

## THE QUESTION OF VARIETIES IN APPLES.

**T**HIS is a very old and vexed question for the fruit grower. Time was when the variety mattered little. There were cider apples, cooking apples, and dessert apples, and their names were of little moment; for the price was the same for all. The only question was productiveness, and for this the Greening and Baldwin were the favorites with planters of thirty years ago. Then it was found that red apples sold better than green, and the favorites were Baldwin, King, and Spy; but as time passed, the Baldwin did not always meet expectations, the King was unproductive and the Spy too slow in coming into bearing; so that of late the Ben Davis has enjoyed a season of great popularity because it seemed to combine in one apple productiveness, color, and shipping qualities.

## QUALITY THE LEADING FEATURE.

**O**F late however, the question of quality has become more and more important until we find our finest quality, colored cooking apple, the King, is bringing the very highest price in the British market, being sold sometimes as high as \$7.00 a barrel when Greenings and Baldwins are only \$3.00 and \$5.00. We have no doubt at all that quality will every year become more important and that, for the best results, especially in a fancy trade, high flavor will be in time a more important feature for the grower to consider, than even productiveness of tree or color of fruit. For the man who can afford to wait, and who will give the best cultivation, our Northern Spy is most to be commended, for it combines quality and beauty as no other apple on the list, while the Ben Davis is almost at the bottom of the list for quality, and should be planted sparingly.

## THE BEN DAVIS.

**O**UR position on this question is strengthened by the present drop in demand for Ben Davis, where this apple is best

known. Immense orchards of it have been planted in Illinois and great profits have been made from them; but a change has come, for consumers have tired of an apple of such poor quality and are asking for something better. In proof, we quote from "The Fruit Grower's Journal," of Cobden, Ill., as follows: "The current receipts of apples in this and other leading markets of the West at present and for some time past, show that over nine-tenths of the receipts are of the Ben Davis variety. On last Saturday four boats unloaded on our levee 10,000 barrels of apples, fully three-fourths of them from Illinois and the remainder from Missouri. A canvas of the subject among the receivers disclosed the fact that 9,500 barrels were Ben Davis, and railroad receipts show a similar record. Now this proportion is out of all reason, greatly to the detriment of the apple industry and an injury to the apple growers at large.

"For years the Ben Davis has been found a profitable apple from a commercial standpoint, and this has led to a heavy run on the nurserymen for such trees. The demand not only continued without abatement, but rapidly increased to the exclusion of all the better sorts, and we are thus confronted with the startling fact that a large number of the best varieties grown had to give way to one of the poorest in cultivation—an apple hardly fit to eat or cook, and yet every market in the entire southwest is now flooded with it. The inevitable result is before us, as the Ben Davis is now selling at figures that average only a trifle over half that the other sorts are bringing.

"A most discouraging feature is still in store for the Ben Davis, for most of the orders coming in for apples now request no more Ben Davis. Even the country merchant, who orders only five or ten barrels, almost invariably adds, 'Don't send me any Ben Davis.' Thus much lower prices for it seem assured, while the other sorts, so much