

Handling Apples for Export*

R. W. Shepherd, Montreal, Que.

IN Quebec the leading and most profitable apples are Fameuse, McIntosh Red and other highly colored and highly flavored varieties that are of delicate texture. They are too delicate to be handled in a blundering, slipshod fashion, if the best prices are to be realized. The way the finest Fameuse apples are handled from the time they are picked until they are shipped, would cause one to think the fruit was as hard as a Ben Davis or Lawver, instead of being an apple with the thinnest of skins and the most delicate texture of flesh.

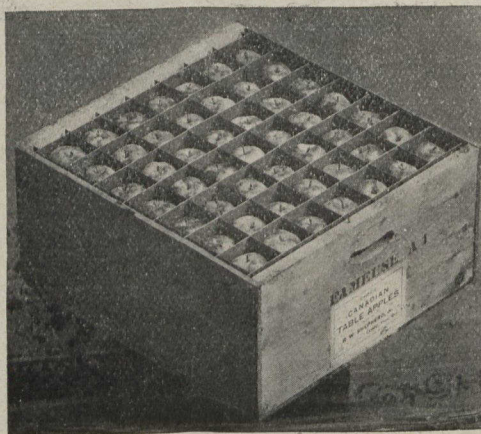
The picker's baskets should be lined with burlap or something similar, and the pickers should be taught to handle the fruit like eggs. Packing tables with coverings of canvas, instead of boards, should always be used and the full baskets emptied carefully. The sorting and packing is best done in the orchard, as by that means the fruit gets less handling and is less knocked about. There are occasions when it is expedient to put fruit intended for boxes into barrels (with a little hay or straw in the bottom of each barrel) and the barrels can be carried in a spring wagon to the fruit house to be packed in boxes the next day or on wet days. The best plan is to put Fameuse apples in the export packages as soon as possible after picking.

When the packing is done, it is advisable to store the packages without delay in some cool place for a week or 10 days. My plan is to put all packages, whether cases, boxes, or barrels, in cold storage for a few days before shipping. This is one of the principal essentials to successful and profitable exportation of the finest Quebec apples. Frequently we have warm days in the month of October, when the thermometer runs 70 to 75 degrees. How can apples reach the other side of the Atlantic in good order if they are picked and packed in a temperature of 70 degrees, kept in a warm shed for a week or two, and then put into the warm holds of vessels to be kept there for 10 or 12 days? If the fruit is thoroughly cooled before shipping, it will arrive at the English market in fine condition.

It is most important that the fruit should be in good condition when it leaves. It costs money to put it in cold storage, but it pays to do so. It pays to do it most years even with No. 2 Fameuse packed in barrels. I have proved it repeatedly. Last season No. 2 Fameuse and Wealthy, sent to Quebec market, realized \$2.00 a barrel; but the same fruit, after having been

10 days in cold-storage and shipped to Glasgow realized 15 to 16 shillings a barrel, which is equal, after paying all expenses, to \$1.10 to \$1.25 over the net prices on the Quebec market. Hundreds of barrels of No. 2 Fameuse were shipped last season from Montreal to England and Scotland to be sold at three to six shillings a barrel. This is shown by the market reports. This great loss was caused by the fruit being carelessly handled, carelessly packed and shipped in a heated condition. The fact that prices on the other side are high, as they were the past season, is no reason why blunders should be made in this foolish fashion. Nothing but loss can follow such practice, whereas, if a little more care and intelligence were exercised, the results would have been a handsome profit.

The use of cold-storage prior to shipping apples is not advocated because I



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am interested, either directly or indirectly, in any cold-storage company, but because of practical experience, which has shown the advantages derived from thoroughly cooling fruit before sending it to England. With apples of hard texture (winter apples) this precaution is not so necessary. Many large exporters say that the trouble and expense is too great and that in many cases it is utterly impracticable. My experience has proved that apples cannot be shipped year after year without the shipper noticing the advantages derived when fruit arrives on the other side in good condition. The commission men soon let you know if the barrels are wet, slack or damaged in any way.

Wet condition is caused by shipping the fruit in a heated state; slackness may arise from bad packing or because of some of the fruit becoming bad, causing a shrinkage, which makes the fruit move in the barrel. Apples that are not handpicked and sound should not be shipped in a No. 2 barrel; in fact, as much care should be taken to

pack a barrel of No. 2 apples as a barrel of No. 1. Canadians use great intelligence in handling and packing bacon, cheese and butter, but, with few exceptions, the same careful attention is not paid to our apples.

Root Pruning Fruit Trees

There are times when root pruning is of value in the successful culture of fruit. When the trees are growing luxuriantly and producing wood at the expense of fruit, the practice of root pruning will tend to check growth and promote fruitfulness. The operation is not difficult, nor dangerous when rightly done, but the beginner should start on a small scale or employ an experienced man to do the work for him.

The operation consists in digging a trench around the trees at a distance of three to eight feet, according to the size of the trees, and chopping off most of the large roots. Good judgment is required in the work. Too much mutilation of the roots might give disappointing results. Enough should be done, however, to check vitality. The trench should be refilled, and, if convenient, with poorer soil than was taken out.

The best time for root pruning is in August. It may be done earlier in the season, but the object of root pruning—the change from wood buds to fruit buds—is effected better at this time than any other. Root pruning may be practised, also, on trees, even shrubs and bushes that are susceptible to frost and winter injury. By checking the growth, they will endure severe weather without injury.

Prune Raspberries in August

W. G. Horne, Clarkson, Ont.

The raspberry, when planted on well-adapted soil, is, perhaps, as remunerative as any fruit we grow. With ordinary cultivation, and manuring every second year, a patch, once established, may stand twenty years or more. I have one that has been picked 16 years and this year it is fruiting as well as ever.

Many growers neglect their raspberry patches. After the crop has been gathered the bushes are left often without care until the next spring. On this year's canes is borne next year's crop. Cleaning out the old canes only when convenient is not good practice. The old canes should be pruned out as soon as possible after the picking. They are far easier to cut at that time and it is better for the new cane.

Topping off the canes had better be done in the spring than early fall. Young shoots that grow from fall topping generally winter-kill. Raspberries are being planted more and more each year. The best all-round variety is the Cuthbert.

*A paper read at the annual convention of the Pomological and Fruit Growing Society of the Province of Quebec, held last December.