

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS AT F. G. ASSOCIATION

Able and Exhaustive Report of Rev. A. E. Burke on Our Fruit Growing Industry, the Doings of the Past Year, the Fruit Crop of 1903 and Many Things Required for the Development and Growth of the Industry.

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the Fruit Grower's Association of Prince Edward Island:

In addressing you for the second time as your President, I am pleased to be able to say that this organization has never been in a healthier condition than at the present time nor ever face to face with greater possibilities for the ultimate success of the important fruit industry, with which, in a large measure is bound up the prosperity of our native province.

The work of horticultural instruction has gone on apace within the term just completed until it has been brought to the very extremities of the land, and such an awakening has resulted as has put intending apple-growers—and they are extensive with the farming community—in complete possession of every necessary fact, relative to the culture of fruit, viz. where best to locate the orchard, how to prepare for and protect it, the sort of stock to purchase, what agency frauds to avoid, how to plant, cultivate, prune, spray and care generally when planted, and the requisite conditions to the efficient gathering, packing, storing and marketing of fruit. The Association aided again by the General and Local Departments of Agriculture has been able to do much more than appears on the surface; and its untiring efforts must necessarily make for the proper extension and maintenance of fruit-growing in Prince Edward Island.

Professor Robertson, whose favor we gratefully acknowledged at our last general meeting and whom we then had with us, has, with characteristic faithfulness to purpose and that kindly concern for Island interests which always distinguished him, continued and extended so far as he could before taking ill, the missionary efforts of the instructors

here. We have rightly regarded the "Paternal Visit" as a most important factor in our Island instruction. Messrs Burke and Vroom as has appeared in the report which they have already submitted, travelled the whole province and this time have broken entirely new ground and brought instruction, practical as well as theoretical, wherever they went. Their location work, pruning, grafting, spraying and the visits to individual orchards have been the means of rehabilitating many old plantations and have tended greatly to the planting out of innumerable new ones. Although unforeseen by Professor Robertson himself or by us, Mr. Vroom was called away to Bisley in the midst of the work and thus our program was somewhat restricted; but Mr. Burke only redoubled his efforts and managed to keep about all the advertised appointments and crown the work with ultimate success. We earnestly hope for the continuance of these instructors whose field is yearly enlarging and who are really doing a greater amount of good than any other section of the service. Doubtless the Commissioner under whom it was inaugurated, who has watched it with such increasing satisfaction, and who, in it, has been such a benefit to Island horticulture, will make ample provision for the continuance and extension of this work so that the fruit industry may more readily assume its proper place amongst us.

Whilst the other fruit growing provinces of Canada have been in the full enjoyment of more than average crops, Prince Edward Island has viewed in the past year comparatively bare orchards. It has been unmistakably our off-year. In the season previous we had a full crop when Nova Scotia and Ontario were in our position of today. The immense surplus apple product of the Dominion

and thus the best price procured, so small apple-growers shall be obliged for the same purpose to contribute the product of their mixed orchards to the cooperative station where the different kinds of apples may be properly selected and packed and the foreign market tempted with some show of success. Even the older and more extensively planted regions of America find this system the only practical one in the present circumstances. The rising generation will come to regard the fruit station with the same complacency as this does the cheese factory.

The question of protection is becoming more and more vital to horticulture here. We have discussed it in all its bearings, on previous occasions, and while there has certainly been an awakening in some quarters to the importance of preserving the remnant of woods we have left, and reforesting, the apathy of the general public has not by any means being totally shaken off. To grow fruit anywhere protection is a first necessity. Situated in the middle of a great storm swept gulf, we are the most exposed community engaged in horticulture at all, and to be successful, must as quickly as possible replace our shelter belts and restore the necessary proportion between forest and field.

We have reached that stage in our provincial life, too, when the improvement and embellishment of our homes by means of trees and flowers and their tasteful disposition, should engage our earnest attention, so that the healthfulness, fruitfulness and loveliness of our Island home may be more and more in evidence. The members of this Association are especially pledged to forward this worthy purpose and it is to be hoped that their example may everywhere illumine the people.

The question of the best varieties of apples to grow here has continued to occupy the attention of the Association and still last year's recommendation is generally approved. We may have to vary it a little for different localities, but after all, it is surprising how closely the standard apples approach each other in successful cultivation not only here but also in the neighboring provinces. In our consideration of this matter we may perhaps have permitted a preference for the sorts which sell well in Britain to subordinate altogether domestic choice. Gleaning over the figures one is struck by the smallness of the export trade compared to the entire crop. The difference between the figures shows the enormous quantity of fruit used at home, manufactured into jams and pulps and evaporated. Of the immense fruit crop of the United States last season, for instance, only a fraction over one per cent was exported. This and other considerations make it necessary to keep the domestic market well in view, and not to discard everything in the line of apples not urgently demanded in Britain. We made haste to discard from our lists altogether the old and excellent fall dessert apple Bellefour, known in Canada as Bishop's Pippin, although there is no apple we relish more in Dec-

ember, none demanded more urgently by the local provincial trade and none from which our Nova Scotian friends make more money.

The Amherst Winter Show affords a grand opportunity of determining the standard apples of Maritime Canada at least. All the fruit growing counties were represented and the comparison of collections gave the favorite varieties in the following order: Spy, King, Ben Davis, Ribston, Baldwin, Fallwater, Ontario, Nonpareil, Russet and Stark. Of course Gravenstein, Wealthy, Bellefour, Fameuse, Alexander and Baxter were prominent among Early Winter varieties. Baxter took everybody's eye because of its size and attractive appearance and the best samples of it were from the Island, but so far it has not been sufficiently tested in the province to be generally recommended. The favorable comment made and interest aroused in scientific circles especially, over the Doid and Inkerman apples, both originated here, the one by an experienced old gardener named Doid, of Cherry Valley, and the other by our veteran orchardist,

John Robertson, of Inkerman, itself present with us today, as we say, brought horticulture here more prominently into view than anything we have ever exhibited. The two apples were closely watched, and, we hope, may prove of permanent value to horticulture.

The Association, at its last general meeting appointed a committee to revise the Prize List of the Fruit Department of the Provincial Exhibition. In the main its suggestions were in accordance with those of the Provincial Horticultural Society in this direction and while we have exhibited in this year, the last year's list of fruit variety can only be well to make the committee's suggestions well to make it apparent to all that, as far as possible, the fruit growing industry should be generally represented in the Board of this Exhibition, and we therefore hope that the Commission from the Executive of the F. G. A. may be placed in charge of this important department at an early day. Lastly on account of the success of the last fruit show in connection with the fall fair we suggest that the

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