

## PACKING APPLES.

A convention of shippers of apples was held recently at Buffalo, N.Y., at which a paper on the proper way of shipping apples was read by L. K. Sutton, of Ohio, in which he said:

"We will take the barrel as the standard package for use in storing apples, but the writer firmly believes that in the near future the bushel box will be used quite extensively for storing the better grades of apples for late keeping. The barrel should be made of No. 1 staves, heads and hoops, the face and head lined, top and quarter hoops nailed with three quarter-inch nails before going to the orchard; never use a wire nail. Our experience has been that apples hand-picked from the tree and carefully placed in the barrel show best results. Apples thus packed show their bloom better and show a life of freshness that apples which are run over a table or laid on the ground for a time before going into the barrel do not have. When you please a buyer's eye the sale is half made.

"We believe in double facing, using apples as nearly one size and color as possible, and to have the face apples represent the remainder of the barrel in size as near as practicable. Shake the barrel gently after each basket is emptied until the barrel is filled. Some varieties will stand filling three inches above the chime, others not so much; right at this point is where great care is needed. Apples properly filled in the barrel, and an experienced man with a press, can add very much to the keeping and selling quality of the apples. We often find from eight to twenty or more apples badly bruised at the bottom, caused by too much pressing; simply a waste and loss, and frequently a barrel will shake, and the dealer must use a like quantity to plug or fill the barrel before sending it out to a customer. With proper care in barrelling and heading, all this extra work and waste of apples would be avoided. Shake well and level off the face before putting in the head, then nail and head line carefully. It takes a little time, but one barrel bursting in a car will cause more loss than the extra labor spent in securely nailing the bottom. A careful packer will put a private or distinguishing mark on an extra fine colored barrel that will frequently bring his employer an additional 50 cents or \$1 from stand buyers who want quality, and the same plan followed by marking an off barrel will assist the salesman materially in satisfying a customer who wants a lower-priced apple.

"It is preferable to load apples on the car the same day as picked, and apples placed in storage as soon as possible after packing keep better than when lying on the ground or stacked up in piles under trees or alongside the station and exposed to rain and sun. The question on what day to begin barrelling for storage is frequently asked; our rule is when the seeds

are black, apples pull fairly free from the limb, with the short stem remaining in the apples, even if the proper color is lacking. Above all, use only a standard-sized barrel, the package recommended by this association; and make three grades of apples: firsts, seconds, and drops. The apples that drop while picking are often the largest and best colored, but should not be put in with the fruit for storage, even if they fall on soft ground or grass: the fall injures them, even if the skin is unbroken; they will show dead color in a few weeks and injure the sale. The header should use care in marking plainly the variety and the face end of each barrel to save the salesman much annoyance and labor."

## POULTRY ON FARMS.

There are scores of farmers at this moment keeping 100 hens who will tell you that they do not produce more than 7,000 eggs per annum, and that their chickens do not fetch, on an average, more than 3s. 6d. per couple, and, even with what fowls can pick up for themselves, they scarcely repay the trouble of keeping.

Allowing this to be true, so far as they are concerned, does it prove that poultry on farms cannot be made a source of profit, or that there is a "screw loose somewhere"? I am inclined to think it points to the latter solution—in fact, that there are several screws loose.

The average farmer is satisfied with a very indifferent specimen of barn-door fowl, often in-bred, more often mated up with less than no care, he being quite content, when he considers fresh blood necessary, to introduce into his yard males bought for an old song from a peddler, birds whose stamina, egg and flesh-producing qualities may be of the meanest order, resulting in a progeny of poor layers and indifferent table fowls.

The same farmer may be noted for the quality of his other live stock, and make it a profitable branch of business, and the difference in results may be attributed to the same care and discrimination which he affords to his cattle being withheld from his feathered friends—he neglecting to breed them with care, to feed them with care, and to house them with care, his chickens taking their chance with the adults, and, in consequence, stunted in their growth, by reason of insufficient feeding, and crooked-breasted by being allowed to perch too early. Is there any wonder at his yard being filled with indifferent layers and poor table birds?

If better results be desired, the few hints that follow may be taken with advantage. Hens, to be profitable, should produce 120 eggs per annum; a fair proportion of these must be laid in the winter months, and chickens for table purposes should weigh five pounds and upwards. In order to at-

tain these ends from an indifferent lot of barn-door fowls, there is no call for a great revolution nor a great outlay. The first matter requiring attention is the fowl-house; so that this is wind and water-tight, and at the same time well-ventilated; also determine how many fowls can be accommodated therein with due regard to their health. As the breeding season approaches, select the best of the laying hens by means of observation at the nest boxes, and of the activity and intelligent appearance of the birds—a bright-looking comb, large in proportion to the breed kept, is also a good sign of a prolific layer. From this selection pick out the largest birds, separate and mate them up, according to number, with one or more pure bred cocks of a good laying and table fowl strain; a Langshan, from its hardness, winter laying qualities, its size and beautiful white, juicy flesh, would be a most suitable breed, even though it is so often stated that black-legged fowls are not in favor for the table. This may be true as regards the London market, but country experience goes to prove that the careful housewife pays more attention to the quality of flesh and size of a fowl than to the leg color, when on marketing intent.

Pay a little more attention to the setting hens by giving them one good meal a day, and making them come off the nest for it, and their dust bath. Vermin causes more hens to desert their eggs than anything, and attention to these two items will result in bringing off a larger proportion of chicks.

Coming to the chickens, keep them growing and separated from the old stock for the first three months of their life, and they will develop into fine, healthy birds.

Now the question comes as to getting the greatest possible number of eggs during the winter months. The royal road to this end is to keep the birds warm at night, and, as far as possible, out of damp slushy yards during the day; to feed them with warm food in the morning, to change their diet as much as possible, and to remember that fowls cannot find many grubs or insects in cold weather, so that they need an occasional meal made with broth, or containing well-boiled flesh, to make up for the loss of this portion of their natural food. It may be here mentioned that the too frequent use of Indian corn tends to produce internal fat, and causes diseases of the liver and egg organs.

Space permits little further to be said, beyond advising that the hens be got rid of before their second moult, and that all eggs sent to market should be collected from cleanly-kept nest boxes only, by which means a reputation will be secured for selling perfectly reliable, tempting-looking eggs; also that a poultry account be kept, and a practical manual on the subject be added to the farmhouse bookshelf. —H. Franklin, in *The Cable*.