saying. I have just gathered from the dealers here a count of the number of cars they have severally handled since April 1, and find it reaches the astonishing number of 170 cars of fruit and vegetables, and by vegetables I do not include potatoes and that kind of thing shipped in from provincial points, but pie plant, tomatoes, and new cabbage from the south. About 40 of these cars were bananas, then comes oranges, and all the other varieties of fruit that are in season at this time of the year. One carload of apples

cost on arrival here \$1,632. There is, also, one car of strawberries in the lot. In commenting on this state of affairs the eastern men can judge for themselves whether or not it is worth their while to try to capture the bulk of this trade, but I wish to draw their attention to one or two points, which are very apparent to me, and in doing so I shall "Nothing extenuate, nor set ought down in malice."

The charge has frequently been made that the Winnipeg people are not willing to pay a fair price for a good article. This is manifestly unfair, and can easily be proven to be incorrect, but one must discriminate. There is a vast difference between a disposition to pay a fair price for a first-rate article, and a refusal to be held up for a big price for something that is worth perhaps but little more than the freight.

In writing these letters it is to be distinctly understood that I am voicing nobody's sentiments but my own, and I am writing ex-officio at that. The press reports an extraordinary good show for peaches at Leamington. If this is correct, now is the time to perfect the plans to get them to this market, and not wait till the week they are to be shipped.

This is a ticklish subject to touch, but without wishing to give offence, one cannot but deprecate the sad want of self-reliance that is apparent in the actions of the fruit growers. They have the Railway Commission at their disposal to help them lick the transportation companies into line, and that is a great advantage compared with the conditions that used to obtain in years past.

The prospects for a great and successful business the present season are better than ever before, but it is only by being prepared and

ready to take advantage of the opportunities that one can get their share of the benefits.

If by writing these letters or answering any private communications I can help any one to share in the general prosperity, I shall be only too glad to do all I can.

Montreal Fruit Trade Letter

E. H. Wartman, D.F.I.

Several steamers have left this port for England, but I have heard of no apples going forward on any of them. Usually a few consignments are sent on the first steamers out in May. The reason for none going this year is that number one Spies are worth \$7 a barrel here with no risk to run.

The only new fruit coming in is strawberries. Those from North Carolina are in good condition. The boxes contain full imperial quarts, 32 to the crate. Although they are selling cheap for so early, 11 to 13 cts., the demand is not keen. The weather early in May was too cool.

If berries can be landed in Montreal from Florida and North Carolina in perfect condition, what about our early apples that ripen in July and August, and arrive on our markets in rotten condition? If they were packed in cool storage buildings, instead of outdoors and in heated buildings, and shipped in well-iced cars, they, also, would arrive in good condition. If our numerous apple houses, which are generally close to lakes and rivers, had ice houses to hold a sufficient quantity, not only to cool the packing rooms, but to ice the cars when ready to load, this would help to remedy matters. There could be tanks at proper distances apart in these packing houses to hold about one ton of ice each. If this were done and the building closed, in a few hours the temperature would be low enough to commence work. There would be plenty of men glad to take a contract to put in ice to fill these houses at 25 to 35 cts. per ton. If apples are put up at a temperature of 70 to 80 degrees and never cooled, what could we expect but disaster? When fruit can be cooled so cheaply it never pays to run any risk. Sometimes even in the middle of October a few hot days come. Hot weather at this time frequently does untold harm and results in heavy loss to the fruit shippers.

Our Nova Scotia Letter

G. H. Vroom, D.F.I.

The spring in N.S. has been cold and wet. The rains have been frequent and heavy. North and east winds have helped to retard the work of cultivation and cause vegetation to come along slowly. The past week has been better and the fruit trees are showing considerable life. On some early varieties of apples the bloom is beginning to show.

All kinds of fruit will bloom full, and the prospect for an average crop is exceedingly good. Spraying is being carried on extensively, particularly in the counties of Kings and Hants. The power-spraying outfit is doing good work in Falmouth and giving general satisfaction. The tent caterpillar is very troublesome in this locality as well as the other pests orchardists have to contend with, and the fruit growers are awake and will profit by the demonstrations given this season with the power outfit.

Shipping Green Melons

W. A. Emory, Aldershot

The foolish practice of growers shipping green melons is hurting the melon trade more than anything else. Green melons are fit for nothing else than feeding to hogs. A consumer who buys a green melon never wants another.

We had a good trade in melons in Montreal, but lost it because growers insisted on shipping green melons. We cannot get nearly as high prices as we used to. The fruit inspectors do not seem to know anything about melons or they would stop this practice.