

Among the Orchards of the Northwest

A Page of Interesting Advice and Information About Fruits, Large and Small.

Recent news developments regarding the activities of the Northwest Fruit Exchange will make this article, we believe, doubly interesting. The development of the market for Northwest fruit from one purely local and, at the most, national, to an international one overnight was one of the wonders of two years ago. Just what this exchange is doing we shall allow Mr. Gwinn to tell.

BY W. F. GWINN.

THE marketing of farm products is public service. Corporations engaged in it are public service corporations.

The question of public service and the treatment of the corporations that sell is one of the liveliest issues before the American people today. Public opinion is sharply divided. Some hold that efficiency and economy in public service is best achieved through private ownership and operation of the public utilities under public regulation.

Believers in this theory oppose public ownership on the ground that public ownership means political operation and that usually means inefficiency, extravagance and graft. So far as tried in this country, public ownership has been characterized in too many instances by those very features, whether in the case of street railways or farmers' organizations.

The history of rural co-operation is strewn with wrecks caused by these same conditions.

On the other hand, believers in the public ownership theory have many very sound arguments to advance and for illustrations can point to the older civilizations of Europe, where, to an important extent, the individual has become merged into the social cosmos.

Personally, I believe that the form of the corporation, whether privately or publicly owned or operated, is relatively unimportant. What really counts is the personal character, responsibility and efficiency of the men who administer its affairs.

It happens that the Northwest Fruit Exchange is the exponent of the private ownership theory. It was organized in 1910 by a group of men who saw the dire need of the industry for modern marketing facilities, some time before there was any general public recognition of that need, and what is more, provided the capital to supply the necessary men and equipment.

Speculators Are Amazed.

When the exchange was organized the orchard industry was in the grip of the land speculators. I remember with what amusement and amazement we regarded the frantic protests of this gentry whenever we dared tell an unfavorable truth about the market.

The exchange for three years was the only service organization the industry possessed. Its very existence served to stimulate the inception and growth of the correlative theory of public ownership, so that the organization recently of a co-operative sales agency, was absolutely foreordained and is wholly desirable from the standpoint of the industrial welfare.

The Northwest Fruit Exchange introduced into the Northwest in 1910, the system of f. o. b. sales, and for several years advocated that principle in the face of rather general opposition. It is therefore all the more gratifying that its judgment has been vindicated by the adoption of the same system by the co-operative agencies which have followed it into the field. Also, the exchange was the first to emphasize the absolute necessity of wide distribution and was the first to make this possible by dividing the country into sales zones and establishing in each a resident salesman.

Officer Goes Abroad.

This same system of marketing has since been adopted by practically all of the important sales agencies which have followed the exchange into the field. The exchange was the first fruit organization in the Northwest to send one of its officers to Europe to make a personal study of the field, and was the first to establish an office of its own on the other side of the Atlantic.

Having established a permanent office in London in the spring of 1912, as a result of these methods Northwestern apples are being given a systematic distribution in Europe that would never have been possible otherwise.

Before the entry of the exchange into the situation the European trade in Northwestern apples was exclusively in the hands of New York and foreign speculators, and the appearance of our fruit on the foreign markets was irregular. Under present conditions, the most famous Northwestern brands can be had in Europe every day from October to April. The exchange sold 200,000 boxes of Northwestern apples in Europe last season.

Trade Routes Are Studied.

The exchange is making a serious professional study of the whole shipping situation with reference to present trade routes and particularly with reference to the new trade routes to be established upon the opening of the Panama Canal. At the present time it is engaged in a serious study of markets of Australia, Central and South America and South Africa.

To the exchange is due the credit of opening up this season an important market in South Africa. During the

autumn Northwestern newspapers made frequent mention of the presence of a buyer from South Africa. They did not say, because they did not know, that the buyer had been brought here by the exchange as the triumphant results of two years persistent pressure on the partners in Johannesburg, supplemented by strong personal representations by the exchange's London manager to the London partners of the South African concern. The exchange actually made the opening sale to this firm in London and the preliminaries were arranged as a prerequisite of the trip out by the buyer. Once here, while the exchange had the preference and made important sales, it nevertheless encouraged the distribution of the business among other shipping factors, so that the exchange's work was a direct benefit to the industry at large. Next year this business should mean at least 100 carloads or more.

The exchange's history has been one of achievement and of service. It has done much of the heavy pioneer work and blazed many important trails. To it is due the principal credit for the divorce of the business from a consignment basis, and the establishment of what is practically a cash market f. o.

b. It has spent, since its organization, in the development of its service over \$200,000. It will clear through the Portland banks this season over one million dollars. Its telegraph account is said to be the largest in Portland.

BEHNKE-WALKER pupils in Bookkeeping, Stenography, Typewriting, Penmanship, Telegraphy receive that thorough, practical, trustworthy training which alone can produce efficient help.

When you realize this you'll know why the merchants come to us for competent assistants.

We will place you when competent.

Write for Catalogue.

Behnke Walker

BUSINESS COLLEGE
I. M. Walker, Pres. Portland, Ore.



Malt Rainier is the Pure Malt Tonic
For Mothers Who Require Additional
Nourishment and Strength.

ASK YOUR PHYSICIAN

For Sale by All Druggists