

A PROFITABLE PEAR ORCHARD.

Franklin Davis, the veteran fruit grower of Richmond, Va., gives an account, in his report to the American Pomological Society, of the pear orchard of the Old Dominion Fruit-growing Company. The ground which it occupies is on the south bank of the James river, 75 miles below Richmond. The farm belonging to the company contains 500 acres, mostly sandy loam, underlaid with shell-marl from 5 to 15 feet below the surface, with a natural drainage. About 18,000 peach trees were planted from 1860 to 1867, but the fruit rotted badly, and the orchard was neglected. At the same time a few pear trees was set out. About 1871 the pear trees gave handsome fruit, which sold well in market. The owner then saw that it was the place for pears, and next year set out 1,000 Bartletts. The following spring 400 more Bartletts were added, and 600 Clapp's favorite. In 1873 the above named company was incorporated, and the farm passed into its hands, with a capital stock of \$20,000, in 200 shares of \$100 each. Nine thousand more trees were set out the following spring, and the same number a year later. The orchard now numbers over 20,000 trees, or over 19,000 Bartletts. When planted they were 1 and 2 year trees, were cut back to a foot of the ground, and were thus made quite low headed, which form was thought to be best suited to that climate. Twenty or thirty acres are annually planted with corn, as much more with peanuts, and the remainder with black peas, plowed under in autumn. This, with the marl, constitutes nearly the only fertilizing.

Clapp's Favorite ripens about the first of July, and the Bartletts from the 10th to the 25th. The fruit is carefully assorted and graded, and packed in boxes holding a bushel each, made of $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch dressed lumber, and nearly

water-tight. It carries better and ripens better in tight boxes. Being gathered ten days before ripe, time is allowed for conveyance to New-York and Boston, and for the arrangements of the commission merchant and the retailer.

The company paid \$12,000 for the farm, leaving \$8,000 for planting trees, and various other expenses. The first dividend was paid in 1880. The pear crop brought \$4,000, which, with the balance in the treasury from the previous year, gave a cash dividend of 20 per cent. on the capital. In 1881, four thousand boxes of pears were sold, with net returns of \$13,684, out of which 50 per cent. was paid to the stockholders, besides 10 per cent. set aside for current expenses. Most of the trees were set out within the last eight years, and are still comparatively small.

The two valuable facts taught by this successful experiment are—1. Choosing a site which previous experience had proved well adapted to pear-growing; and 2. Planting the orchard where the fruit would ripen four to six weeks before that of the multitude of orchards at the North, but easy of access to northern cities, to which the boxes could be conveyed for less than 25 cents each. Another important point was in securing the last named advantage before other southern orchards were under way, to dispute the profits of the early market.—*Country Gentleman.*

KIEFFER'S HYBRID.—This new and unique pear was raised by Peter Kieffer, Roxbury, near Philadelphia, from seed of the Chinese Sand pear, accidentally crossed with Beurre d'Anjou or some other kind grown near it. Tree remarkably vigorous, having large, dark green, glossy leaves, and is an early and very prolific bearer. The fruit is of good size, good color, good quality, and is a promising variety for the table or mar-