



Packing the Apple Crop in the Orchard of F. A. Forster, Bowmanville, Ont.

vesting and packing as he otherwise would have been. This was the grower's mistake, and now he, as well as the trade generally, have discovered, to their sorrow, that as a result of bad practices the consumers of Canadian fruit have been unfavorably impressed with it. In consequence it may take some years to live down the mistakes of the past.

Within the last few years the trade has undergone a great change in its methods of marketing followed. The numerous cooperative associations organized throughout the province has at last set the grower thinking. Now he knows that he is interested in the fruit until it reaches the consumer, and that the size of his cheque will be regulated by the good or bad sales made. Naturally, therefore, he is now interested not only in the quality but also in the proper packing and handling of the fruit.

We come now to the fruit dealer. Some few may say that the dealer or middleman should be cut out. I agree with the majority that there is room and always will be room for the reputable dealer or middleman. With them we have the two mediums through which to market our fruit, namely cooperative associations and reputed dealers.

Have the dealers made mistakes? Just have a talk with a dealer of twenty-five years' experience and ask him. Perhaps the greatest mistake made by dealers has been the handling of too large quantities of fruit. This involves the hiring of a large number of operators and results in a large percentage of men or boys being engaged who know little or nothing about the work. As a consequence, through lack of judgment, large quantities of inferior fruit are placed on the market, shipments are refused, and contracts broken. It also involves on the one hand the picking and mar-

keting of immature fruit, in order to get the work done, and on the other hand, that which is equally as bad, the leaving on the trees of large quantities of the best fruit until caught by the wind storms or frost. This always has been no small cause of our marketing troubles.

One dealer informed me that he made a mistake when he took an advance on his shipments, which necessitated his apples all going to a certain quarter whether it was the best market for them or not. Other dealers may have discovered that they have made similar mistakes, and it is just possible that some of those who gave the advances have made the same discovery.

#### COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS

Do cooperative associations make any mistakes? They do. The principle of cooperation is perfect. The practice sometimes faulty. The kingpin on which turns the success or failure of an association seems to be the manager. Accepting anyone as manager except a first-class man is the greatest mistake an association can make.

Some of the associations made the grave mistake the first year of their existence of not making their initial pack such as to give their dealer good satisfaction. As a result they had to look for a new dealer the second year. Changing dealers each year is bad business. It never has been known to give more than ordinary results.

It has been truthfully said that the best advertisement is a "satisfied customer." This surely is the key to successful marketing, and should be the aim of not only the association, but of each of their individual members.

At first thought we naturally conclude that the higher the contract price received for our fruit the better. This has

proved to be a great mistake. A manager of an association may, by holding at an exorbitant figure early in the season, secure a contract for his pack at his figure. Later, however, when the fruit is delivered, or being delivered, if the dealer finds that he is being loaded up with fruit of only ordinary quality bought at fancy prices, while his competitor across the street is putting him out of business with fruit bought at a reasonable price, then there is bound to be trouble. If the fruit is at all defective it is refused, or a rebate is demanded, or perhaps a lawsuit results. I would much prefer a good reasonable "live and let live" price, with no rebates and no lawsuits.

Perhaps the greatest problem yet unsolved, and a requirement that should engage the attention of the shipping end of the trade, is the pre-cooling of fruit before shipment. It is required in order that the consumer may get a larger percentage of our fruit at its best.

There is another general practice in marketing which all growers and shippers should war against, and that is the placing on the market of too large a percentage of the lower grades of apples.

With the higher ideals that now seem to be established in the minds of the growers and the packers, coupled with the facilities that are being placed within the reach of all concerned, we should soon be able to eliminate our most serious marketing troubles, and secure for the Canadian fruit industry the high place it is entitled to in the markets of the world.

#### Orchard Cultivation

T. G. Bunting, C. E. F., Ottawa

Some of our growers are producing better fruit at harvest time than others, and it is noticeable that these more prominently successful ones, when asked regarding what date they commence cultivation, invariably say that their aim is to work their orchards as early in the spring as possible, or when the soil is dry enough to plow. They tell us that to conserve moisture, a loose and fine soil mulch must cover the orchard, that it should be from two to four inches deep, and that it must be put there before the ground dries out.

Plowing should be the first operation practised during the spring on most soils, perhaps on all, with the exception of sand. Sufficient depth of mulch cannot be gotten with the disc harrow or other implement without plowing.

Both sod mulching and clean cultivation as means of conserving moisture have their exponents. The majority of fruit growers prefer to adopt clean cultivation instead of mulching the sod with manure. By clean cultivation, not only is the moisture in the soil held, but also a great work is done in the way of the destruction of many injurious insects.