

N. S. Fruit-growers at Kentville.

The forty-sixth annual meeting of the Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association opened at Kentville on the afternoon of December 1st.

President F. M. Chipman, of Pictou, said, in part: Though the spring was somewhat backward, the weather during pollination of apples was all that could be desired. The dry weather of the summer was followed by an October which doubled the size of the apples, and experts placed our exportable crop at 700,000 barrels. The promise of high prices of the early part of the season is not being fulfilled. Gravensteins, especially, arrived in poor condition, and depressed the market. Apples are ripening very early, even the winter varieties, and speculators are afraid to handle them. One fact, as the result of this year's trade, is strongly impressed upon me, and that is that, unless there are better methods adopted both in handling and transportation, our foreign trade in Gravensteins is done forever. The insect pests that were most troublesome this year were the canker worm and the aphid. The banding of the trees with some sticky mixture is such a cheap and sure way of destroying the pest that it is to be hoped an effort will be made this year to completely exterminate them. Some of our most progressive growers have adopted the work of thinning their fruit in early summer, and doubtless we shall get some good reports from these. The much-desired experiment station has not yet materialized. It seems that in matter of such importance our Governments require a long time for consideration. Once a year a man is sent down to look over the situation and revive our flagging hopes.

A discussion on the necessity of a uniform-sized barrel for the Dominion lasted some time, the opinion still being strong that our barrel was the proper size.

CONTROL OF SOIL MOISTURE IN ORCHARDS.

Frank T. Shutt, Chemist, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, deplored the raising of hay or grain in an orchard, since the demands of these crops upon the moisture of the soil must interfere with the best development of the fruit or tree. The following conclusions were reached after several experiments at the Central Experimental Farm:

First.—The growth of rye, oats and buckwheat in the orchard has always resulted in the removal of larger amounts of moisture than is lost by the growth of legumes. The draft made by the cereals upon the moisture in the soil is greatest between May 1st and July 15th, when it is most required by the orchard trees. As high as ten inches of rain may be lost in this period over and above that lost from a cultivated soil.

Second.—More moisture may be conserved by sowing the legumes in drills and cultivating than sowing them broadcast.

Third.—A mulch of straw, etc., six inches thick was found very effective in controlling moisture.

Fourth.—It is very desirable to cultivate immediately after plowing, as undisturbed fallow land dries out very rapidly. Cultivation is the great conservator of soil moisture.

This paper was followed by a very spirited discussion, in which nearly all present took part.

THINNING FRUIT FOR PROFIT.

The evening session was opened by an address, "Thinning Fruit for Profit," by R. J. Messenger, who made the following points: Thinning saves:

First.—Time in packing. When this work is done in the early summer, time is not as pressing as in the busy picking season of October. Numerically speaking, thinning should take off from 50 to 75 per cent. of the apples on the tree. This can be done more quickly in the summer than autumn, since there is no time occupied in emptying baskets, opening barrels, etc., as one can pick with both hands, and simply drop them on the ground.

Second.—Saves time in packing. A man can pack twice the quantity of large, clean apples in a day as of small, wormy and scabby specimens.

Third.—Saves expense and freight. Amount of money returns being considered, the apples of a thinned tree can be placed on the market much more cheaply than those of trees not thinned. Since it takes three times as many No. 3's to fill a barrel as No. 1's, and since a No. 1 barrel is worth three times as much as a No. 3, you have to grow nine times as many No. 3's as No. 1's to get the same amount of money.

Fourth.—Saves in vitality of the tree. As the seeds or reproductive parts of the apple are the parts that sap the strength of the tree, it is reasonable to believe that the taking off of the apples which would only make No. 3's or culls, will not only allow more plant food to be diverted to the better development of those left on the trees, but will conserve more of the strength of the latter for the bearing of future crops.

Messrs. Eaton, F. E. Archibald, G. C. Miller, M. K. Ellis, F. H. Johnson, and Mrs. Sangster, all spoke of the benefit they had received from thinning, and determined to do more in the future. J. W. Chute gave, as a testimony for thinning, that one man's apples coming into his packing-house, packed about four barrels No. 1, one bar-

rel No. 2, and very few smaller. The apples were very much superior to any others that came in, and this man thinned his fruit.

Professor Cumming, of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, spoke briefly of the work of the Department of Agriculture, in the course of his remarks expressing the hope that the fruit-growers would soon become unanimous in their choice of a location for the proposed experimental station for orchard work, and that such a choice would speedily be followed by its establishment. The College, in its hold upon the people and its popularity, had far exceeded his most sanguine hopes. This year, 125 men were to attend the Short Course from Prince Edward Island alone. He hoped to see the three Provinces united in the use and adoption of the College.

Robert Thompson, of St. Catharines, Ont., gave a very instructive address on co-operation and its benefits. They were forced to go into the matter because of the low prices they had been receiving for their fruit.

His experience showed that the men in these associations must be public-spirited; that the best man available should be selected for manager; that the numbers should not be limited to too few, as more made the association stronger, still it was not wise to make the numbers too unwieldy; that, as soon as a large quantity can be put up under a reliable brand, there is no difficulty in disposing of them at a good price; that they could also save in buying supplies, such as baskets, barrels, boxes, spraying materials, etc.; that greater concessions can be gotten from transportation companies than could be obtained by individuals.

Thursday Morning.—Report of treasurer showed a balance of \$483 in cash, and \$2,000 in Glace Bay Bonds.

Officers for the ensuing year were: President, E. E. Archibald; Vice-President, R. J. Messenger; Secretary, S. C. Parker.

After the elections, Prof. H. W. Smith, of Truro, took up the subject of plant diseases, recommending that this Association try to obtain legislation of such a kind that the importation of plant diseases would be checked. Most plant diseases were caused by fungi, and every means should be used to check the spread of disease by destroying the spores. The plowing under of the leaves, the burning at once of all diseased or dead wood caused by this fungous growth, the generous use of fungicides, were all important in keeping down disease. In the discussion which followed, the following points were brought out: That spraying with bluestone alone, 2 pounds to 40 gallons, was effective before buds opened; that excess of lime weakened the fungicidal properties of bluestone; that kerosene could be added to Bordeaux for apples; that flour would emulsify kerosene, 8 pounds to 1 gallon; that home-boiled lime-sulphur is more effective than the commercially-prepared article; that about 18 pounds sulphur to 20 pounds lime was a good proportion to use.

F. Fitch, Fruit Inspector, in a short address, urged on the meeting the necessity of a definite minimum size for grading apples. This provoked considerable discussion, but no action was taken.

The evening session was taken up mainly by addresses by visitors. L. D. Robinson read a paper on "Winter Sprays," strongly advocating lime-sulphur as a winter spray.

P. E. I. Fruit-growers Meet.

The fourteenth annual meeting of the Fruit-growers' Association was held at Charlottetown, December 2nd and 3rd. Inspector Vroom was delayed, owing to the steamer not crossing Wednesday, but he arrived in time to judge the fruit Thursday evening.

The secretary's report showed the association to be in good financial standing, with a balance on hand of \$199.83. Prof. Theo. Ross reported that some of the Model Fruit Farms were in good condition, others were not doing so well. In regard to the latter, it was shown, during the discussion which followed, that the trouble was largely due to the condition of the trees when purchased from the nurseries.

The meeting adjourned at 3 p. m., and a meeting of the Co-operative Fruit Co. was held.

The secretary gave a detailed account of expenditure, such as cost of barrels, boxes, packing, etc. President A. E. Dewar stated that the Company had shipped 70 barrels of apples to Newfoundland, while a large quantity was sold locally in boxes and barrels. He reported that the large number of windfalls and culls found in apples sent to the Company made the fruit difficult to grade, and wasted much time for the packers, while bruises and scab caused many lots to be graded No. 2 that would otherwise have graded No. 1. He mentioned the necessity of barrels being packed tightly, as a slack pack always brought a lower price and injured the apples.

The meeting elected the following directors: A. E. Dewar, Charlottetown; John Vaneau, Lower Montague; Prof. Theo. Ross, Charlottetown; John Newson, Charlottetown; and Geo. J. J. McDonald, Kinkora. After some discussion, the question of shipping Ben Davis apples to St.

John, to be held in cold-storage for transatlantic shipment, was abandoned. The Halifax route did not meet with the approval of many, and it was decided that the Company would pack Ben Davis and other apples in March for shipment to England. Those wishing to avail themselves of this opportunity should correspond with the Board of Directors at once.

The Fruit-growers' meeting was called to order again at 8 p. m. Inspector Vroom gave a very instructive address on co-operation, and complimented the Fruit-growers on the splendid quality of the exhibit before him. He said that the quality displayed was the best he had ever seen on Prince Edward Island, and it gave ample proof that apple-growing could be made a profitable industry for the farmers here. He strongly advised having several centers for packing apples, as it would cost too much for truckage, etc., to have them all brought to Charlottetown. He then gave interesting information as to the method of packing and grading followed in the Annapolis Valley.

Prof. Ross said that Spies were imported here from Ontario at \$5 a barrel. This he considered unnecessary, as plenty of equally good apples (of other varieties) could be grown here to meet the demand of the home market.

Mr. Vroom said that apples brought a much better price in Prince Edward Island than in Nova Scotia, \$2 per barrel being the average price paid in the latter Province, while here \$3.50 is not unusual. In conclusion, he strongly advocated the continuation of the movement on the Island.

Hon. John Richards opened the general discussion on the fruit industry. He spoke of the good appearance of the exhibit, and said that P. E. I. apples compared very favorably with those of any other Province in the Dominion.

Friday morning, a demonstration on box packing of apples was given by Inspector Vroom. He and President Dewar then spoke at some length on the judging of apples at exhibitions.

The prize-list was discussed by J. A. Moore, Fred McIntyre, and J. A. Clark.

The following officers were elected: A. E. Dewar, president (re-elected); D. J. Stewart, vice-president; A. W. Sterns, auditor. The directors were re-elected, with the exception that Fred McIntyre succeeds the late John Robertson.

The scale of points for judging exhibition fruit, submitted by the Nova Scotia Fruit-growers' Association, was discussed, and unanimously adopted by the meeting.

The Question Box was then opened, and the following subjects discussed by those present: Mulch vs. cultivation; clover as a cover crop; russeting of apples by Bordeaux mixture; fall plowing of orchards; and the lime-sulphur wash.

In the discussion on varieties, led by A. E. Dewar, the majority of the members stated that they had found Baldwins, Kings and Spies did not prove satisfactory. The commercial varieties most in favor were Wealthy, Alexander, Wolfe River, Lukerman, and Stark, the first three being considered the best. Three other varieties, Baxter, Dudley and McMahon White, were mentioned, and highly recommended by some of the speakers.

Principal Le Lacheur, of the Macdonald School, was present with his class of boys, and at the close of the meeting Mr. Vroom gave them a short demonstration on judging and packing apples.

Resolutions were passed thanking the Federal and Provincial Governments, Inspector Vroom, and the Press for services rendered, placing on record its appreciation of the bulletins issued by the Fruit Division, Ottawa, and urging that they be enlarged and issued more frequently.

Resolutions were also passed, expressing regret at the loss sustained by the Association in the deaths of John Robertson and Senator Ferguson.

One of the most prominent exhibits at the National Apple Show, in Spokane, Wash., this year, was an exhibit from British Columbia, being a pyramid of apples exhibited in a hanging scale. There were 50 apples, with a total weight of 61 pounds—over a pound and a quarter each. The fruit was quite up to the mark in flavor, and was from the orchard of H. W. Collins, on the Covert Estate, at Grand Forks.

POULTRY.

Good Sport or Useful Sport.

Commenting upon the educative work accomplished through plucking and dressing contests, and other demonstrations, given by the Poultry-producers' Association of Eastern Canada, at the recent Quebec Provincial Poultry Show, held in Montreal, a Quebec French daily editorially says:

"Everyone is free to think as he wishes on the subject, but we are of opinion that if half the enthusiasm, energy and financial elements wasted on certain sports of a questionable usefulness were applied to creating and sustaining useful, educative and pleasant ones, such as have been carried on during nearly a whole week at the Poultry Exhibition, agriculture in the country, household