



Loading Nova Scotia Apples at Halifax for Export

A glimpse of Mr. G. H. Vroom, the Dominion Fruit Inspector, may be obtained on the extreme right.

A.—“Five thousand to six thousand barrels.”

Q.—“How big a plant do you require?”

A.—“The one here is not nearly large enough. I heard one grower say that it should be four times as large to meet the requirements of this district.”

Q.—“What is the best insulating material?”

A.—“I do not know of anything better than shavings. They are drier and better than sawdust, which is apt to encourage mould. We have about one foot of shavings in our outside wall.”

Q.—“Do mice ever get in the shavings?”

A.—“Never when the boards are properly put on. If there are knot holes or cracks where mice can get a start, they may make trouble, but not otherwise.”

Q.—“Which is better for covering ice—sawdust or shavings?”

A.—“I would prefer sawdust.”

Mr. M. Snetsinger, Thornbury, Ont.: “One of the best features of a pre-cooling plant is that when fruit is put in it, it not only stops decay but the fruit holds up better after it is put in the car.”

(Continued on page 252)

The Barrel Packing of Apples*

ALTHOUGH the box package for apples is becoming more popular every year, the greater proportion of our apples are still packed in barrels. Packing in barrels is a much simpler operation than packing in boxes, but judging from some of the fruit that we see on the market the packing methods of many growers who adopt barrel packing are in need of improvement.

Clean barrels are a prime requisite. Dirty or second-hand barrels should not be used, especially for export fruit. A necessary convenience is a proper packing table. The most convenient packing bench for orchard use is made on the same principle as the ordinary stretched couch or an enlarged saw horse

with a bolt where the supports cross each other. The upper points of these supports are joined with a two by two strip as long as the required length of the table, and on these pieces a sheet of stout burlap or canvas is securely fastened. For indoor work a more durable table can be built of lumber. It should be lined with burlap having straw or similar material placed between burlap and the wood.

When everything is in readiness the first operation is the preparation of barrels. The quarter hoop should be forced down firmly and three nails driven in in a slanting direction, and clinched upon the inside. The face end of the barrel should be nailed and the headlines placed in it. The fruit for the face should then be placed neatly in the barrel. For this

purpose it is well to support the barrel a few inches from the ground while performing the operation. The grade of the apples should be precisely the same in the face as in the rest of the barrel and there should not be the slightest attempt to get high-colored or specially perfect fruit for the face. Each apple is laid with the stem end down, the stem having been previously cut off with a stemmer. Upon no consideration should a very large or very small apple be used to finish up in the centre of the face. If the apples are colored, the second layer should be placed so that the color of the apples will show through between the apples for the first layer. After this second layer is laid the apples may be turned in from the round bottom baskets in which the graded apples have been placed. Never use any device that will require the apples to fall any distance into their place on grading table or in the barrel.

The presumption is that the grading has been done off the grading table, and that fruit of a perfectly uniform grade is put in each barrel. As each basketful is placed in the barrel, the barrel should be shaken (racked) slightly, not so as to throw the apples against each other or against the side of the barrel violently, but just sufficiently to settle them into place. It must not be supposed that this racking can be done successfully, if it is delayed until the barrel is nearly full.

When the barrel is full to within two or three layers of the top, a “follower,” a round piece of plank slightly smaller than the head of a barrel, is placed on the apples and the packer holds this firmly in place while he continues to rack or shake the barrel. The effect of this is to make a comparatively level surface upon which the last process or “tailing up” can be done. It is well to note here that the “follower” should be covered with heavy felt, such as is used by harness makers for pads.

A TEST OF THE PACKER.

The process of “tailing” a barrel of apples is the severest test of a good packer. It consists in arranging the last two or more rows of apples so that they will project slightly above the barrel. The characteristic of good tailing is to have the apples of the last two rows placed solidly and evenly so that when finished the head will touch with the same pressure each apple exposed. This is a very difficult thing to accomplish even where considerable time is taken in the operation, and it is only a skilful packer who can perform this operation quickly and well. It is a common fault with unskilled packers to allow one or more apples to project above the general surface. When pressure is put upon the barrel, these apples take the whole pressure at first, and are frequently crushed before the head is in place.

*Condensed from a bulletin on Apple Packing, issued by the Dominion Fruit Division.