

EXPERIMENTAL FRUIT SHIPMENTS.



YEAR by year it becomes more evident that Ontario is able to produce a larger quantity of certain varieties of fruit than our markets are able to consume to the profit of the grower. Especially is this the case with the grape, which has recently been sold at a very low price in our markets. The profit upon grapes when at a cent a pound is very small, but unless some outlet opens, these low prices seem likely to rule in future for such productive varieties of ordinary quality as the Concord. Experimental shipments of grapes were made some years ago to Great Britain, by some Canadian fruit growers, but the result on that occasion was not very satisfactory, the net returns not averaging as good a price as could have been obtained at home. It would appear that the taste of the English consumers has been accustomed to grapes grown in hothouses or under the sunny skies of France or Spain, where a different class of grapes can be successfully grown from those which we ripen in Canada. On this account buyers hesitate to invest in such a distinct article from anything they have hitherto handled.

We believe, however, that could the British public learn to appreciate the refreshing and agreeable nature of our Canadian grapes, there would be a demand for all the grapes we could produce, providing we could place them in their markets in first-class condition without too great an expense. With this object in view, the Dominion government has been several times approached by representatives of the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario, asking for legislation favorable to this end. Prof. John Craig, of the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, also before a committee of the House, spoke favorably of the advantages to Canadian fruit growers of opening up the British markets to our tender fruits.

Being somewhat encouraged, and hoping for success, the fruit growers of the Niagara district raised by subscription a sufficient amount of money to send a delegate, namely, Mr. E. D. Smith, of Winona, to place before the Dominion government the wishes of the growers. The Niagara District Fruit Growers' Stock Co. sent a delegate, namely, Mr. D. J. McKinnon, of Grimsby, and the Fruit Growers' Association of Ontario sent their president, Mr. M. Pettit, Winona. These delegates were received kindly, and they were assured of free cold storage on board certain steamers for a number of trial shipments of fruit, similar to that provided for butter. A grant of \$20,000 had been appropriated by the Dominion for the purpose of providing cold storage accommodation for butter, but the Minister of Agriculture promised that he will prepare compartments of the same kind for fruits, in order to make the experiments satisfactory.

The important thing now will be for Canadian growers to select some fine shipments of first-class fruit and see that they are consigned to some reliable