

INSPECTION OF APPLES.



E have just received a copy of the "Act to Further Amend the General Inspection Act," to which has been added a section providing for the *inspection of apples*. This, of course, was in response to the request of our Association, made through a committee to the House of Commons at Ottawa. Unfortunately, the wording of this amendment has been done without consultation with the members of our committee, or with any apple grower; and the standards have been made so absurdly exacting that it will be absolutely impossible for our packers to come up to the requirements. In consequence, no one will be likely to attempt to comply, and the Act will become a dead letter.

The following are the sections referred to :

109. (1.) In the inspection of closed packages of apples, the inspector shall open not less than one package in every five; and, if the manner of packing is found to be fraudulent, or unfair, then he shall open all the packages put up by the shipper of such package.

(2.) Every brand found to be fairly and properly packed he shall brand as No. 1 Inspected Canadian Apples, or, No. 2 Inspected Canadian Apples, as the case may be, if fit to be so branded.

(3.) The inspector shall also examine the varieties of apples submitted for inspection, and shall correct the nomenclature if incorrectly marked, or, if the name of the variety is not marked, he shall cause it to be marked on the package.

(4.) The inspector may charge a fee of ten cents for each package inspected by him, and such charge shall cover the cost of opening and closing the package.

110. (1.) No. 1 Inspected Canadian Apples shall consist of perfect specimens of one variety, of uniform size, and, in the case of a colored variety, of fairly uniform color, and shall be free from scab, worm holes, knots and blemishes of any kind.

(2.) No. 2 Inspected Canadian Apples shall consist of specimens of one variety, free from scab, worm holes, knots and blemishes of any kind, but not of uniform size or color.

Now let us look into the matter. To open one barrel in five may be necessary in the case of shippers that are known to be somewhat careless, but we are of the opinion that, where the inspector has become acquainted with the character of a certain packer, it is not at all necessary that he should open more than one barrel in ten, taken at random. To open one barrel in five would mean at least thirty barrels in a car-load. Now this would cause too great a delay of a shipment of apples, at Montreal, or at whatever port they were inspected and transferred to the steamer. The inspector should not be obliged by the Act to open more than one barrel in ten.

It is all right to correct the nomenclature, if incorrectly marked; but to make it compulsory that every unnamed lot should be named by the inspector might frequently give him a task which no human being could satisfactorily accomplish.

The fee of ten cents a barrel is too high, at least while the benefits of inspection are as yet unproved. The Dominion Government should provide for the larger part of the work; a small fee of two or three cents would be enough for the shipper to pay, and, if found necessary, after the benefits are fully appreciated, the fee might be raised.