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The Fruit Industry of British Columbia

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FRUIT-GROWING is one of the infant industries of British Columbia, but it is growing rapidly and is quite certain, ere many years, to rival mining, lumbering or fishing. A few years ago the man who would venture to describe the Kootenays as fruit-growing districts, would be looked upon as a visionary or an imbecile; to-day all southern British Columbia is acknowledged to be the finest fruit country on this continent. Not only will it produce fruit in abundance, but the quality of the fruit is superior to that grown in any other part of America.

In 1903, Messrs. Stirling & Pitcairn, of Kelowna, on Okanagan Lake, shipped a trial carload of apples to Great Britain. The shipment consisted of Spys, Baldwins, Ontarios and Canada Reds. They arrived in Glasgow, Scotland, on November 9th, in splendid condition, and sold at six shillings a box, or about \$1 more per barrel than the choicest eastern Canadian apples—reckoning three and a half boxes to the barrel. The British Columbia apples aroused much interest amongst fruit dealers as well as consumers, and many letters were received by the consigners from persons eager to secure shipments of the splendid fruit.

In 1904, the British Columbia Department of Agriculture forwarded a collection of British Columbia fruits to London, England, for exhibition purposes. It consisted of apples, pears and plums. The exhibit was greatly admired, and evoked the highest encomiums from the newspapers. The *London Times*, while hesitating to declare the fruit superior to the best English specimens, admitted that they very nearly approached them in color, shape and flavor, even after having travelled 6,000 miles by railway and steamship. The Royal Horticultural Society's appreciation of the fruit was shown by the award of the society's gold medal and diploma.

One result of the exhibit was the deluging of the Agent-General of British Columbia (Hon. J. H. Turner, Finsbury Circus, London,) with letters from prominent fruit-dealers, anxious to do business with British Columbia fruit-growers. To momentarily satisfy the clamor for British Columbia fruit, and

to emphasize the fact of its good qualities, the department of agriculture, shipped in cold storage a full car-load of assorted fruits to London in the fall of 1905, in charge of Mr. R. M. Palmer, provincial horticulturist. This fine collection was the chief attraction at the Royal Horticultural Fruit Show at London, England, and at several provincial shows, and was awarded many prizes.

SUCCESSES AT EXHIBITIONS

Following up the success of 1905, the department of agriculture, forwarded a commercial exhibit in 1906, consisting of apples and pears, to Great Britain, in charge of Mr. Palmer. This fruit was shown at Edinburgh, York, London, and

broken up, and sold to fruit dealers at the highest prices.

IN NEW ZEALAND

An exhibit of apples was forwarded to Christchurch, New Zealand, and made one of the chief attractions in the fruit division of the New Zealand International Exhibition. Writing of this collection Mr. W. A. Burns, Canadian Commissioner for New Zealand, said: "The shipment arrived in excellent order, and the quality and range of varieties is most creditable. The newspapers and the public have gone fairly wild over the exhibit, and now that it has been proven that the Canadian apples can be transported safely to this market, a good trade should follow. I may say that the price of San Francisco apples at the present time is eight pence per pound in the local market, so you will see that there is a good margin of profit."

In 1907, a collection of over 800 boxes of apples and pears was sent to Great Britain, and shown at all the principal exhibitions and horticultural shows—at Edinburgh, Hereford, Tunbridge, Exeter, Sheffield, Crystal Palace, London, and Royal Horticultural Show, London. Gold and silver medals and certificates of merit were awarded to the exhibit as representative of the province, while individual exhibitors won many silver-gilt, silver, and bronze medals, and certificates of merit.

MARKETS AVAILABLE

These repeated triumphs have resulted in the establishment of a permanent market in Great Britain, to which several growers are now catering exclusively. Australia also wants British Columbia fruit, one grower alone receiving an order last season for 70,000 boxes of apples. Thus fruit-growers here have the satisfaction of feeling that apart from the unlimited market afforded by the prairie provinces, they can also count upon big orders and big prices from overseas. At present their is an embarrassment of riches, so far as markets go, for they cannot possibly supply the demand.

At the fifteenth annual convention of the Northwest Fruit Growers' Association, held in Vancouver, December 5-8,

Excels all Others

THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST excels all United States fruit papers that circulate in British Columbia in that it gives more cultural hints and discussions upon markets, packages and other questions from the Canadian viewpoint. Your publication devotes much space and energy to British Columbian interests, which United States papers do not. May it continue in influence and progress.—Chas. Webster, Kelowna, B. C.

other cities, and won praise from press and public at every point. At Edinburgh, the gold medal of the Royal Horticultural Society of Scotland, was awarded the collection, and at London the province again won the gold medal of the Royal Horticultural Society for the best collection of apples, while seven silver and silver-gilt medals, and three bronze medals were awarded to individual exhibitors, whose contributions made up the collection. As in former years, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company co-operated with the government of British Columbia in the collection and transportation of the fruit, generously furnishing cool storage cars and cool storage space on its Atlantic steamships, free of charge. After going the rounds of the fruit shows and securing unqualified approval everywhere, this collection was