

GROWING, HANDLING and MARKETING of POTATOES

Following is an Address to the New Brunswick Potato Growers Association at Woodstock. It was delivered by Guy G. Porter of Porter-Manzer Co. Ltd. of Perth

Two dominant factors which have helped this province to the enviable position it now occupies as the banner Potato Province of Canada are, undoubtedly, our suitable climate and soil. Neither climate nor soil without hard work will produce potatoes, and hard work, unless properly directed and coupled with scientific knowledge, diligently applied, will not produce the results we are starving for.

Second—Selection of Seed and Ground:

All will admit that it is very necessary to select the seed with the most of care, being sure to use nothing but sound tubers of medium size, free from all diseases. Then, again, it is very important that good, clean ground be selected, in which there are no contagious diseases carried over from season to season. With proper attention to these two important factors, your potato crop will have been started under favorable conditions.

Third—Cultivation and Care While Growing:

It is gratifying to know that in recent years spraying with a proper Bordeaux Mixture has become very prevalent, and that the results from thorough spraying are showing big profit in the way of increased yields and better quality. Improvement in quality is just as necessary as increase in yield, and I am strongly convinced that only as long as we produce the best quality of potatoes possible with all our advantages of soil and climate will we be able to hold first place in the potato industry in Canada.

Fourth—Digging and Delivery to Shippers:

Experience has shown me that nearly ten per cent of the entire potato crop of New Brunswick is spoiled by rough handling between the field and the shipper's warehouse. Many farmers handle their stock so roughly that the entire value of their crop depreciates ten per cent from bruises, cuts, cracks, etc., which later develop deterioration. By rough handling the nice, smooth, sound appearance is lost when the potatoes are delivered at the buying points. Estimating the potato crop at ten million bushels, and estimating this crop at the low price of 25 cents per bushel, the farmers are losing two hundred and fifty thousand dollars annually by rough handling. This amount of money, which is lost through carelessness, would pay the expense of selling the entire crop under proper organization, and would net the province a quarter of a million dollars annually. Farmers, handle your potatoes as you would fruit! They are worth just as much as oranges to-day. I would like to see the government, or some association of shippers or grow-

ers, prepare a pamphlet from time to time, to be distributed among the farmers as well as the shippers, educating both farmers and shippers how the potato crop should be handled. The potato crop is one which can be raised most profitably in this province, providing the waste in raising and marketing could be eliminated. This waste, if converted into dollars and cents, would pay the interest on the debt of the province every year. It is therefore most important, especially at this time of general economizing, that both farmers and shippers learn something about economy in the handling of their potatoes.

Again, in the buying of stock by the shippers there is very little effort to try and improve the standard of quality. The shipper, as a rule, buys indiscriminately everything that is hauled to his warehouse. He seems to work on the idea that it does not pay to be too particular about quality, fearing that he may drive his customer to some other shipper who would accept the poor quality without protest. He overlooks the fact that in accepting a load of poor potatoes he does an injury to the farmer who is bringing to market first-class stock. He dumps them all in the car together, and as a result the good stock, that should have graded No. 1, is mixed with the poor stock, which would grade No. 2, and the result is the whole ear will grade nothing better than No. 2.

Although the growing end and the shipping end of the potato business are separate and apart in every way—so much so that the growers usually take all the profit and the shipper all the loss—still the interests of the potato growers and shippers are so interlocked that the closest cooperation concerning quality would undoubtedly be of advantage to both. Interlocked with their interests, again, are those of the buyer, and indirectly the consumer, the man who puts the butter on your bread.

I believe we should adopt a set of grading rules and a standard of quality. It is now, ninety per cent of the cars we ship grade No. 2, and we are getting the No. 2 in consequence of the lack of organization among growers and shippers. No. 1 stock should be potatoes of a medium size thoroughly screened, free from rots, cuts and bruises. No. 2 stock should be a little smaller than medium and would also include the large rough stock and potatoes that are only slightly bruised or cut. No. 3 stock should never leave the farm, as its commercial value is not as great as its feed value. I have seen potatoes from every province in Canada, and can say without hesitation that our potatoes are in a class by themselves, but in grading and packing we are a century behind the times.

As an illustration let us take the apple crop of Ontario. A few years ago the farmers used to sell their apples in bulk. They were sent to market in carload lots in bulk, and shoveled up with a fork. They sold for a dollar a barrel. One enterprising firm undertook to put up a quality brand in bushel boxes. The neighbors laughed themselves into a hemorrhage when they figured how much the boxes cost, but when they saw this firm get as much for a bushel as they did for a barrel they thought there must be something in it, and development along this line was rapid. Now we find that all Ontario apples are shipped in bushel boxes or barrels, bearing a standard of quality No. 1, No. 2 or No. 3, as the case may be. If a shipper sends in a barrel marked "No. 1" and it contains some No. 3's, the fine is \$50.00 and costs. We see only about one case a year where a shipper gets fined. They have got accustomed to living up to the standard of quality and it comes easy to them now. Why? Simply because they get \$3.00 for No. 1's, \$2.00 for No. 2's, and \$1.00 for No. 3's.

When they dumped everything in a box car in bulk, as we are doing with our potatoes today, their orchards were growing up in weeds. The farmers would not pick the apples, but shook the trees and let the cows in; these wasteful methods are things of the past; they have been educated to market their crop in a

more profitable manner. Old orchards are being restored and orchard land has increased in value from two to four hundred per cent.

We are today in the same shape as the Ontario apple growers were forty years ago. The waste each year from not having a standard of quality is criminal. Our potato crop is not bringing more than fifty per cent of its real value, simply because we have no standard of quality, no grading regulations—in fact, no efficient organization behind the potato industry. If we had grading regulation and a standard of quality to live up to, backed up by organized control, either government or association, it would be but a short time before seventy-five per cent of our entire crop would grade No. 1. The farmers would know that bruised and small potatoes would not sell to advantage, and would take more care in handling their crop. Each farmer would do his best to market his crop under No. 1 classification, and in a very short time New Brunswick potatoes would be known in all the markets of the world as "The Best."

If this grading of potatoes were carried out, the crop would bring hundreds of thousands of dollars more every year to the farmers of this province, and the value of their farms would increase by leaps and bounds. Our competitors in every province would get so little demand for their potatoes that they would quit the potato business and go in for other lines. The potato would soon be the most important crop of the province, and New Brunswick would continue to grow in prominence on the map of North America. We must take advantage of our opportunities. We must take better care of our stock. We must grade and pack our potatoes better, so that we will have the best to offer on any market that requires our goods.

I do not believe you can educate a farmer or a shipper through sentiment, friendship, or politics; the only way to appeal to them is through their pocketbooks—show them how it will be to their advantage to grow and grade their stock in the proper manner, just as the apple growers of Ontario were shown. If this is done, both growers and shippers will become rich, standards of quality will be maintained, and progress will be rapid. I also believe we should abandon the practice of shipping in bulk. Our potatoes should be graded, put up in either bags or barrels, and marked No. 1 or No. 2, as the case may be. If this were done, we would be able to market our stock to much better advantage.

The remainder of this able and valuable address will be printed in next week's paper. It deals with an important phase of the question—"Marketing the Crop."

Thomas H. Phair

Thomas H. Phair, of Presque Isle, well known in New Brunswick as an owner of horses, passed away Thursday night at Camp Quigley, Square Lake, near Presque Isle. Death followed a paralytic shock. The deceased was aged sixty-six years, and was one of the prominent business men of northern Maine.

Snow on the Nepisquit

Charles Cremin, the well known guide, who has been on a trip to his sporting camps on the headwaters of the Nepisquit, has returned home to spend a few days with his family. He says that there is still a foot of snow in a

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Especially at this season of the year digestion lags, appetite fails, you do not get the good of the food you eat and vitality is consequently lowered. You feel the effects in loss of energy and ambition, feelings of fatigue come over you and you lack in courage and good cheer.

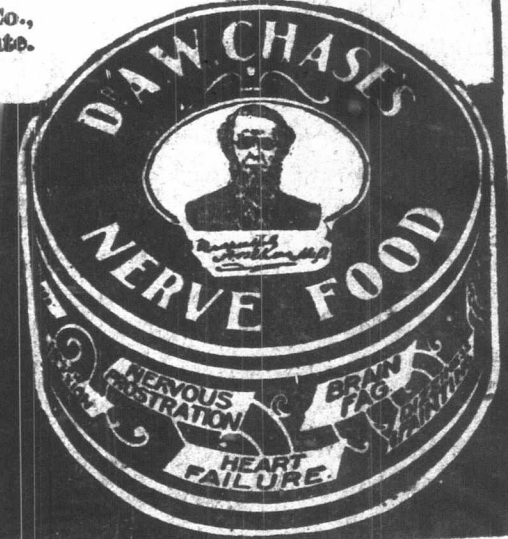
Eating more will not help you, for you must have nourishment in an easily assimilated condition so that it may be taken up by the blood stream without effort. In short, you need such assistance as is best afforded by Dr. Chase's Nerve Food.

By using this food cure you enrich the blood and supply nourishment directly to the starved nervous system. The nerves which control the process of digestion are invigorated, digestion is improved, appetite sharpened, and gradually you are restored to health and vigor.

This is Nature's way. Dr. Chase's Nerve Food supplies the elements and the processes of Nature convert these elements into new, rich blood and new nerve force. You cannot fail to be benefited by such treatment, and the results obtained are lasting.

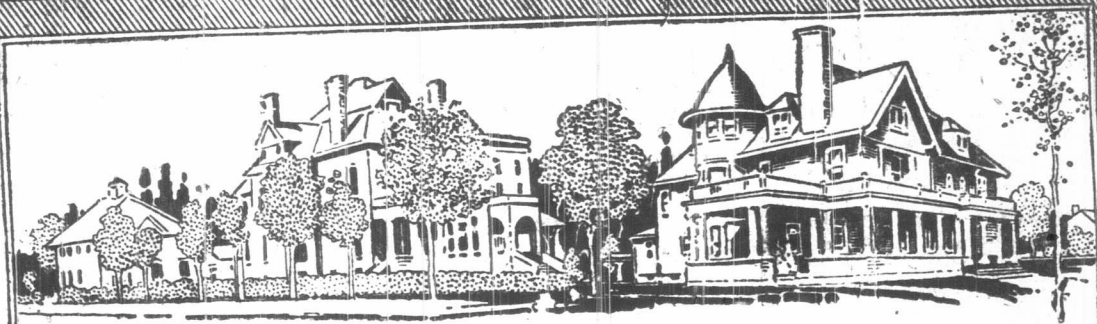
50 cents a box, 6 for \$2.50, all dealers, or Edmanston, Bates & Co., Limited, Toronto. Do not be talked into accepting a substitute. Imitations disappoint.

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section of the country which he visited. The Bathurst Lumber Company's drive on the Nepisquit, was at Indian Falls when Mr. Cremin left for home, and was in a fair way to get out. The Tobique drives are also in safe water. Mr. Cremin, while at his camps, put out thirty bear traps and expects to make quite a catch during the next few weeks. Mail.



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H. N. Boyer, Hartland, N. B.



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