

Horticulture.

Harvesting and Storing Apples.

The present month is the time for securing the winter supply of apples, a large proportion of which, in this country, is grown by farmers. The professional grower knows well the great importance of careful gathering and careful handling of this valuable fruit, but among farmers, too many of whom are short of hands, and always hurried over their work, sufficient care is seldom bestowed in harvesting their orchard crop. So long as the apples are gathered, and taken to market in the readiest way—either loose in the waggon bed, or in bags or barrels, being inevitably well shaken and bruised on the road—yet provided he gets rid of his load at a moderate price, the seller feels no further concern in the matter. He would, however, establish a higher reputation, and be able to secure a better price for his produce, if he bestowed a little more pains in harvesting and marketing his fruit.

The proper time for gathering winter apples is just before any decided frosts set in. Exposure to sharp frost injures the flavour of the fruit, and renders it more liable to decay. They should neither be gathered nor put away wet. Cool, dry weather is the most suitable for this pleasant part of the husbandman's labour. It is almost needless to condemn the rough and ready practice of shaking from the tree such apples as are intended to be kept over winter. Every apple must by this method be considerably bruised. Even if the ground underneath were densely covered with a soft carpeting of grass, or otherwise artificially prepared for the reception of the fruit thus violently dislodged, the blows received by striking against branches and each other in their fall would damage a great number. Every bruise thus received, if it do not break the skin of the apple, breaks up the delicate internal cells filled with juice, which thus escapes and comes in contact with the air. A chemical change is thereby effected, and a process of decay set up, which will before long extend over the whole of the fruit. When stored away in this state, it is not surprising that the apples will not keep; for one decaying apple very quickly infects even a sound one adjacent. The

greatest care is therefore necessary to avoid bruising the fruit in gathering, marketing, or storing it away for winter use. Gathering by hand, into baskets, though a tedious process, is, after all, the best. When the apples are gathered, some farmers are in the habit of leaving them exposed in the orchard, in large heaps, to sweat, as it is called, before taking them into the cellar. This is a bad practice, unless the heaps are small, raised above the ground, on a layer of straw, and protected by a covering from the rain and sunshine, to neither of which should the apples be exposed after being gathered. When they are intended for the market, they should at once be put into barrels, which should, during the process of filling, be gently shaken occasionally, in order to pack the fruit as closely as possible, and prevent the jolting and friction which would happen in transporting them if the apples were loose in the barrel. When this receptacle is well filled, the head should be pressed down with force enough to prevent the apples from moving when the barrel is transported, but not with force sufficient to break the skin, or bruise the flesh of any of the fruit. For storing away,

the apples should be put into barrels, boxes, or bins—the greatest care being taken in every part of the process to handle gently and avoid bruising—and should be kept in a cool, dry cellar, secured from frost, and not exposed to light. When there is room and convenience, choice varieties may be placed on shelves, and covered over with a cloth. In packing in barrels some use sawdust; interposing a thin bed between each layer of apples, and filling up all the interstices with the same material. This is a good plan for excluding the air, but is apt to impart a woody and unpleasant flavour to the fruit. A better protection from air is secured by packing in the same way with dry sand, when it can be procured. But, if carefully gathered, and carefully handled subsequently, apples will keep well in barrels placed in a proper situation—dry, cool and dark.

The apple crop is by far the most important fruit product of this country: and both for private con-

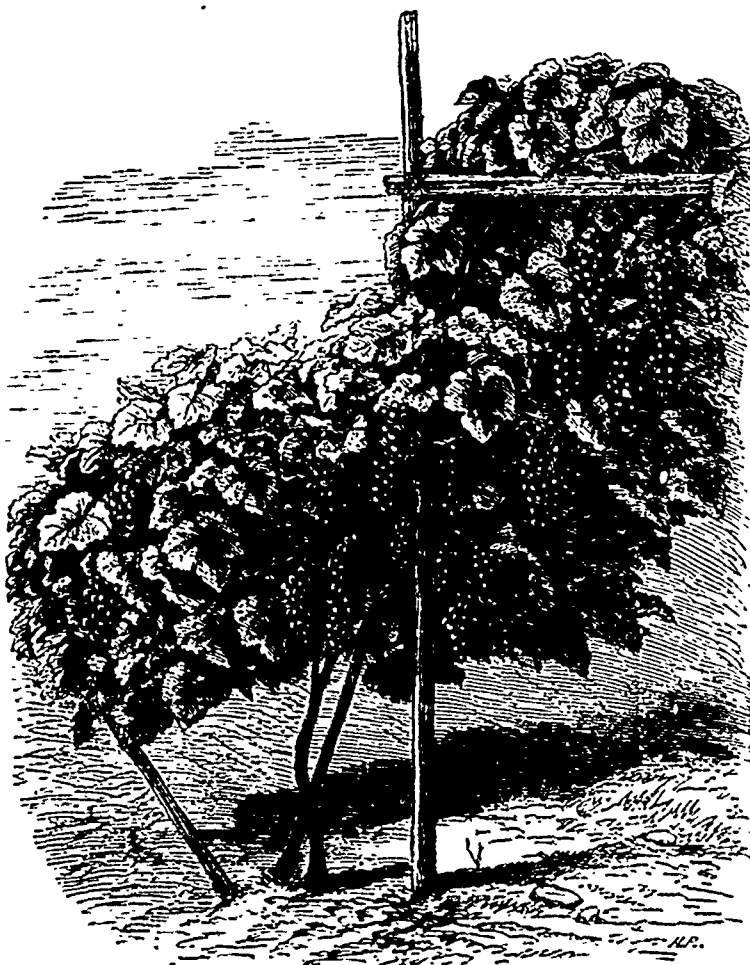
This is its fourth year of bearing. Our artist has depicted a little from the actual appearance of things beneath the vine, the ground being full of layers. As many as possible of these have been struck with a view to the multiplication of the sort. This is of course a disadvantage as it respects a large crop of fruit, but the prolific habit of the vine will at once be seen from the engraving. Mr. Arnold has other promising hybrids, but this one has advanced to a stage which leaves little or no doubt as to its being a triumph of horticultural skill, and a welcome addition to our list of hardy out-door grapes.

Encouragement to Plant Vines.

"Let us plant Vines," says Horace Greely, and to enforce his advice he offers two very liberal prizes to encourage farmers and working men to supply themselves with grapes. We should be glad to see some encouragement offered in a similar manner, by individuals of capital or by the Provincial Association to promote grape culture in Canada. Mr. G., says:—"The grape, under skilful culture, is a surer crop to-day than almost any other delicate fruit, the strawberry only excepted. Experienced growers say that grapes may be grown, wherever they thrive at all, for the price of wheat, pound for pound; yet, while wheat scarcely averages four cents per pound to growers, grapes can almost always be sold at double that price. We can start the vine and enjoy its fruits within three years; whereas at least thrice that time is required to bring an orchard from infancy to maturity. Our farmers and mechanics, their wives and children, but especially our farm-laborers and day-laborers generally ought to eat far more good fruit and far less salt meat; and they cannot until fruit becomes far cheaper and more abundant. I would suggest to our Agricultural Societies, State and local, the expediency of concerted systematic efforts to extend the cultivation of the vine. Let us organize county and town societies which shall have the diffusion of vine culture for one of its prominent objects. It would be easy to have a few vines planted on every farm, and then theft—a sad discouragement to fruit growers—would be obviated. Only let us make grapes as abundant as potatoes, and they will no more be stolen.

A little well-directed effort by a few public spirited men and women will secure to their township an abundance of grapes. If the vine is planted on every farm therein, it will be seldom that the crop will utterly fail. There will at first be many diverse species or varieties, and experience will show which is best adapted to the climate and soil of that locality. Time will teach many valuable lessons, and a few years will give us thousands of skilful vine dressers. We shall live longer and better, have more comfort and less disease, when every dwelling shall be surrounded by its vines. I hope our Agricultural Societies and Farmers' Clubs will devise and adopt fit measures to stimulate the planting of the vine; meantime, I, as a mere beginner, will pay a premium of \$200 to the first, and \$100 to the second township of not less than 100 houses, whose three principal officers shall certify to me that every dwelling in that township has not less than two well planted, thrifty vines."

An exchange paper contains the following imploring advertisement: "Will the gentleman who stole my melons on Sunday night last, return me a few of the seeds, as they are a rare variety?"



sumption and for marketing, the extra time and attention required in careful harvesting will be well bestowed, and be more satisfactory to both producer and consumer than the hasty and careless methods too often practised.

Mr. Arnold's New Grape.

In our issue of Nov. 1st, 1865, we gave an engraving life size, of an average bunch of grapes borne by a new hybrid vine, which, after patient and long-continued experiments, Mr. Chas. Arnold, of Paris, has succeeded in producing. After another season's trial, this new grape continues to give excellent promise. It has been subjected to the inspection of some of the most experienced pomologists on this continent, among them the Hon. Marshall P. Wilder, of Boston, and pronounced by them a most gratifying success. The production of so valuable a seedling grape is a matter of public interest, and most encouraging to Canadian fruit-growers. We present herewith an engraving of the parent vine as it appeared a few days ago, with the clusters of fruit upon it.