

displaying the flag of the great republic over them, but why such a thoroughly home product as ice should be decorated with a foreign flag we do not just understand. However, this has nothing to do with Labor Day, properly speaking, and as we have already said is a trifling matter anyway.

### BRITISH COLUMBIA FRUIT.

Last week The Commercial referred editorially to the arrival in Winnipeg of the first carload of plums from British Columbia, making some remarks in connection therewith upon freight rates. The Commercial has since received a letter from Mr. Kerr, of the Canadian Pacific railway, upon this subject, which we take the liberty of quoting. Mr. Kerr says:

"In the second paragraph of your editorial one would infer that prompt dispatch cannot be given by this company's freight train service to fruit from British Columbia points. This, I suppose, is only a surmise on your part from the remarks of Mr. Catherwood, who patronized the express service, and is entirely at variance with the results of the fast freight train service at freight train rates that we are now giving other British Columbia fruit shippers. Our rates from British Columbia are precisely the same to Winnipeg as the rates current by the Northern Pacific and Great Northern to Fargo and St. Paul, viz., \$1.12½ per 100 lbs. from interior British Columbia points and \$1.25 from British Columbia terminals. Our facilities for rapid transit by freight train service are as good as the service provided by the southern lines. I think a good deal of the trouble in connection with the shipment of British Columbia fruit to this market is accounted for by the fact that the growers do not pick the fruit until it is too ripe to stand transportation, neither do they pack it in the same manner as the Americans to the south of us. For long distance transportation deciduous fruits must be handpicked and carefully packed, otherwise the results will be disastrous."

Mr. Kerr's statement certainly puts the matter in a very satisfactory light, so far as freight rates and quick transportation are concerned. We certainly understood that Mr. Catherwood paid a high express rate because he could not get rapid transit by freight, but it appears from Mr. Kerr's remarks that this was not necessary.

As regards the quality of the fruit in this particular car, we stated last week that it arrived in good condition and sold well. This was quite true as regards the condition on arrival, but after the fruit had been here a short time it began to rapidly collapse, showing a great lack of keeping quality. We noted this fact in our regular market report last week. Our editorial remarks last week were based on the first impression of the fruit on arrival, but a little later the poor keeping quality of the fruit became apparent, and this fact was stated in our market reports of last week.

If the British Columbia fruit growers are to secure and hold a large trade here, they will evidently have to exercise more care in picking and handling their fruit. Oregon and Washington state fruit comes in here in large quantities and shows excellent keeping quality, and certainly the British Columbia

fruit should do the same if given the same care in handling. With the same freight rates, and the duty in their favor, it will be entirely their own fault, on account of careless packing, if the British Columbia fruit growers do not secure a large share of the trade of this market. They might as well be told frankly, however, at the outset, that they will never gain a foothold in this market until they learn to handle the fruit so as to place it in this market in as good condition as that which comes in from the Pacific coast states.

### EDITORIAL NOTES.

It is reported from Duluth that a test has been made with one of the big elevators there, to see what could be done with smutty wheat, which is very prevalent there, but the experiment proved a failure. With all the appliances at hand the smut could not be removed short of applying the brush-scouring process. The effect will be to prevent the regular elevators from trying to do anything with smutty wheat. There is nothing surprising in this test, as it is well known to all wheat handlers, that smut cannot be dealt with by the ordinary cleaning process. Even the costly scouring process can hardly free it from the foul odor which permeates smutty wheat. This difficult and expensive cleaning system must of necessity reduce very materially the price of smutted wheat.

At the opening of the territorial assembly at Regina last week, Governor Mackintosh said it might be interesting to the assembly to know that the Dominion government have decided to name, by order-in-council, all the territories between Alaska and Labrador. The far northwestern district will be called Yukon. Athabasca will be enlarged. The eastern portion will comprise Franklin and Churchill, and to the far east Ungava. This will enable the public to localize the distant districts, and will be found very convenient for geographical reference. While the government is doing this they should also abolish the word "northwest," as applied to the organized territories. From a geographical point of view the word is misapplied, and secondly, the real official application of the word is generally misunderstood, sometimes being applied to Manitoba, sometimes to the territories only, and at other times it is used to designate all the country west of the lakes. It is a vague term, it is usually used in a wrong sense, and when its use is officially correct it is geographically wrong, so that it would be better to drop the word entirely.

A LARGE trade has been done in blueberries this season. The blueberries are gathered in immense quantities in the Rat Portage district, whence they are shipped to Winnipeg, and from here distributed throughout the country. The manner of packing the berries heretofore has been a drawback to the trade, as the packages have been too large and frail, the large bark packages being particularly objectionable. With an improved

mode of packing, the berries should have even a wider demand for shipment, and this year quite an improvement has been made in the packing. A regular size and style of package should be adopted, and with a good package and uniformity of style, the demand for the berries would no doubt be enlarged. It would also seem possible that something might be done in the direction of canning these berries. A canning factory has several times been talked of for Winnipeg, and here is a line of fruit which could no doubt be canned here to advantage, while there is also no lack of vegetables available here for canning purposes, at very low prices. This year the supply of vegetables such as corn, peas, beans, etc., has been practically unlimited. It really appears that the time has come that a canning factory could be operated to good advantage in Winnipeg. There is a large local demand for canned goods, and many of the lines which are now brought in from the east, could be put up at home, thus encouraging local production, as well as saving freight on goods now brought in from the east.

SEVERAL articles appearing in Manitoba papers of late, notably the Winnipeg Tribune, relating to the grain trade, are simply scandalous. It is to be regretted that any journal will wilfully strive to stir up strife between different classes of people. But the Tribune has become noted for its adherence to this policy for some time back, and it is not surprising that it should now be trying to stir up trouble between the farmers and grain shipper.

Do the grain buyers of Manitoba—the alleged combine for instance—control the Liverpool and Chicago and New York and Duluth and all other great markets of the world? If they do not, then how are they to blame for the present position of wheat? There is no reason to believe that wheat will sell any lower in Manitoba this season, in comparison with the world's markets, than it has done in past years. In fact the tendency has been to buy wheat on a smaller margin than a few years ago. During the shipping season last fall, when prices were so low to the Manitoba producers, the grain shippers of Winnipeg were buying on a closer margin than they ever did before, large quantities of wheat having been handled on a margin of ¾ cent per bushel. There has been much talk by certain papers about the grain men trying to make capital out of the frost to bear prices. This is absurd. Any one having any knowledge of commercial conditions at all, would know that damage by frost would have a tendency to advance prices in the markets generally, and the more grain men talk frost, the greater would be the tendency to "bull" prices. The Chicago market has been known to jump upward on the mere prediction of frost.

Acheson & Burke, general storeroopers, Rosenfeld, have dissolved, and Acheson will continue the business.