

vessels have been employed exclusively in the apple shipping business between Annapolis Royal and London.

Many conflicting statements have been published regarding the apple product of Nova Scotia, and the amount of apples exported from the Province. In one journal recently there was a statement that "in the Annapolis and Cornwallis valleys, in favorable seasons, upwards of 600,000 bushels of the finest apples" were raised; and in another it was stated that "200,000 bushels were shipped abroad by the Fruit Shipping Company of Annapolis." I have taken great pains to ascertain the facts in the case, and have sought information from the most trustworthy sources; and I am inclined to think the above statement largely over-estimated. Still the volume of the apple growing business in the Province, and the apple export trade from this port is something enormous. But there is no "Fruit Shipping Company" here, as such; although there are many firms and business men engaged in forwarding apples to London, and London houses have their agents resident here who purchase and forward.

Now a word as to the growing of apples, and the varieties. The soil in the lower Annapolis Valley is a stiff clay; and the orchards occupy the land between the diked lands—which lie along the river—and the foot of the North Mountains. The older orchards are invariably in grass, and when young trees are put out, the land is cultivated and manured till the trees are well into bearing. Sometimes buckwheat is sown and the crop plowed under, and generally potatoes are grown as the chief crop. [Let me say just here in parenthesis that the potato beetle is unknown in the Province, and it is a luxury to see the fine, broad-leaved fields of rank-growing potatoes which are so common. Corn is not much grown, and the leading grain crop is oats.] Little manure is applied to orchards, and top-dressing for the trees is not practiced. The apples which keep the longest are grown in the lower Annapolis Valley; and it is the opinion of shippers that apples grown on a heavy, clay soil endure shipping, and will retain their quality to a much longer period than those grown on a warmer, lighter, more loamy (free) soil. Again others tell me that the influence of the flow of the tides and the salt atmosphere is beneficial to the fruit, while all agree that the more hardy kinds are grown between Lower Granville and Bridgetown, a distance of forty-five miles from the Annapolis Basin; those grown above there, on higher and more loamy soil being less *hardy*, as it is termed, and not being as good keepers, though generally of a finer flavor. The varieties are *Nonypareil* (Russets); Baldwin; Bishop

(Ribston, Royal) Pippin, and Rhode Island Greening. These are the shipping sorts and their relative rank or excellence is shown by the order in which they are named. But in addition there are large quantities of Vandovers, King of Tompkins, (I have forgotten the new standard name for this sort), Gravenstein, Alexander, Hubbardston Nonesuch and Spitzenburga. The early varieties are all taken by the local markets, Halifax, St. John and the States. There are many growers here who have orchards of two or three thousand trees each, and one thousand barrels is not an uncommon crop for many individual growers to raise in good years.

Formerly the business of handling and shipping apples aboard was conducted in a very miscellaneous sort of way. Every cellar that was available in Annapolis Royal was chartered for the storage of apples, ready for shipment. But year by year the business has been assuming more importance, and is now reduced to a thorough system. The annual apple crop of the Province, in average years, is not far from two hundred and fifty thousand barrels, and the number exported is from eighty to one hundred and ten thousand barrels. In the winter of 1881-82 one firm here—T. S. & F. C. Whitman—shipped direct to London sixty thousand barrels. In 1882-83 they sent abroad thirty thousand barrels, and last winter from five to six thousand barrels—the bulk of their shipments last winter were to our own States, comprising in the neighbourhood of fifteen to eighteen thousand barrels. The above firm represents here the London firm of Knill & Grant, and through the kindness of Mr. F. C. Whitman—a young gentleman to whom I am under obligations for much information, and who has himself been abroad three or four times—I was enabled to visit the large Fruit Storing Warehouse, built here by Mr. Richard Grant, of the London house of Knill & Grant, the only one of its kind in the Province. This house is 100 by 150 feet, commenced in August 1882, and finished in December of that year. It has a capacity for storing forty thousand barrels of apples. There is connected with this building a pier and two miles of private railway. The total cost of the building was \$40,000. The building is of brick, the foundation wall of stone, forming the lower story, being two feet thick, and the elevation walls one foot thick. It has an iron roof. The bottom of the cellar is six feet below high water mark, the grounds about the building being protected from the sea by private dyke. The cellar is twelve feet high in the clear. The bottom is moist and damp all the time, and there is a loose, movable floor of boards, resting on joist about

four inches above the earth bottom. "The damper a collar is for keeping apples, the better," says Mr. Whitman; and many apple growers make the same statement. Along one side (inside) of the building runs the track for admitting cars for loading, and raised above this, so that the floor comes just level with the floor of the cars, is the main floor for sorting, handling, loading, and unloading the cars. The facilities of this building are so complete for its purpose, that a crew of five men will take two hundred barrels of apples from the cellar, sort them out, put them in cars, run them to the pier and place them in the steamer in one hour. At one time in the winter of 1882-83 there were six thousand five hundred barrels of apples in this house; and in the town, in different cellars, seventeen thousand barrels awaiting shipment. In the fall when this house has received its complement of apples, the ventilators are opened for a few days until the "sweating" process is completed and then it is completely closed and not opened for the winter, the building being thoroughly frost-proof. This year on the 5th day of June, apples were re-packed in the house, which had been in there for six months, with a loss of only two barrels in one hundred. These were shipped to Boston and sold at \$5 the barrel.

Upon the pier owned by the Acadia Steamship Company is a building 30 by 250 feet, built for the purpose of the temporary storage of apples from the country awaiting shipment. This is a wooden building having a double wall, with a packing of four inches of sawdust and a three-inch plank for the outer covering. Apples have been kept in this building all winter by having base-burning stoves burning in the coldest weather. Its capacity is six thousand barrels.

Nearly all the apples exported from Annapolis are shipped direct to the markets at London Bridge. The passage usually takes fourteen days, and the cost of placing a barrel from Annapolis to the London market is, on an average, (it is a matter depending upon freights), \$1. They are packed in new barrels made for the purpose by local manufactures near the various orchards. These barrels hold two and a half bushels, and cost from 22 to 25 cents. A hard wood barrel for apples for the retail Christmas trade in London, having a flat hoop, has been made to same extent, and has given good satisfaction. At one time a layer of excelsior over the apples at each end of the barrels was used, but has been discarded. Its object was to keep the apples firm in the barrel and to prevent bruising. But if properly packed they do not require this extra protection, and the tendency