

Quebec Fruit Growers Meet in Convention

LEADING fruit growers in the province of Quebec rallied at Richmond on December 13, 14, on the occasion of the annual winter meeting of the Pomological and Fruit Growing Society of the province. The sessions were well attended and subjects of live interest to fruit growers were dealt with. For this reason the convention was an important one. The following officers were elected:—Patrons, Hon. S. A. Fisher and Hon. A. Tessier. Hon. pres., W. W. Dunlop, Outremont; Hon. vice-pres., J. M. Fisk, Abbotsford; pres., R. W. Shepherd, of Comoy; vice-pres., J. C. Chapais, of St. Denis; sec.-treas., Dr. H. W. Wood, of St. John's; Directors of districts—District No. 1, G. B. Edwards, of Covey Hill; No. 2, Charles A. Fisk, of Abbotsford; No. 3, J. H. Carter, of Massawippi; No. 4, Mr. Auguste Dupuis, of Village des Aulnais; No. 5, Henri Dumas, of Murray Bay; No. 6, C. P. Newman, of Lachine Locks; No. 7, G. Reynaud, of La Trappe; No. 8, N. E. Jack, of Chateauguay Basin; No. 10, Robert Brodie, of Westmount.

"Commercial Fruit Growing," was discussed by Mr. C. P. Newman, of Lachine Locks, who described conditions that would benefit the export trade. The recent development of apple growing in Quebec has made it necessary to look to foreign markets. It was recommended that apple growing be specialized and not maintained as a side line. Mr. Newman said that apples and other fruits can well be combined, each having a separate piece of ground and being given to special care and cultivation. Thinning of trees and fruit and the growing of fewer varieties were advised.

"The Proper Handling of Our Best Export Apples" was taken up by Mr. R. W. Shepherd, of Comoy. His address was very interesting and will be published in a later issue of THE HORTICULTURIST in full.

Dr. Jas. Fletcher, of the Central Experimental

Farm, Ottawa, spoke on "Injurious Insects." The Codling Moth and San Jose Scale were fully dealt with. Remedies to prevent or lessen their ravages were mentioned. Recent ravages on shade trees by the Tussock moth were also alluded to and immediate action was advised. The most approved methods of destroying it are collecting the conspicuous white egg masses in winter and spraying in summer.

Mr. G. Reynaud, of La Trappe, in a paper on "Soils that may be Devoted to Fruit Growing," pointed out that much land now uncultivated could easily be made profitable by planting fruit trees. Mr. Reynaud is always a favorite speaker at the conventions of the association.

Mr. R. Brodie, of Westmount, gave an excellent paper on "How to Set Out an Orchard." It was claimed that in the past the great fault with Quebec orchards had been that the trees were set too close, and in 15 or 20 years they become overcrowded. This resulted in the branches becoming interlaced and the fruit being off color because of lack of sunshine. Limestone soil was mentioned as being best for apples.

In discussing the treatment best suited to an orchard for the first 10 years, Mr. W. Saxby Blair said that it was not necessary to give extra cultivation or extra fertilizers, but that to get good crops each year a system of cultivation must be followed that will give wood growth early in the season and later on fruit buds.

A resolution was passed expressing appreciation of the work of Sir W. C. Macdonald in establishing an agricultural college at St. Anne de Bellevue and equipping it with an able staff of professors.

Messrs. J. C. Chapais, G. Reynaud, J. M. Fisk, N. E. Jack, R. W. Shepherd and R. Brodie were appointed delegates to the Dominion Conference to be held at Ottawa in February.

Would Increase the Tariff on Fruit

A. B. Cutting, B.S.A., our Special Representative

AT a mass meeting of the fruit growers of the Winona and Grimsby sections, held at the latter point, Dec. 21, it was decided, after a lengthy discussion, to petition the Dominion Government, through the tariff commission, for the following increases in the tariff on fruits:—

On peaches, from 1 cent a pound to 2 cents.

On pears, from 20% ad valorem, to 1 cent a pound specific.

On plums, from 25% ad valorem, to 1 cent a pound specific.

On apples, from 40 cents a barrel to 75 cents a barrel.

Messrs. J. W. Smith, E. D. Smith, M.P., and Murray Pettit were delegated to bring the resolution before the tariff commission. St. Catharines growers were invited to attend, but unfavorable weather prevented them from doing so.

Two meetings to discuss this question were held recently, one at Winona and one at St. Catharines. At the former, the trend of discussion showed most emphatically that the growers of that district were unanimously of the opinion that an increase in tariff should be asked for on certain classes of fruit, including peaches, pears, plums and apples. In reference to this Mr. A. H. Pettit, of Grimsby, said, "A high tariff on peaches will not effect the local market so very much, but it will increase the sale and consumption of Ontario peaches in the North-west. At present North-west dealers prefer California peaches to ours, as they, being better bodied and longer keepers, though lacking in quality, will stand on the market shelves

a week without spoiling, and as a result the North-west is asking for a decrease in the duties. As for apples, the question of tariff is important, particularly in the fall apple trade. We want an increase as under the present tariff the United States floods our markets with their surplus of early varieties. Large quantities of pears and plums also come into this country from over the line in competition with home-grown varieties."

At St. Catharines, fruit men from the different sections of the Niagara district were present, but the majority were growers from the immediate vicinity of the city. The expression of opinion on the tariff was far from unanimous. Most of the St. Catharines growers supported the action of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Convention at Toronto, in November, which waited on the tariff commission and asked that the tariff on fruits be left as it is; while the growers from Grimsby and Winona advocated an increase. A change from ad valorem duties to specific was suggested, in the case of pears and plums, from 20% to 25% respectively, to $\frac{1}{2}$ cent per pound, the other duties on fruits to remain as they are. This was moved and carried by a majority of one, and cannot be said to express the views of fruit growers in general.

At the recent meeting in Grimsby, Mr. E. D. Smith, M.P., of Winona, said that the action of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association, influenced as it was by Mr. W. L. Smith's sympathetic address, does not coincide with the opinion of the growers of this province as a whole. "The great majority were not consulting," said Mr. Smith, "and though we appreciate

the work of the Ontario Fruit Growers' Association in general, we have no right to back the organization when it has taken a wrong step." He advanced many arguments for an increase in the tariff. We are not going to make fruit more expensive for the home consumer by adding the increase in the duties to the price of fruit, but a higher tariff will keep out foreign fruits, thereby lessening the supply, and as a consequence, by virtue of creating a greater demand, the fruit business will be more profitable for the grower. In the North-west market, also, the demand for our fruit will increase. Buyers there will handle our fruit in greater quantity than now, because of its cheapness under increased duties, as compared with that from over the line, to say nothing of the advantage our fruit has in quality."

Mr. A. Greenwood, of Grimsby Park, cited some instances in which Ontario fruit has been preferred in the North-west to that from California. One consignment of Ontario fruit the past season brought \$2.25 per 35 pound box, against \$2.00 per 50 pound box of California fruit, the same day and in the same market. Mr. Greenwood contended that even to-day our fruit is preferred to Californian, but, under the present tariff, the foreign article captures the market on account of its cheapness.

A comparison between the existing duties on fruits and the cost of production was brought out by Mr. J. W. Smith, of Winona. The duty on small fruits is two cents a pound. This class of fruit is comparatively easy to grow, returns are secured within a year or so after planting, and the market for such does not fluctuate so much as the market for pears and other tree fruits; the grower of small fruits can form in advance an approximate idea of the demand and price for his fruit a year hence. On the other hand, the duty on pears is 20 per cent. ad valorem, or about one-quarter of a cent a pound. Pears are expensive and difficult to grow; they require a much longer time to produce a crop—best varieties, 12 to 15 years; the market for pears is not so stable as that for small fruits; and the pear planter cannot form the slightest idea of the condition of the pear market 15 years hence. For these reasons, Mr. Smith believed that the duty on pears should be increased to an amount equal to that now imposed on small fruits.

The relative costs of plants and work to plant an acre of different classes of fruit were estimated by Mr. Smith as follows:—Strawberries, 7,260 plants, \$14.50; setting plants, \$8.00; total, \$22.50. Grapes, 450 vines, \$14; 150 posts, \$20; setting posts, \$10; wire and hanging, \$10; planting, \$2.50; total, \$56.50. Plums, 200 trees, \$50; planting, \$6; total, \$56. Peaches, 200 trees, \$30; planting, \$5; total, \$35. Pears, 200 trees, \$50; planting, \$7; total, \$57.

The labor problem was referred to by Mr. Jas. Tweddle, Fruitland. The cost and scarcity of labor increases the cost of production. Manufacturers here at home and labor employers in the North-west are taking our best men. We cannot afford to pay the high wages offered by these men and as a consequence good farm hands are hard to secure. This condition of affairs could be mitigated by an increase in the tariff on fruits.

The annual meeting of the New Brunswick Fruit Growers' Association will be held January 25, immediately following a two days' session of the Farmers' and Dairymen's Association. Prizes will be offered for a display of winter fruit. Among the speakers whom it is expected will be present are Mr. W. T. Macoun, of the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa, and Prof. F. C. Sears, of Truro, N.S.

The average farmer should have from two to five acres in an orchard, and should attend to it well. An orchard, unless well attended to, is valueless for commercial purposes. Farmers occupied in general farming have not time to take care of many trees.—(A. Shaw, Walkerton, Ont.)