

The handling of the crop naturally fell into the hands of dealers who very quickly monopolized the trade connections, to such an extent that they could practically dictate the remuneration returned to the growers, and in this condition the trade has continued almost to the present time.

Of course, the form in which this monopoly existed was in a measure dictated by slightly different conditions. The net results, however, were the same. The grower was in the hands of the middleman and was powerless to secure a fair proportion of the prices which his fruit brought in the ultimate market. In Nova Scotia the dealers were usually associated with some strong English firm who made advances on the apples in their possession and who eventually built warehouses at the points of production in order to secure a better hold upon the fruit. Not content with this, certain dealers often secured control of the transportation facilities, so that rival shippers and independent growers had great difficulty in moving their fruit. Some of the shrewdest men among these growers, too, were employed to act as soliciting agents, and by these devices the dealers secured almost absolute control of the trade.

In Ontario, apple orchards were not so concentrated, and it was somewhat more difficult to secure such control. However, the distance from the markets and the inability of the English firms to become acquainted with the local conditions, enabled a comparatively few men to pose as exporters. There grew up a large army of local buyers more or less under the control of the exporters, and at times the competition among these kept prices fairly well up to a point corresponding with the price in the foreign market. In later years the competition between different buyers became merely nominal and the business in Ontario was so shrewdly organized that the apple grower got just a little more for his fruit than his actual expenses. For this reason there was no incentive to increase the orchard area. In fact after this régime had more or less complete control, the orchard area began to fall off most seriously, and it was no uncommon thing in the decade beginning 1890 to see splendid orchards chopped down for firewood. It was under these circumstances that the co-operative movement began. It was adopted by Ontario as a sort of last resort. In this it follows the history of co-operation in every land and in connection with every industry. It is seldom indeed that it has been adopted during good times or while industries were flourishing. But though adopted with little hope it has never failed to improve conditions.

Nova Scotia Export Trade.—The development of the apple trade in Nova Scotia is similar to that in Ontario and it began about the same time. About 1870 shipments from Nova Scotia to London were in large enough cargoes to attract attention. Many of these apples were sent in sailing vessels from local ports and, as might be expected, the condition on arrival was variable. There was no provision for ventilation, and even if there had been none of those delays so common to sailing vessels, it would have been a difficult matter to have lauded apples in London to do justice to Nova Scotia. Steamers sailing from Boston were then induced to come to Halifax for a part cargo of apples, and this helped the situation considerably. Later, of course, Halifax secured a direct line of steamers that has served the needs of the trade more or less satisfactorily up to the present time. The exports in 1880 were only 24,000 barrels, and in 1886, 177,500 barrels. The phenomenal crop of 1896 gave a surplus of something like 500,000 barrels and the 1911 crop gave an output for export and long distance shipments of 1,500,000 barrels, representing a total yield of about 2,000,000 barrels. Briefly this is the history of the apple industry, both in Ontario and Nova Scotia, the only provinces that have yielded a large surplus for export.

Recent Developments.—The phenomenal increase in the crop of Nova Scotia has been the result partly of increased plantings, but partly also of the better care which is taken of the orchards.