

I would move that the President, Vice-President, Mr. Dempsey and the Secretary be a committee to correspond and confer with the steamship companies, or take such steps as may be necessary, in reference to getting facilities for the shipment of our grapes to the old country. Shipments that have been tried by our shippers are very discouraging, and as long as they turn out discouragingly the shippers of this country must be content to take a large discount on their apples. It is simply that they are cooked on board ship—placed in hot storage, or something of that kind. I think the matter of the fruit trade of this country has got now to be of such importance that if ever we are to get accommodation from the steamship companies it ought to be now.

Mr. MORDEN seconded the motion, authorizing the committee to speak for the whole of the fruit-growers of Ontario, which was put and carried unanimously.

The PRESIDENT.—For my own part I will have no objection at all. In fact for some years past I have had a good deal of such business with these companies, and I now take what some people might call a fiendish delight in pitching into them. (Laughter.) They require it; they certainly do. They speak well to us; they receive us very nicely indeed, and they promise everything that can be promised from any one; but my experience has been that there has been very little good done by it so far. However, we can make another trial, and the only thing is to keep continually at them; and I have found a good way of working, it is this,—to go to one steamship company and say, "Now, we are going to try you, but we are going to try these other companies, too"; and when we go to a Canadian company and say, "We are going to try you, but we don't like the way you handle goods; we are compelled now to ship by New York, and we are going to try that and let you loose altogether." This gets them down on their knees, I find, and they want to hold the trade, and they promise then; and I believe they handle a good deal better when we pit the one against the other. There is becoming now a very strong competition for our freight trade; the American lines are bidding very strongly against the Canadian lines; and I think there is more chance of getting something from them in that way than we have had for years past.

Dr. BEADLE.—I was going to ask in what order those Spanish grapes usually arrive; they are packed in cork saw-dust?

The PRESIDENT.—Yes; you would open up a little cask, and the grapes would be quite decayed and broken up. There was a good deal of loss one way or the other in every package opened.

Mr. OSBORN.—How were the goods packed that were sent to the Exhibition?

The PRESIDENT.—In several ways; in two or three bunches in a berry box, and those boxes contained in a case with some paper in them. I don't think we had any in saw-dust; had we, Mr. Dempsey?

Mr. DEMPSEY.—No.

Mr. OSBORN.—How would you recommend packing for shipment?

The PRESIDENT.—That is something that has to be experimented upon. I would hardly give an opinion on it yet. We should try the saw-dust; but I believe in trying the saw-dust our grapes would have to be cut and kept for some time until the wood and the stems thoroughly ripened and dried up, and then we should see that nothing was packed there but perfect berries.

Mr. OSBORN.—Something has been said about educating the British taste to the eating of grapes. It is quite correct that their taste is not educated yet as to the eating of apples. I have letters from dealers, and the only thing they ask for is red apples. They say, "nice showy red apples,"—that is all the length of their education; they don't ask for our fine varieties.

Mr. KERMAN.—You should take into consideration not only packing but unpacking again. You will find there will be more grapes broken in the unpacking than, in the transport, unless they are packed in such form that you could take them out without having to break them off the stem.

Mr. ORR.—Last year Mr. Smith, emigration agent in Hamilton, got three baskets of Niagaras from me. They were packed in ten-pound packages, with tissue paper. One each was sent to emigration agents in England, Ireland and Scotland, and he got reports from them that they all arrived there in first-rate condition.