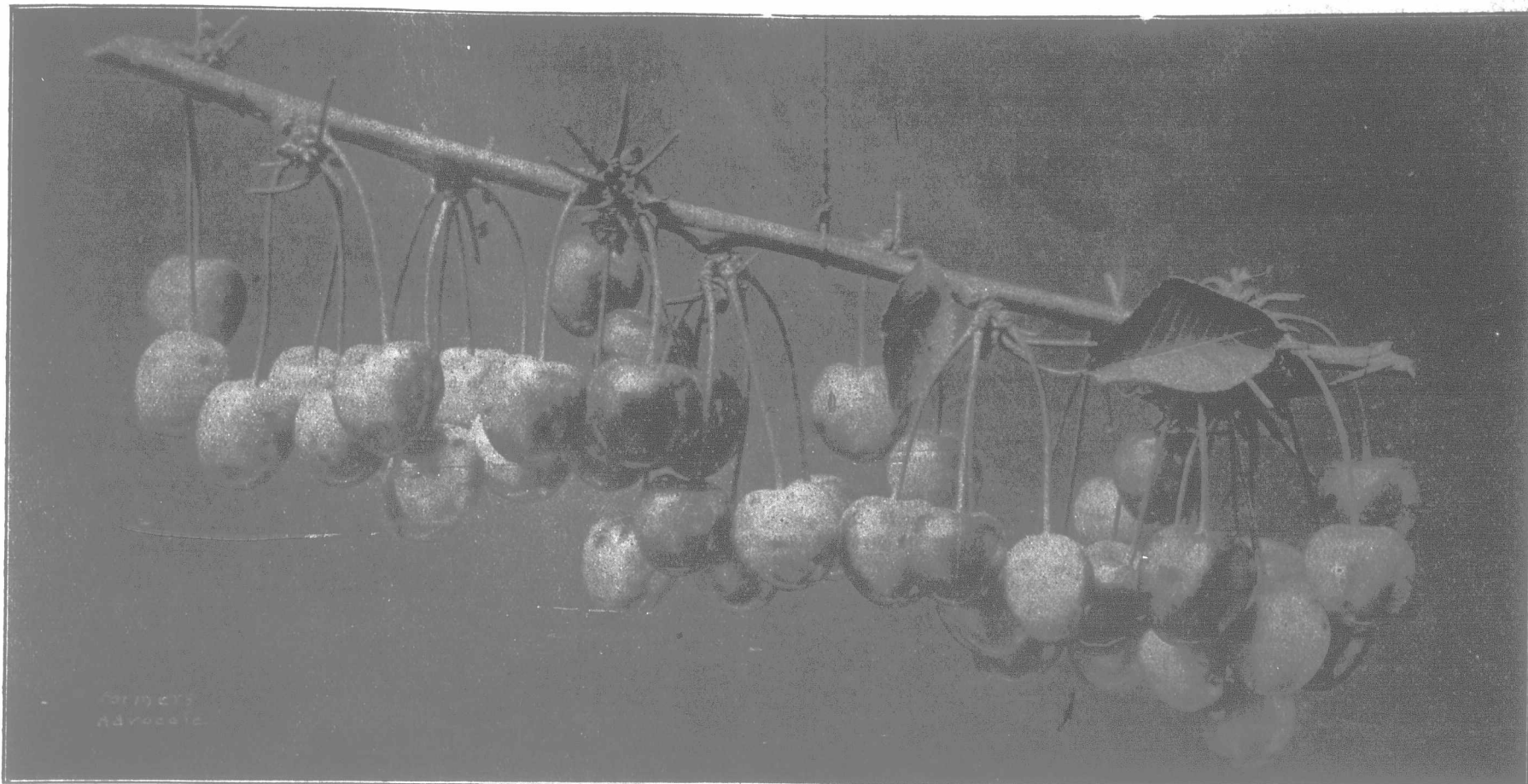




British Columbia Cherries.

its capabilities, but, undoubtedly it has a few surprises in store for the future. Though in small quantities as yet, apples, peaches and grapes have been successfully grown on the Skeena. The first apple trees were planted at Hazelton in the spring of 1901, and fruited in the fall of 1904.

For a considerable distance inland, from the west coast, there are a number of valleys and plateaus, which are well adapted to growing many of the hardier varieties, though fewer in number than those capable of being developed in the first-named district.

Notwithstanding the conditions and adaptabilities which may be, in a general way, characteristic of the large districts above mentioned, there are always peculiarities of soil and climate, soil moisture, atmospheric currents, etc., which must be taken into consideration, and intelligently utilized in a common-sense way by the individual settler when choosing varieties to plant or deciding on methods of cultivation.

That the supply of water from mountain streams for irrigation purposes is limited, should always be borne in mind, and in those portions of the Province where irrigation is necessary, the prospective settler or investor should be exceedingly careful that a proper supply of water is available, and that he secures a legal right to use it when purchasing fruit lands. There are many of the so-called dry districts where the soil moisture, with proper cultivation, is quite sufficient to produce a full crop in an ordinary year, but there comes, periodically, the extraordinary year when, without any artificial supply of water at hand at the critical time, the whole crop may be lost. In the arid districts it must be seen to that the right to a sufficient supply of irrigation water is obtained, whether needed every year or not.

There are immense fertile table-lands along the Thompson, Columbia, Kootenay and Similkameen rivers, and the Kamloops, Okanagan, Upper and Lower Arrow and Kootenay lakes, which cannot be irrigated from the available mountain streams, but it may safely be predicted that some day, in the not distant future, a genius will arrive who will contrive to invent a comparatively cheap method of pumping the water from these large reservoirs up to the higher levels, and who then will venture to estimate the quantity of rare and luscious fruits which this Province may be capable of producing, or the gratitude that future generations will lavish on the memory of the man who shall make the cultivation of these beautiful plateaus possible? Then will the glittering Okanagan Lake become a magnificent water highway, through the midst of densely-populated stretches of orchard lands. On either shore will be one continuous line of superb villa homes, and all up and down those scenic galleries of luxurious gardens will dwell the kings and queens of husbandry in the happy performance of the first duties allotted to mankind.

By establishing high standards and the practice of high ideals, both in the quality of their products and business methods, fruit-growers of British Columbia should have a large share in building up the commercial character of the Province, which, like the golden beams of the summer twilight, shall shed its benign influence eastward over the great Dominion of Canada.—[Maxwell Smith, in B. C. Review.

What is pluck? Pluck is the unconquerable spirit which enables one to defy discouragement, persevere, prevail, and turn defeat into victory.

Exhibition Fruit and Fruit Exhibitions.

For some reason or other, or, perhaps, I should say for several reasons, fruit exhibitions are not, as a rule, so instructive as live stock and other shows. Certainly they are not as instructive as they ought to be. Of course, in a way, the live-stock men have the advantage of the fruit men, from the fact that when they bring a cow to a show, for example, they are bringing the whole thing, while the fruit men are only bringing the final, finished product. Fruit men are about on a par with a hog-raiser who should exhibit sausages. The sausages might be most excellent, and to the mere consumer might be all that could be desired, yet they wouldn't be as instructive to the man who wanted to learn as the live animals.

But while we fruit men may be handicapped, I think we are like most other people in most situations, we don't do, as well as we might, nor even as well as we know how very often; and it is in the hope of helping somewhat to improve fruit exhibitions that this article is undertaken.

The first requisite, of course, is good fruit, well grown and well colored, but with that we shall not concern ourselves, but assume that the intending exhibitor has done everything in growing his crop to assure fine fruit. Having done this, a great many exhibitors make serious mistakes in the time and manner in which fruit is selected. Fruit should be fully matured and well colored before it is gathered, but avoid overripe specimens too. The "golden mean" is extremely important just here; and by all means select the fruit in the orchard. No man can make a proper selection of exhibition fruit digging about in a barrel or a basket for his specimens, nor even (in the writer's opinion) from the packing table, though this is much better. I believe that fruit for exhibition purposes should be taken directly from the tree; and with apples and pears, one of the long-handled "pickers" will be found invaluable, as the best specimens usually grow out of reach; and don't be satisfied with anything short of perfection. Don't imagine because you didn't see the little scar or scab or wormhole when the fruit was hanging on the tree, that the judge will not see it when he comes to examine the fruit on the plates. There will be enough blemishes creep in if you aim at perfection.

Then handle the fruit carefully—very carefully! Any fruit which has a bloom on it naturally ought still to have that bloom on it when the judge gives his decision on it; and the longer fruit must stand on the tables, the more important does careful handling become. An excellent way is to take ordinary grape baskets to the orchard or vineyard, and lay the fruit directly into these as it is picked, and then take it to the packing-house to cool and be packed later on. This matter of careful selection and careful handling cannot be emphasized too strongly, for no one who has not acted as a judge of fruit can realize on how small a point the decision sometimes turns.

Then, again, don't be afraid to select plenty of fruit. If the prize-list calls for five apples to a plate, select at least twice that number, from

which later on to choose the final sample which shall represent your judgment in the competition. Many an exhibitor has been disappointed when he came to put out his fruit and has lost the prize, because some little blemish escaped his notice when the fruit was packed, or has developed since, and he hasn't an extra fruit to take the place of the damaged one.

In putting fruits up in acids, as must sometimes be done with early, perishable stuff, one needs experience to be sure of success; yet a few rules, carefully observed, will usually give good results. It is a big subject by itself, and I shall only attempt a few brief suggestions here. My general remarks as to the selection of fruits will apply with special force here. Choose fully-matured, highly-colored, ripe specimens, perfect in every respect, but not overripe. Handle by the stem, if possible, and place directly in the jars in which they are to be preserved, which ought to be clear white glass, not greenish, as this latter prevents the colors of the fruits from showing in their natural tints. Arrange the fruits carefully in the jars, so that they make the best appearance, and then put the jars away, either in a refrigerator or some other very cool place, until they are well cooled down; then pour over the liquid and seal. For a preserving liquid various chemicals are recommended, but in the writer's experience and observation, nothing is better than a 2% solution of boric or boracic, dissolved in water. The percentage, of course, is figured on weight.

In taking fresh fruit to the place of exhibition, I have found barrels for the larger fruits and baskets for the smaller ones to be the most satisfactory method where shipment is made by train. Apples and pears should be packed with layers of excelsior, and the more tender fruits with cotton batting.

We come next to the question of putting up the exhibit. In the ordinary single-plate entries there is no chance for the display of artistic ability in arranging them, but there is a chance for a good deal of judgment in choosing out of the ten fruits brought to the show room the five (if it be pears or apples) which shall stand the best show of taking the prize. No doubt the choice will depend somewhat on the judge, for different men have different ideas as to what constitutes excellence in fruit, but, in general, the points would be the same, and would include size; form, whether typical for the variety or not; color, freedom from blemishes, and uniformity. The latter point is, perhaps, more often overlooked than any other, yet, in my opinion, it is one of the most important. A plate of apples, even though they may not be of the largest size nor of the highest color, if they are perfectly uniform in every way, color, size, shape and even ripeness, is very attractive.

I shall not touch upon the question of what might be called display or advertising exhibits, because that is quite a different matter from ordinary fruit exhibits, and one which would interest not five readers of "The Farmer's Advocate." I may say in passing, however, that I believe massing varieties—that is, having a number of plates