

RUSSIAN APPLES AND PEARS AT MOSCOW MARKET.

A LETTER FROM RUSSIA.

Dr. ALEXANDER GRELL, of Moscow, one of the well known growers of Russian trees, wrote a pamphlet containing some interesting articles upon the apples and pear exposed for sale in the Moscow market, their market value and the value they have for commercial orchards. From his lengthy communication I extract for you the descriptions of those kinds of which I send you scions. To some of them I will add hints from my own experience.

I. PEARS.

1. *Bessemianka*.—This pear received its name because of its small seeds. It is an excellent pear for the north. It originated at Kaluga. It is sweet, juicy and bears transportation well, if harvested early. It ripens in September and keeps for two or three weeks, but, of course can be kept longer in cold storage. The tree is a vigorous grower, pyramidal in form, begins to bear at about the age of five years and produces abundant and annual crops thereafter. It is distinguished from all other pears because its flower buds are round, clinging close to the branches like those of apples, while those of other varieties are sharp. At Moscow winter kills it and it does not bear more than 34° C of cold. It is more hardy in the southern governments of Tula and Riazan. The market price of the Bessemianka is 2 and 3 rubles for one pound.*

2. *Dame Pear* or *Griapa*.—Called at Tula, Milepin pear. This variety is like the Bessemianka, but the fruit is yellow with red side. It carries well to Moscow from Tula. The tree is not hardy at Moscow. It is a variety little known.

3. *Lemon Pear*.—This pear resembles a lemon, of a pale yellow color, without blush. It is of beautiful appearance and pleasant to the taste. It ripens about the end of September and keeps two or three weeks. The tree is large headed, leaves round, bears freely, but is not hardy at Moscow. It is good at Tula, Riazan and Kursk governments. The value is about the same as the Bessemianka. This sort has two sub-varieties. It cannot be of Russian origin, as it is found in large quantities in western Russia where it is valued for drying and other purposes. In productive years you can buy this variety in the market, either in the south or the north of Russia, at a very low price. I send you scions of this variety.

4. *Tonkovievka* or *Smolensk Pear*.—Its name is derived from its long pedicels and thin branches. The flavor is good, but it soon becomes over-ripe. Size medium, skin yellow with one side red. The tree grows quickly. It is beautiful and is not easily affected by the frost at Moscow. The fruit is worth in our market from 1½ to 2 rubles per pound. It is good stock to use for grafting tender sorts of pears on, because it is so hardy and, for this reason, I call the attention of fruit growers in northern Canada to this variety.

II. APPLES.

1. *Plodovitka*.—Not large, medium, with red side, ripens in October and keeps all winter. The tree is pyramidal and is hardy. This kind is good only for "wetting."† Price, 1 to 1½ rubles per pound. There are two varieties of this kind, the ordinary, *Plodovitka* from Kiev and a red variety.

2. *Skrut*, also *German Skrut*.—Flesh white, skin pale red, ripens in September. The tree is a spreading grower, leaves small with white blossoms. The tree is hardy. The fruit is small and only grown for the St. Petersburg market, where it is very much prized. Worth about two rubles.

3. *Skrisk*.—Medium size, ribbed, dark green with red flesh, of acid, vinous, aromatic flavor keeps through the winter. The tree is pyramidal with long leaves; endures the cold very well and is an annual bearer. This is one of the better varieties of Russian apples. It has been distributed under the name of *Avenarius*.

4. *Anis*.—Very pleasant, red apple, vinous in taste and aromatic in flavor. Ripens toward the end of September and keeps till November, carries well and sells well. The

*1 pound=16 kilogrammes; 1 ruble=about 60 cents.

†A dish used in Russia. Apples are put in kegs, covered with water and left in cellar. When they become sufficiently acid, they are served with meat, like cucumbers.

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