

British Columbia at the present time is in a very healthy state. There is room in many of the districts of the Province for the profitable operation of efficient canneries and jam-factories. These must be economically and properly managed, but, if so handled, they will prove excellent investments, and will do much to afford stability to the industry. The development of the so-called by-product industries will be a most important one in our fruit industry.

The crop of large fruits in 1913 is not likely to be as great, either relatively or absolutely, as that of 1912, owing to the natural reaction which always follows an exceedingly good crop. If the same is true, as it undoubtedly will be, in the North-west States, it will give our growers an ample opportunity to prepare for the great crop which we would logically expect in 1914.

The prices of many lines of fruits were low in 1912, and the following reasons seem the most important: The very large crop in the North-west States, combined with unsatisfactory market conditions in the United States, tight money, and marketing organizations incapable of handling the task, a consequent flooding of Canadian markets with fruits either at low prices or on consignment; softness of many of our fruits, due to the unusually wet summer; a bumper crop in British Columbia, extending beyond the abilities of our organizations under the conditions; some minor handicaps in competition, such as different packages, different marks, different grades, etc., from those used by our competitors; the extension of our fruit business into new markets.

Undoubtedly there must be created a marketing organization fitted to cope with such conditions as existed this year as far as that is possible. There must also be an increase in the quality of our various grades. Just as 1912 was a tremendous improvement over 1911, so there must be an advance in 1913 and 1914.

The one thing which will do more than all other factors to make our marketing conditions more satisfactory is the natural growth of the business. With increased production, better development, organization, with better trained labour, and with adaptations to meet our markets, the industry will be put on such a stable basis as those who have little faith in the natural evolution of methods can scarcely credit or realize.

In all the developments which must take place to facilitate the handling of increased crops, and to steady our markets, the key-note must be co-operation. There must be co-operation to increase the supply, to produce a more uniform and better article, to improve the grading and packing; co-operation in prices between different districts, co-operation in the handling and selling of products. Co-operation can be made to decrease the cost of production, to increase the saleability of the product, and to lessen the cost of transportation and of marketing, which are all bound to result in greater profits and a more stable and prosperous industry.

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