

It is in this particular that there is the greatest need for improvement at the present time; just how the improvement shall be effected is more or less of a vexed question. There are scores of apple growers who have the skill to produce first-class fruit, while there are comparatively few who have the business ability to place it on the market when and where it will bring the best price. This is no doubt an argument in favor of the division and specialization of labor, whereby the grower confines his attention to the production of the fruit and the dealer to the buying and selling of it. But it has been this division of the work among buyers and handlers and sellers that has so divided the proceeds that there has been little or no profit left for the producer. The growers who make the most out of their apples are those who keep in as close touch as possible with the best markets both at home and abroad. During the shipping season these men watch the market reports daily, and unless prices are satisfactory they hold their fruit until good prices prevail. The great majority, however, of those who have apples to sell wait for some local buyer to come along, and sell for whatever he chooses to offer, either so much per barrel or a lump sum for the crop on the trees. The latter plan is little better than gambling, and at best is a hap-hazard way of doing business.

The only apparent remedy for this state of affairs, and the most promising means of putting the apple trade on a proper business basis, is for the growers in each apple growing section to unite to form a strong co-operative association through which the grading, packing, and marketing may be accomplished.

An effective co-operative association for this purpose, involves the selection of an honest, wide-a-woke, business manager, and the erection of a central packing and storage house at the most convenient point for shipment. Through such an organization boxes and barrels could be purchased wholesale to much better advantage; the grower could devote his whole attention to gathering the crop at the proper season and delivering it in good condition at the central packing house; the association would relieve him of all care and responsibility in grading, packing, and marketing; and with this work in the hands of expert packers, the grade would be uniform and the packing properly done, which would in time inspire confidence in the purchasing public. A good business manager could keep in close touch with the best markets and make sales when and where the fruit was most in demand. In short, consumers would be assured of a better product and growers would realize a better profit.

#### SHIPPING.

From the time the fruit is picked, until it is placed on the market it should not be exposed to sun, rain, or frost, nor should it be subjected to rough or careless handling, which it too often receives when given over to the tender mercies of the transportation companies; and this is