

SECOND ANNUAL

The address given by R. C. Brock at the meeting in the court house on Friday evening of the Kootenai Fruit Growers' association, was admittedly of so high a character, and contained so much of general interest to the community at large, that The Daily News obtained a verbatim report and this morning places the same before its readers.

Mr. Brock has been appointed secretary of the K. F. G. A., and his first public utterance has made a deep impression.

C. W. Busk, Esq., Chairman.
D. C. McMorris, Esq., Secretary.
About 45 members present.
The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The Chairman stated that the meeting had been called to introduce the newly appointed Manager, Mr. Brock, to the members, and to present a scheme with regard to finances that had been drawn up by the Directors.

The resolution proposed by Mr. Ford of which notice was given at the last meeting, to amend the provisions of the constitution relating to the election of Directors, was read by the secretary.

Mr. Ford—The idea is to avoid the possibility of an entirely new board being appointed at any time, which may not be conversant with the business of the preceding year.

Mr. Johnston—The arrangement proposed at least half of the Directors will be familiar with what has been done in the previous year; it assures a stability which is not otherwise obtainable.

Mr. Hulbert—I do not see the advantage of the plan proposed. If you have elections annually you choose the most suitable men.

Mr. Johnston—It sometimes happens however, that the man who receives the most votes is found to be inefficient in practice. Under the system proposed you can select the men who have proved to be most capable.

With the permission of the meeting, Mr. Ford amended his motion to read as follows:

"That at each annual meeting six of the members composing the Board of Directors for the last preceding year, be elected to serve for the coming year and after that elections be held to replace the retiring directors, who shall also be eligible for re-election."

Seconded by James Johnstone, Esq., and carried unanimously.

A resolution proposed by Capt. McMorris, of which notice had been given at the previous meeting, was read, as follows:

"That the date of the annual meeting be fixed for the first Wednesday in February in each and every year, and that the financial year end on the 31st of December in each and every year."

Seconded by Capt. Paddon.
Mr. Ford—What the date of the annual meeting was the first Wednesday in March it brought the election of directors on in the midst of negotiations regarding the coming season's business.

It might be that the newly elected Directors chose to adopt a policy entirely different from that of their predecessors, in which case it was necessary to start negotiations all over again.

Mr. Johnston—One reason we wish the Board of Directors elected as early as possible, is in order that boxes, etc., could be arranged for early and members could work on them during the winter. I think the solution of this difficulty would be for the Directors to consider that the date proposed overcomes both these difficulties and is most suitable.

Mr. Brock—I think December 31st is the most convenient date that can be found for the closing of the financial year.

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in order to get orders from the best firms they must be in a position to guarantee that they will get the product of certain acreage, we cannot guarantee the crop, of course, but the representatives of the Exchange must be able to guarantee the fulfillment of our engagements unless prevented by natural causes.

Mr. Russell—Call attention to sub-section A of (1).

"One of the objects of the Association," etc.

Mr. Hulbert—Would this apply to one who like Mr. Johnstone, for example, was acting as manager or representative of someone else who was not a member of the Association?

Mr. Johnston—I think if one were representing anyone not a member of the Association it would not apply, so far as that non-member was concerned; but they ought to be a member.

Mr. Russell—It is to apply to jams and preserves. I should like to have it plainly understood so that people may not go into it except with their eyes open.

Mr. Russell—Does it conflict with the obligation of the members of the Farmers' Association to ship their garden truck through the Farmers' Association?

Mr. Johnston—I am a member of the Farmers' Association but I did not know there was any such obligation.

Mr. Busk—I do not think this Association can take into consideration the rules of any other society.

A Member—We shall have to drop the Farmers' Association, that is all.

Mr. Russell—If you do not belong to the Farmers' Association, you do not get the bulletins.

Mr. Ford—I strongly favor the motion. What the Association has suffered from hitherto has been lack of support, members would sell privately at the back door all they could, and what they could not sell they would try to sell through the Association.

Motion carried.

Resolution proposed by D. A. Boyd, of which notice was given at last meeting:

"That Directors and delegates of this Association be paid their travelling and hotel expenses incurred while attending to the business of the Association; hotel expenses to be limited to \$2 per day, to take effect on and from the date of the last election, November 6, 1907."

Mr. Boyd—The present action of the Directors who live outside of Nelson has to pay from \$50 to \$100 a year to come down and attend to the business of the Association. The Directors give freely their experience and knowledge and time and to expect them to pay their own expenses as well as a charity organization.

Mr. Johnston—I second the motion. The motion was then put to the meeting, when about ten voted for it and one (Mr. Hulbert) against.

The Chairman pointed out that a majority of two-thirds of the members present was necessary to alter the constitution and bylaws.

Mr. Appleton—I do not think the affairs of the Association are in such a shape that we can afford to pay the Directors' expenses, and I think it would be well to leave this matter over for 12 months.

Mr. Busk—I may say, that some of the Directors have pledged their own credit for the benefit of the Association for the sum of \$85 each; that is a hint of what the Directors are doing for the Association for nothing.

Mr. Hulbert—I oppose this resolution for the reason Mr. Appleton has advanced. The Directors accepted their office with their eyes open. It involves a considerable expense, which, if for one cannot well afford, at the same time we have an association heavy expenses to meet, we want to make it a success, and it is no use riding the horse to death at the start. Let the Association get fairly started, then, if after this year things are in better shape and there is something to share out, the Directors will be willing to accept their portion.

Capt. Paddon—I absolutely agree with Mr. Hulbert's remarks.

Mr. Busk—As to the expense, some of the Directors who live in or close to the city would have no expenses, except perhaps meals, but some of your most efficient directors might be men who work in the land, who are far out of town, who have been working on the land for years and are not men of means and are not in a position to spend this money. Take the delegates to the convention at Revelstoke, the expenses were over \$102 each for that. I think the Association should pay the expenses incurred by Directors in connection with its business.

Mr. Russell—I think the matter might be met by a special vote; in cases, for example, where they have an all-night meeting and have to stay over.

Mr. Hulbert—I do not think payment of Directors is a usual thing in such Associations as this. Possibly at the end of the year, if the condition of the finances warrant it, an honorarium is voted, or for some special service.

Mr. Ford—There is no reason why the Directors should not order the boxes for the coming year in the fall if they think it desirable.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution proposed by Capt. Paddon, of which notice was given at the last meeting, was read, as follows:

"All shareholders in the Association who are held to ship all fruit and produce by and through the Association only. Violation of this rule renders the member liable to suspension from the privilege of buying and selling through the association for a period within the discretion of the directors. Any member so disposing of fruits and produce other than through the Association shall be held liable for the regular commission on the amount of sales so made prior to his suspension."

Mr. Hulbert seconded the motion. "If you act on your own account the commission agents will soon catch on, and cut prices."

(Question was asked whether it would apply to jam and preserves. The Chairman and others stated that it would not.)

Mr. Johnston—This bylaw is absolutely essential by reason of our connection with the Central exchange. It has a large staff of men in the field and

cultivation, packing and so on, especially perhaps packing, which I do not think any of us really know thoroughly. We have set out to follow the example of people who have been successful in other places, and we have taken Hood River as our model. To take an example and determine to follow it, is more satisfactory than constant arguing as to what methods are the best. But we are in this position, that whereas older associations have a large product to ship and it only requires a light tax on shipments to provide for the expenses, many of us are chiefly interested at present in getting started on right lines, so that our ranches will be profitable in future, than in selling the product now. At present selling is not difficult with us, on account of our good local market and the quality of our fruit. The matter of chief importance at present, is to correct any mistakes we may have made and start right, and our idea is that a great part of Mr. Brock's salary will be earned by the advice he is able to give us on this point.

Therefore, in devising a system to provide revenue required, in order that it shall not bear too heavily on shipments and so discourage people from joining the Association and that those who have a large acreage under cultivation derive great benefit from Mr. Brock's services in other ways, may contribute fairly to the expenses, this scheme is proposed. As I suggested the scheme, I thought it was a safeguard which I proposed to you, and so the more easily it shall be in the class that will be more heavily taxed this way than by the other method. (Applause.)

Mr. Ford—I propose that there shall be an assessment on the acreage that is either under cultivation, or that it is planned to bring under cultivation during the coming season, that is a matter that will be to some extent voluntary on the part of the members to say how much they will have and about how much they expect to have, so as to arrive at a fair division of the burden.

There will also be a percentage tax on sales and purchases.

We have made a rough estimate of the expenses, including Mr. Brock's salary for travelling expenses, etc.

Mr. Johnston—I have about three acres; I think I will be credited to the members of the Association against their taxes, when the taxes are determined. I shall be glad to start the list with \$50.

Mr. Johnston—I second the motion, with another subscription of the same amount.

Chairman—It might be well to confirm the appointment of Mr. Brock by the directors. I think it would be nice if someone not on the Directorate could be put in to look after the Directors be approved. It would greatly strengthen their hands.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Appleton—Can we settle prices for strawberries picking? I think we should settle the whole case, where we are willing to pay to the manager and executive. It would prevent thoughtlessness or selfishness on the part of anyone, in making up the list of the C. P. R. He is bumping the subject of pickers some time ago and was anxious to know what arrangements would be satisfactory to the growers for getting in pickers during the busy season.

Mr. Johnston—I am going to the Coast on Saturday and shall see Mr. Marpole, the assistant to the 2nd vice-president of the C. P. R. He is bumping the subject of pickers some time ago and was anxious to know what arrangements would be satisfactory to the growers for getting in pickers during the busy season.

Mr. Ford—Are you aware that the pickers you suggest would require the best of accommodation?

Mr. Johnston—I think tents would be suitable.

Mr. Ford—They would be women and children chiefly.

Mr. Johnston—Yes, I think tents and blankets and stoves would be all that is required.

Mr. Ford—The price of picking seems to be increasing every year. It is entirely due to the fact that the man who has his neighbor's place higher than his neighbor. Four years ago I think we paid 30 cents, since then it has started at 30 and 40 and run up to 50 cents and higher. I therefore strongly urge that some figure be decided upon and adhered to. We should also like to know what accommodation will be required.

Mr. Johnston—Mr. Marpole will want to know how many pickers we can use, and he will advertise special rates for certain numbers. The pickers would be under the supervision and distribution of Mr. Brock.

Mr. Brock—As to prices, I suggest that slips be passed out among the members and let them name a minimum price and the most he should pay; that would be the basis for the rate. We should state it publicly before the meeting. From these slips I could arrive at a figure that would be suitable.

Mr. Ford—Mr. Campbell said something about Mr. Wigen's advice being to pay by the hallock instead of by the crate; what was the reason of that?

Mr. Campbell—Mr. Wigen gave a talk and one of his emphatic messages was that we should not stick together. If we make a price we must stick to it and not bid against each other.

Mr. Johnston—I think that it is absolutely essential that we decide upon a price and hold to it. I think from the information I got at the Coast that the C. P. R. will see that we have enough pickers. It would be just as much a breach of faith for us to bid above the price agreed upon as to sell our fruit

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Mr. Ford—I am heartily in favor of the plan proposed. It is so arranged that the cost will not fall unduly on any class, those who are not shipping but that is not done. He made his price \$2.50 for the first six or eight days, then for the next week or so \$3.25 and for the balance of the season \$2.75. At that time he did not spend the extra trouble facing. He made \$1 difference between his first grade and the softer, over-ripe grade. He also has a number of varieties which he is testing and he finds the Warfield the best shipper among them all. One thing he does not like about the Magoon is its large size, it does not pack conveniently. Soft berries he has no use for as shippers; he considers it difficult enough to pack berries well and ship to reach Winnipeg in good condition at the best.

Mr. Hulbert—Can Mr. Brock enlighten us as to the methods adopted at Hood River and the kind of labor they employ?

Mr. Brock—Up to the last few years it has been principally Indians, but lately the railways have followed the plan mentioned by Mr. Johnston of bringing people out from the Cities. Whole families come and they with the Indians have picked the strawberry crop. In Hood River it is very heavy, from 100,000 to 150,000 crates in a season. They have no trouble in getting plenty of pickers and packers.

Mr. Brock—I am not certain; I think they paid it a hallock and the packers the same. During the early part of the season they pack them from the bottom to the top. But during the rush they put them in loose and only pack the top layer. But in doing so they make the top tier a fair representation of what is beneath or very often the larger berries are put at the bottom and the box faced with a average size.

Mr. Boyd—I understand Mr. Wigen does not even face the top during the busy season?

Mr. Brock—So I understand.

Mr. Boyd—What will the B. C. Exchange have to say about that?

Mr. Johnston—I think they will adopt the method recommended by our secretary.

Mr. Smith was asked his idea as to the number of pickers required per acre.

Mr. Smith—I am not certain, we have never really cleaned up.

Mr. Johnston—I have about three acres; I think I will be credited to the members of the Association against their taxes, when the taxes are determined. I shall be glad to start the list with \$50.

Mr. Johnston—I second the motion, with another subscription of the same amount.

Chairman—It might be well to confirm the appointment of Mr. Brock by the directors. I think it would be nice if someone not on the Directorate could be put in to look after the Directors be approved. It would greatly strengthen their hands.

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