

## PICKING AND MARKETING PEARS.

I THINK I may safely say that the ripening of pears by growers has received but little attention until very recently, the purchaser invariably attending to that whenever they were sold in market for eating. In the past, I have annually supplied market men with hundreds of boxes at a shipment, that they might ripen for that purpose. They would store them away in some convenient place, and frequently cull them over, taking out the ripe ones, until they were all disposed of.

Very often such purchases did not prove very profitable, though sold at a much higher price, from the simple fact that the place in which they were stored was not at all suitable for the purpose; the principal loss, which was by decay, being very great.

Many years back, finding my crops greatly increasing and the price declining, particularly for green stock, caused me to give the subject of ripening the fruit before shipping my most serious attention. That season, I selected fruit from all the varieties that I was growing (some fifteen or more), and put them in various place in my house (which is of brick) from cellar to garret and also on a shady porch, and carefully noted the results.

The following spring, I erected houses especially for the purpose. (Described house here. Size, platform, how used, etc.)

The fruit to be ripened is carefully picked and brought to the ripening room, where it is at once assorted; all inferior, ripe, specked and bruised are carefully culled out, the others being

placed in baskets (7-8 peach baskets) and piled as high as a man can reach and kept there until they begin to ripen which will be from 10 to 15 days, if the fruit is properly picked from the trees. By that time, any variety that you are at work on should be gathered and put in the house. It is during this period of picking that the market is generally overstocked and prices low. As soon as they begin to ripen, commence on the first you put in, to cull them over, taking out the ripe ones to ship, putting back the green ones for a future culling, until finally they are all ripe and disposed of.

You can work, say, on the Howell and Duchess for at least three weeks after you finish picking, before they are all ripe enough to ship. Before you have gotten through with these varieties, the Kiefer is ready to begin on, and when you have finished these, the Lawrence will follow, and it generally takes until about the first or fifth of December to close out our pear crop.

As to varieties to ripen in house, I will say, that all varieties are not adapted to this system; in fact many varieties cannot be handled in this way, as they will ripen much better on the tree, and can be held, if desirable, much longer in that way. This is particularly true of the Bartlett; when housed, the Bartletts all ripen nearly at the same time, but fortunately, it is a variety, and one of the leading and most largely grown, that sells well to canners and shippers when green, and they prefer them in that way.—Report Md. H. Soc.