

PACKING FRUIT FOR LONDON.

(Extract from "*British Trade Journal*," June 1, 1890.)

NOW that powerful corporations are busying themselves with the cultivation of fruit in the Colonies and in Central America, with a view of shipping direct to London, general interest attaches to the result of the competition in fruit packing recently instituted by the Victorian Government. A prize was offered for the best packed box of apples consisting of twelve varieties, eight of each kind, to be shipped from Melbourne to London, the prize to be given to the firm or the fruit grower whose consignment should arrive in the finest condition. The boxes were addressed to the Agent General for Victoria in London, Sir Graham Berry; and on the 19th ult. they were opened and examined. Unfortunately the competition was limited to two boxes, one having been sent by Mr. S. A. Nielson, of Richmond, Victoria, and the other by Mr. Draper of Arthur's Creek. Sufficient, however, could be gathered from the two methods of packing adopted to afford a valuable lesson to all engaged in the trade. The first, Mr. Nielson's, was undoubtedly superior, and generally successful, although the selection made as regards the variety of fruit was not happy. Of the ninety-six apples which he sent only five were decayed; in four of these (Adams' Pearmain) the decay was but slight. The apples were gathered on March the 15th last, and packed on the 20th, and dispatched in the cooling rooms of steamers. They were first placed singly in ordinary paper bags. They were arranged in layers in the boxes, and the intervening spaces were carefully filled with paper shavings, a sheet of paper being laid between each layer. The box was in two compartments, divided by an upright partition, preventing too much lateral pressure when tilted on its side. Thus there was little risk of crushing or bruising in course of transit. On opening the case the apples were nearly all found in an admirable condition as far as appearance went; and the color was remarkably bright; but the flesh was in many cases very dry and tasteless. The "Jonathan" variety was one of the best. It is of a rich crimson color, and fairly crisp and pungent in flavor. On the other hand the "King of Pippins" was juiceless and insipid, and of poor quality, unfit for an eating or dessert apple. The "Hoover" seems a good baking apple, which, if imported cheaply, would sell well during the early summer months. The "Ben Davis," though rich in color, has a pulp quite too rich for the English palate. "Rymers" are also uneatable on their arrival here, however mellow and palatable they may be at the Antipodes. "Chamberlain's late Scarlet" turned out well, being juicy and of good skin and bright color. Another apple arrived much like wool. The second box had the apples wrapped separately in tissue paper and that was all. The result was that not a single specimen came out uninjured, and in