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Report of the Committee on the Fruit-growers Associations.

Montreal, June 10th, 1882.

To the President and Members of the Council of Agriculture:

It is with sentiments of the liveliest satisfaction that the members of this committee desire to draw the attention of the Council of Agriculture to an excellent report on the fruits of Russia, lately published by Mr Charles Gibb, one of the most active members of the Montreal Horticultural Society, a copy of which has been forwarded to every member of this Council.

The Horticultural Society of Montreal, established in 1847, was one of the societies placed under the control of the Council up to 1878, at which time it became an independent Horticultural Society, with an annual grant of \$1,000.00. All who have followed, step by step, its progress will admit, with us, that it has conferred incalculable benefits on the country, by spreading abroad a taste for the cultivation of fruit-trees. Its annual exhibitions have always been visited with the liveliest interest, and an intelligent public has not failed to remark that, as regards the excellence and variety of its fruits, the Province of Quebec has little left to be desired. Our climate, our soil, and our system of cultivation, have indisputably proved that, in spite of our short summers and our long and rigorous winters, we can produce fruits, which in regard to their excellence are worthy rivals of fruits grown in countries more highly favoured than our own.

You have not forgotten, gentlemen, that the Montreal Horticultural Society has frequently appealed to you to employ the influence of the Council in obtaining from the government a grant in aid of the translation and publication of its reports; reports both interesting and full of practical suggestions, and edited by men who have made a thorough

study of the matters in question, among whom stands pre-eminently the distinguished name of Charles Gibb. Your committee acknowledges, with pleasure, that you have never shown yourselves deaf to these appeals to your generosity, and that the government has always made it a duty to second your praiseworthy efforts by granting the just demands of a society which works with so much zeal to promote the best interests of the province.

At a meeting held on the 1st of March 1882, the Council again received a deputation from the Montreal Horticultural Society, which presented a petition shewing the advantages to be derived from the importation of fruit-trees from the colder regions of Russia; insisting on the advisability of their introduction into the province, and of their distribution into all parts of it after their proper acclimatisation. In conclusion, the petition prayed that the government would grant a certain extent of land and a sum of money sufficient to establish an experimental farm, a sort of orchard and nursery, for the purpose of importing, of propagating, and of distributing Russian fruit-trees.

Actuated probably by want of funds, the government, in spite of the recommendation of the Council and of the transmission of the document aforesaid to the proper quarter, took no initiative in this enterprise. Such being the case, Mr Gibb, believing that the time for action had arrived, and that the country was in a condition favourable to the trial of experiments in the importation of Russian fruit-trees, decided to go to Russia at his own expense. There, he was received with the kindest sympathy, and being on the spot, he devoted himself to the study of the fruit-trees in question in their own climate and soil, and thus convinced himself of the possibility of their successful introduction into Canada. The result of this thoroughly conscientious study is the "Report on Russian Fruits, by Mr Chas Gibb." In this pamphlet, Mr Gibb relates the observations and the pomological studies which he made during his travels in Russia; and, with a clearness which nothing but a deep meditation of the subject could give, he describes the apples, the pears, and the plums of the country, pointing out the sorts which, in his opinion, it would answer to import into Canada. This work of Mr Gibb's is doubly interesting—from the knowledge of the subject treated, and the special value it possesses in connection with the wants of this country.

Your committee has been informed that certain enterprising horticulturists, trusting simply to Mr Gibb's recommendation, have already given large orders for the fruit-trees of Russia; and there is no doubt that in a few years we shall have the satisfaction of seeing these fruits sold advantageously in our markets, and, perhaps, after having been improved by cultivation in Canada, they may find their way to the centres of consumption in Europe. Men, whose character for patriotism, devotion to their duty, and perfect disinterestedness is beyond cavil, are rare in all countries; hence, we cannot too much admire the conduct of Mr Gibb in this undertaking; conduct which has been guided by the purest philanthropy, and which has had for its aim the prosperity of his country.