

HOW TO GROW APPLES.

VALUABLE HINTS ON THE PLANTING OF ORCHARDS BY MR. R. W. SHEPHERD.

THE summer meeting of the Provincial Fruit Growers' Society, held at Stanstead Plain, was brought to a close on the 18th of August. At the evening session Mr. R. W. Shepherd, the well known pomologist of Como, read a paper on the planting of orchards, in the course of which he said:—

In the "good old days" of planting orchards in Quebec province it was thought proper to set the rows of trees only twenty or twenty-five feet apart. There are, in fact, few orchards of fifty years of age where the trees were planted at greater distances than twenty-five feet apart. The result of this mistake has been to produce orchards in which, as the trees grew, completely shaded the ground, they interlaced their branches with one another and became unfruitful, bearing fruit of small size and imperfectly colored. To mend matters the orchardist starts out to prune his trees, with an axe and saw, slashing and cutting right and left large branches in order to admit some light and air, the most necessary adjuncts to successful orcharding. All this work of slashing and cutting of branches is the result of the intense desire to plant out as many trees as possible to the acre—another proof of the shortsightedness and avariciousness of human nature. In this enlightened age, do not let us repeat the mistakes of our grandfathers. Let us understand first that an apple tree must have

PLENTY OF AIR AND SUNLIGHT

to produce perfect and well colored fruit. A tree of forty or fifty years of age standing in the open, in good, well cultivated soil, will bear as fine specimens of fruit

as a tree fifteen years old. It is a common idea that the finest specimens of apples are grown on young trees; but give the old trees the same sunlight and air, with like cultivation and nourishment to the soil in which its far-spreading rootlets permeate, and you will see equally fine specimens of fruit.

In this age of necessary spraying of trees and thorough working among them, it is absolutely imperative that the new orchard trees be planted at greater distances apart than heretofore. Everyone who has tried to spray an old orchard knows how laborious the work is, and, generally, how imperfectly it is accomplished. In two orchards that I planted recently at Como, we set the trees thirty-three feet apart each way, i. e., thirty-three feet in the rows, and the same between the rows. I believe that for such varieties as St. Lawrence, Winter St. Lawrence, Canada Baldwin and others, even forty feet apart would be preferable.

FALL PLANTING.

There has been considerable difference of opinion as to the proper season to plant apple trees, whether in the spring or the fall. I have had good results with either. Let me give you the result of my efforts last fall and last spring. We all know, to our cost many of us, what a very severe winter the past one was to many old as well as young trees. Therefore, the planting of an orchard last fall was attended with considerable risk. About the first of November last, we planted one hundred and twenty-six trees of the following varieties: Fameuse, McIntosh Red, Rochelle, Canada Red, Scott's Winter. The soil had been well ploughed and