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AGRICULTURE

Factors Of Successful Fruit Growing

(The Journal of Agriculture and Horticulture.)

We have now come to the end of the chain, and again we must have an anchor to secure our product. The fruit now produced, picked and packed must be sold, but unless this end of the business is properly conducted all the previous efforts are lost. Selling is a specialized business in itself and might well be left with some qualified person. Many Fruit Association have special selling agents. We find them in both Canada and the United States. The best example is that of the California Fruit Exchange where a very large proportion of the whole output is sold through the Central Organization.

Markets for our fruit might be divided into the three divisions: Home markets, Local or Canadian markets and Export markets. In every case the home trade must first be supplied. Hundreds of bushels are marketed direct from wagons to consumers' homes or to the grocery store. The local trade or the markets of the cities in the East and in the Canadian West take a large percentage and the balance is exported.

The orchards of Quebec (and Ontario) are scattered, and very few men have alone a sufficient quantity to handle a car or a number of car lots, or in this way the cheapest rates are secured and at the same time an impression is made on the markets. The small scattered orchards gave rise at one time to an army of buyers, sometimes two or three in a district, who purchased the apples from the growers, and packed and collected them, and then sold them to a larger buyer who exported them. Competition became very keen and the prices of apples were low. It has been said that the buyers were organized and kept prices down to just above the cost of production. However this may have been, many buyers lost money and were forced out of business. Prices were so low that orchards were neglected and many were cut down and used for fire wood. The industry was in this state when co-operative methods were attempted as a last resort.

by the growers themselves to get out of a hole.

But let us, before discussing co-operation, first trace a barrel of apples from the producer to the consumer in order that we may first more clearly understand where a share of the profits go.

The season of 1912 was a bumper one in the apple business and prices as a rule were low to the producers. At the same time the consumers did not get them at a correspondingly low price. Suppose the grower received \$1.00 for his apples on the tree—about the average of last season; some received as low as 40 cents and some as high as \$1.75. The barrel costs 45 cents and the picking, packing and hauling costs 45 cents more. The average freight rate from Ontario points to Winnipeg is 80 cents a barrel, from Quebec points about \$1.00 or more in ordinary cars—more in refrigerator cars. Thus allowing the dealer or buyer a commission of 25 cents a barrel, the cost laid down in Winnipeg from Ontario and Quebec points would be approximately \$2.55 and \$3.15 respectively. The retail price at this time in Winnipeg was \$5.25 a barrel (Winnipeg Telegram Dec. 27th, 1912).

The question is, who received the \$2.10—difference between f. o. b. price and the price the Winnipeg consumer paid. One dollar should be a fair profit for the wholesaler and retailer, 25 cents for the former and 75 cents for the latter. Fifty cents more for the producer and fifty cents saved the consumer would do something toward satisfying the parties most interested.

Another case that is an extreme example is that given by Mr. Dan Johnson, President of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario, 1912. A woman came to him and said that a buyer had been to see her and had offered a lump sum of \$120.00 for her apples; she had to board the pickers and packers and haul the fruit to the station. It was admitted this was a low price and Mr. Johnson promised to get her into their Association if possible. He was successful and her entire crop was handled by the Association. Some time later Mr. Johnson received a letter from the woman stating that she had received \$1035.00 through the medium of the Association. This was equivalent to \$700.00

or more for her fruit on the tree. These examples are quoted to show that with proper management more money is to be made by being a member of, or selling through, a reliable Association. The profit of at least one middleman is saved. I do not mean that middlemen, dealers, commission merchants etc., are thieves, or that they use any methods but those that are strictly honest business, but it is the business of the farmer and fruit grower to use business methods also and in that way save his profits.

It is stated on good authority that twenty-five percent of the apples grown in Western Ontario in the season of 1912 went to waste. Some were sold for forty cents a barrel, some for seventy-five and some higher in the unorganized districts. The Norfolk County Fruit Growers' Association sold their entire output at \$1.75 a barrel; and I believe the quantity was more than fifty thousand barrels. This Association started in a small way—with less than twenty members, and in six or seven years had grown to over five hundred members. Why this difference between the organized and unorganized districts? Under organization the quantity and the quality of the pack was known. To be sure they were sold to a buyer—a large buyer—and distributed by him. The company that handled the output planned this advertisement before the retailers of the Canadian West: "We have been very fortunate in securing the exclusive handling of Norfolk apples for Western Canada this year. Every barrel is guaranteed to be packed in accordance with the Fruit Makers Act of the Dominion Government. We mean by this that if a barrel is marked No. 1's there is no question about it. It will pass any Dominion Government inspector with flying colors. You have had enough poor apples and we offer you the 'BEST' at a price that is right. Get in touch with us immediately or see one of our representatives. Do not buy your winter apples until you hear from us."

This speaks for itself and needs little comment. What has been done can be repeated, and if experience is worth anything we have this example to follow.

F. M. CLEMENT,
Macdonald College.

Luther Burbank

he has done with electricity, but there is a genius in California who has done wonderful things with plants as Edison has done with electricity. It is Luther Burbank, who is known as the world's most wonderful developer of plants.

He was born in Lancaster, Mass., March 7, 1849. His parents were poor but the public elementary school, and even then he had to work in the factory at odd hours that would bring some income to the family. He cared little, however, for the factory machinery, and as soon as he could conveniently do so he left the factory and began in a small way to raise vegetables for the market. While in his potato patch one day, he noticed on the top of each plant a seed ball which interested him. Some were very good, while others were poor. Selecting the best of these he planted them, and from this selection came the famous "Burbank" variety of potato. It is said that this one variety has been worth many millions of dollars to the world.

While working in his garden he received a partial stroke, and his health became so impaired that he was forced to give up his garden and go west, where he could find a climate in which he could work outdoors the greater part of the year. He sold the rights to his improved potato seed for \$150, and taking a pocket full of them with him, he started west. He made his home in California, about 50 miles north of San Francisco. It was difficult to secure work, and his money was soon gone. At one time, it is said, he was employed to clean out poultry houses on a ranch, and more than once he had to sleep in them. He was forced to work very hard, being exposed to all kinds of weather, and frequently without sufficient food. His weak constitution was unable to stand such a severe life, and he contracted a fever which came near ending his life. A kind lady in

the neighborhood gave him help and encouragement, and he slowly recovered. When his strength came back to him, he secured employment in a small nursery. His love for plants, and his genius for cultivating them, soon made him a valuable man to the nurseryman and to the community. As soon as he could save enough money to acquire a small plot of ground, he started a nursery of his own. The place has since become famous over the whole civilized world as "Santa Rosa, the home of Burbank."

It is said that the first order received by Burbank was for 20,000 young trees. He accepted the order, but he did not have so many trees old enough to bear prunes, and it required about three years to grow the prune trees. But what he did then startled the agricultural world along a new route, and he decided to make the almond tree bear prunes, since the almonds could be planted at once. Therefore, he planted a large quantity of almond seed, inserted prune buds in the almond plants, and in nine months he was ready to fill the order. This achievement brought him money and considerable fame, and within a short time he left the nursery business and became a plant breeder.

For many years his great talent has been devoted to the improvement of trees, flowers, vines, shrubs, vegetables, fruits, and nuts. This improvement is brought about in three ways: (1) By improving old plants, (2) by combining the good qualities of wild plants with those of their cultivated relatives, and (3) by originating entirely new varieties of plants. In carrying out this work he first takes the pollen from one plant and puts it on the stigma of another plant of the same kind; then he gathers and plants the seed which ripens from the flower. He has thus pollinated. As the new plants grow, he selects for perpetuation those which show the qualities he desires.

Constant improvement upon nature has been Mr. Burbank's work. Some of the most wonderful results which he has obtained by scientific breeding and crossing of plants are: A Wisconsin plum as large as a turkey's egg; the plum-cot, which combines the taste and appearance of the plum with those of the apricot; the "shasta daisy," which has several rows of petals and produces flowers 4 inches across; a calla lily 3 feet in circumference and another only 1 inch in diameter; black roses, and an amaryllis as big as a football. In addition, Mr. Burbank has made very many practical improvements on the potato, the plum, the walnut, chestnut, and many kinds of flowers. He has also "invented" several new kinds of berries by ingeniously crossing a number of varieties from all over the world.

On Mr. Burbank's estate in California as many as 80,000 lilacs are in full bloom at the same time. "No horticulturist ever worked on so vast a scale nor in so scientific a manner as Mr. Burbank." He is still busily engaged in producing new fruits, flowers and vegetables to nourish the bodies and please the senses of all humanity.

So successful has he become that the feeling who once did mental service and slept with the chickens is one of the most famous men in the world. Wealth has come to him, as well as fame, and his work is studied by learned men the world over. He knows the habits of plants, as the mechanic knows the movement of machinery, as the sailor knows the motion of the waves and the wind, and as you or I know the peculiarities of our neighbors.

Bulletin U. S. Bureau of Education.

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