

## LIVERPOOL BROKERS AND FRUIT BUYERS' ASSOCIATION.

**T**HE frontispiece of this article shows the Auction Room of the Liverpool Fruit Brokers and Buyers' Association. The gentleman in the centre of the gallery is Mr. Woodall, of the well-known firm of Woodall & Co.

From small beginnings the Fruit Auction has now become the hub of the Liverpool fruit trade. Five years ago, when the apples imported into Great Britain aggregated 2,937,000 bbls., 1,598,294 were received at Liverpool and practically all handled through the medium of this association. The illustration only shows a small number of buyers, as on a busy day not only will the pit but also the galleries be crowded to the utmost capacity.

Not only the fruit kings of Britain, but down to the lowest barrow hucksters are there, each bidding on the class of fruit suitable to their trade. No place in England or perhaps in the world is there such a large congregation of buyers of such a varied class. Apples, of course, are only one of the fruits sold through this medium, as every kind of imported fruit is sold there; samples are exposed on these hydraulic hoists and in many cases tipped out for the scrutiny of the buyers, whose eagerness often causes an uproar like unto a stock exchange.

The total sales in this room some days are enormous; the beauty of this system is that it brings all classes of dealers together into competition.

There are six brokers who control this Auction, but other receivers who are not brokers sell their receipts through one of

these six, who are Messrs. Woodall & Co., J. C. Houghton & Co., James Adam Son & Co., McGeorge & Jardine, L. Connolly & Co., Rogers Wray & Co., each taking their turn of 40 minutes and then 20, and sometimes selling till late in the evening.

The principal sales are held three days in the week, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, and the large dealers from all the leading towns in England and Scotland come in to purchase. Stringent rules are in force, binding on buyer and seller, and the bid of any buyer is refused who does not fulfill the requirements. The Auction Room is strictly public, and catalogues of sales are issued by the brokers on the day following showing prices obtained.

This system of consolidating the buyer and seller has proved most successful in Liverpool, and Glasgow has for some years attempted to copy it, but so far it has been impossible to get all the receivers together; and in London this method has clearly proved its superiority over other systems, where different firms hold their sales at same time in different places.

Mr. Eben James, of Toronto, to whom we are indebted for this cut, represents the firm of Woodall & Co., who claim to be the first receivers of American apples on consignment to Liverpool, dating back as far as 1847, when Mr. Underwood, of Croton Point, N. Y., made a trial shipment in casks, and the original account sales is framed and hanging in the Underwood mansion, of which the firm is justly proud.

