

Ontario Fruit Growers' Association.

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

The thirty-eighth annual meeting of this Association was held in St. Catharines, Ont., on Dec. 1st and 2nd. As this is the first time for a good many years that the meetings have been held in a section of the country so devoted to fruit as is the Niagara peninsula, an unusually wide interest was taken in the proceedings. Amongst other prominent people present were: Dr. Saunders, Dr. Fletcher and Mr. W. T. Macoun, from Ottawa; Mr. Brodie, of Montreal; Professor C. C. James, of Toronto; Dr. Mills and Professor Hutt, of Guelph; besides the officers of the Association and a large number of representative fruit-growers.

The President, Mr. W. E. Wellington, in his annual address, congratulated the Society on the progress made and expressed satisfaction at the present status of the Association. There were now 4,151 members, an increase of about 1,000 from the previous year. A balance in hand existed of \$784.96. No fewer than 36 horticultural societies were in affiliation with the Provincial Society. Much good work had been accomplished during the past year, notably in the San José scale matter, and that of the export of tender fruits to Great Britain. Both the Hon. Sydney Fisher and the Provincial Government had responded generously and with vigor when appealed to. The fruit experiment stations were now doing excellent work, and the Secretary, Mr. L. Woolverton, was gradually preparing a descriptive book which would deal with all Ontario fruits, and doubtless be of great value to fruit-growers generally.

Dr. Mills, speaking on "Horticulture at Guelph," stated that in spite of the unfavorable climatic conditions they were extending their horticultural department, and had now a considerable orchard of pears, plums, cherries, and even a few peaches. During the past year they had tested over 200 varieties of strawberries, 39 of raspberries, besides currants, gooseberries, and a large variety of flowers. They were also giving far more prominence to horticulture in the lecture room. In vigorous and emphatic tones Dr. Mills then pointed out to the fruit-growers that while all work of this kind was undoubtedly good, and as necessary as it was good, yet the important problem now before the Association was the market problem. Good fruit was now grown, but when a full crop of any particular fruit occurred, glutted markets and profitless returns to the grower resulted. "I tell you, gentlemen," said the speaker in ringing tones, "the Association has not yet done what it should do in this direction: the finding of markets, and the cheap and safe transportation of your fruits, these are the things that demand your instant attention, and your best energies."

Mr. W. T. Macoun, Dominion Horticulturist, read an exhaustive paper detailing the experience at the Central Experimental Farm with Russian fruits. More than 200 varieties of apples, pears, plums and cherries had been planted in 1888. Blight and the severe winter of 1890 had been destructive to a great many of the trees, but later plantings were more successful. A good many of the apple trees had borne, but as a rule the fruit was of a poor quality, and the speaker would not advise planting the Russian apples where other varieties would succeed. What pears had fruited were inferior in quality, becoming soft and mealy on ripening. The results with the Russian plums were equally unsatisfactory. With cherries, however, the case was different. If grafted on hardy stock these Russian cherries were likely to prove a valuable acquisition to the colder districts of Canada. As a general rule they bore well, the fruit being excellent for canning and preserving purposes, and if suitable varieties were planted the season would extend from the middle of June to the end of July. Some of the best were Amarelle Hativ, Shadow Amarelle, Ostheim, Brunseler Braun, Bessarabian, and the dwarf Koslov Morello. In discussion, Mr. Brodie thought two Russian apples were worthy of cultivation. The one was "Golden White," a fall apple not unlike the Northern Spy, and "Regel," which he considered the only good Russian winter apple.

The address by Professor C. C. James, on the "Export of Fruit Pulp," was followed with the closest attention. The possibility of exporting our fruit in a cheaper form and with profitable results ensured a good lively discussion of this paper.

Fruit pulp, it should be explained, is made by the fresh fruit being placed, without the addition of sugar, into large vessels, usually of copper, heated up to a certain temperature, and then hermetically sealed. Such pulp will keep two years without deterioration, and is bought extensively by the great jam manufacturing firms in England. There is a shrinkage of about 15% in converting the raw fruit into pulp. Apricot and raspberry pulp are chiefly in demand. About 1,000 tons of the former were imported last year, chiefly from France, California, and Australia.

Mr. James had made enquiries as to the demand for grape pulp, and read letters from many of the English jam firms on the subject. They were uniformly discouraging in tenor. As to raspberry pulp, England drew a large part of her supply from Tasmania. The price ranged from £20 to £25 a ton; this of course was the long ton, 2,240 lbs.

The discussion which followed brought out the following points: When raspberry pulp was higher than £28 a ton the jam manufacturers practically wouldn't buy. At £40 a ton the price would be equivalent to 5c. per box for the grower; at £20 a ton, the grower, on account of the heaviness of the expenses, would get nothing. "Can Canada do business at £25 a ton?" said Professor Robertson. It was generally conceded that she couldn't. A number asked why we couldn't make jam here and send it across to our English cousins. It was pointed out, however, by Mr. Boulter, of Picton, and by Professor Robertson, that such a plan must result in loss, inasmuch as sugar was so much cheaper there than here.

"Prospects for Export of Tender Fruits" was the title of an address by Professor Robertson, an address which was anticipated more eagerly by the practical fruit-growers than any other on the programme. In some respects the results of the address were as discouraging as those of the fruit pulp question, but there is room for hope in one or two directions. The speaker, in propounding the question, "Can the Canadian grower export his fruit to England profitably?" said it depended more on the man than on the business, whether success was achieved or not. It was the man who studied thoroughly the conditions imposed by British consumers that was likely to succeed. In a general market such as that, staples would in the long run be most profitable. Apples, and even pears, which were used to a considerable extent for cooking, were more in the nature of staples, while grapes, which were used entirely for dessert, would necessarily find a more limited market. Their experience this year confirmed that of 1897, that, first of all, the British buyer demands sound fruit, then he values keeping qualities, next in estimation comes appearance, and lastly flavor. In years to come doubtless the English buyers would look more for special varieties, but meanwhile, if we are ever to get Canadian fruit regularly on that market, these two things are especially requisite,—that the fruit should be sound, and that it should be capable of being kept for some time after arrival. It is precisely these two qualities that have obtained for the inferior Californian product a better price than our own fruit brought. All fruit forwarded this year was forwarded in light cases, 22 in. by 11 in., and 4 in. deep, well ventilated, and holding from 24 to 30 lbs. of fruit, each speci-

horticultural possibilities in that climate. The production of a few crab apples was a considerable feat. Some berries were grown, but for various reasons there could never be a big supply. The United States supplied four-fifths of the fruit used. British Columbia could compete with Ontario in some lines, but we had the advantage as regards distance, and should secure the larger share of the trade. He believed the 25-pound Californian crate was the ideal package for that market; and careful packing and grading were essential to success.

"Results of Spraying in 1898," by Mr. W. M. Orr, gave rise to an interesting discussion, partaken in by Dr. Fletcher, Mr. Brodie, Mr. Tweedle, and others. The consensus of opinion was overwhelmingly in favor of frequent and thorough spraying, the figures adduced in some instances being of the most convincing character.

Mr. E. H. Wartman, of Kingston, spoke on "Grading Fruit for Size," showing the great importance of a uniform sample, and exhibited to the members present a "grader" of his own design.

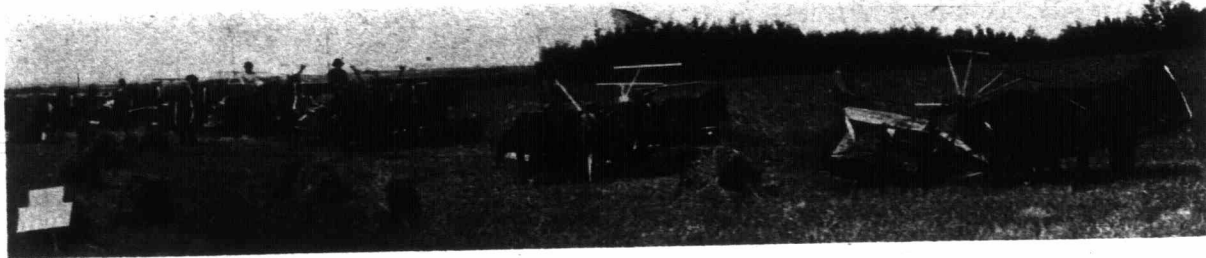
Mr. A. McNeil, in an address on "Co-operation in Fruit Selling," illustrated in a happy way the evils attendant on the present haphazard methods, and put in a forcible plea for combination on the growers' part.

Mr. Armstrong, of Queenston, spoke on the pruning of peach trees. He "thinned out" for the first five years or so, and "shortened in" as the trees got older. With the aid of a couple of peach trees and a pruning knife, the speaker illustrated his remarks.

A suggestive paper on "Frauds in Fruit at Fairs" was read by Mr. A. M. Smith. "The Peach Borer" was handled by Mr. M. Burrell, who briefly gave the life history of the insect, describing it technically, and gave results of experiments against its attacks with washes, etc.

Mr. F. G. H. Pattison read a paper on "Is Fruit-growing Conducive to Morality," and Mr. E. Morden dealt with "The Future Fruit-grower." Three very interesting addresses on floriculture were those by Mr. Gammage, on "House Plants"; by Mr. W. T. Macoun, on "Hardy Perennials"; and on "Horticultural Work at the Central Farm," by Dr. Saunders. Lack of space prevents our dealing with those at present.

The officers elected for 1899 were: President, W. E. Wellington; Vice-President, W. M. Orr; Sec.-Treas., L. Woolverton. Directors: W. A. Whitney, R. B. Whyte, G. Nicol, W. Boulter, Th. Beal, E. C. Beman, M. Pettitt, A. M. Smith, J. S. Searf, J. I. Graham, T. H. Race, A. McNeil, and G. C. Caston. Auditors: A. H. Pettitt and Geo. E. Fisher. The Association will meet next year at Whitby.



HARVEST SCENE AT LORD BRASSEY'S FARM, INDIAN HEAD, N.-W. T.

men of which was wrapped in tissue paper. There were sent 324 cases of peaches, about 2,000 of pears, 428 of tomatoes, 441 of grapes, and a few plums and quinces. As to peaches, one small shipment netted \$1.50 a case, but most resulted in a loss. It seems impossible to find exactly the right time to pick the fruit for export. On arrival, some were rotten, some immature and tasteless, some excellent. No fault could be found with the cold storage; the fruit was well cooled before starting, and kept in a suitable temperature during the voyage. During a very hot spell the peaches ripened so quickly on the trees that it became a matter of great difficulty to get them at the right stage. If too ripe they rotted, and if too green they were tasteless and worthless. With pears greater success had been attained. The average net price to the grower was 73c. per case, equivalent to 67c. a basket. This year the pears were somewhat small, and on arrival had to compete with an immense number of French pears, so that the results were decidedly encouraging. Plums were too ripe on arrival, and as England herself produced a large quantity, Canada could only hope for a remunerative price when the English crop failed. Grapes, though getting to the market in good condition, failed to obtain profitable prices. Those sent were the black and red varieties of Rogers and other good sorts. One lot sent to Glasgow netted 84c. for 17 pounds, but the average price was very low. There was still a strong prejudice against the flavor of the grapes, and vast quantities of Spanish grapes were sold very cheaply there. With reference to tomatoes, Prof. Robertson said results were somewhat disappointing. On the whole the shipments entailed a loss. On being taken out of cold storage the tomatoes seemed to collapse, few keeping more than a day or two. The low temperature does not sufficiently retard the maturing process in the case of the tomato, and most of them were too ripe on arrival. A large proportion of the tomatoes for England came from the Canary Islands; they were placed on deck in ventilated boxes and packed in cork dust. Something of this kind might be done with the Canadian product. Cold storage at all events, did not suit the tomato. On the whole, success seemed doubtful, as far as the export of peaches and tomatoes was concerned, but the prospect for pears was hopeful. Dr. Saunders, in his address on "Manitoba and the Northwest Territories as markets for Ontario and British Columbia fruits," dealt exhaustively with geographical features of the country, and gave an interesting description of the climate.

Oxford Stock Show.

The Oxford County Fat Stock Club, which held its fourteenth annual show at Woodstock, Ont., on

Dec. 5th and 6th, unfortunately encountered very unpropitious weather, a heavy snowstorm making the country roads almost impassable, which prevented many local exhibitors from bringing out their animals. The number of entries was therefore small, but superior quality marked the exhibit in many of the sections. In the classes for cattle and sheep there appeared a number of the prize-winners of the previous week's Provincial contest at Brantford. The steer championship was keenly contested for by Messrs. Robson's two-year-old Hereford grade and Mr. Hall's yearling Angus son of Lucetius. The former claimed the victory. The female sweepstakes went to Messrs. Fried's two-year-old Roan Lily, that won first in the Short-horn class at Brantford. She also secured the championship of the show, which entitled her owners to the special silver challenge cup, which had to be won twice by the same exhibitor before it became his property. In 1896 it was won by Mr. Donaldson, and in '97 by Messrs. Fried, to whom it now belongs. Mr. Donaldson had forward a grand six-year-old cow, upon which he received first award in the cow class. The cattle were judged by Jas. Smith, Brantford, and Stephen Williams, Hamilton.

The classification of sheep allowed all long-wooled breeds to show together, as did also the medium wools. The exhibitors in the former class were: Orr & Lillieco, Galt; John Park & Son, Burgessville; Geo. Allen, Oriel; and John Smith, Beachville; who divided the honors. In medium-wools, Messrs. J. H. Jull, Mt. Vernon, and W. H. Beattie, Wilton Grove, met with their well-fitted Oxford and Shrop. flocks and divided honors. Orr & Lillieco were decided to have shown the best pen of four wether lambs, and John Park & Son the best fat sheep, also the best fat lamb. The judges were Wm. Brown, Delaware, and M. Minton, Brantford. The swine exhibit was very limited. Mr. J. E. Brethour had forward a nice pair of bacon York-shires, and won for the second time the challenge cup, which he very generously agreed to allow to be competed for another year rather than claim it without competition. Mr. Donaldson had in six sows, as did also Mr. Hunsley, of Beachville. A very creditable exhibit of dressed poultry was made by H. J. Woodrow, Burgessville, Ont., who filled all the sections with exceedingly praiseworthy fowls, and dressed to the Queen's taste. In the exhibition there were 33-pound geese, 30-pound turkeys, and ducks, and 6-pound chickens. Messrs. J. H. Jull, Derham, and G. N. Harris, Rogers, showed the pigs and poultry.