

HORTICULTURAL GOSSIP. V.

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HOW TO PACK A BARREL OF APPLES.—Few growers of fruit are aware how much their success in the markets depends upon the manner in which their fruit is packed. And this matter is worthy of especial attention now that the apple is becoming so important an article of export from Ontario, because only such as have been properly put up will be purchased for shipment to foreign markets.

The best place for packing is in barns, or under cover of sheds, where wet weather cannot hinder, for apples should always be dry when handled to preserve their bright fresh appearance. They may be brought into the store house on a drag, either in bushel baskets or in barrels, which latter need not be emptied till packing time. If emptied in heaps, a few inches of straw should be first placed upon the floor, and the depth should not exceed two or three feet. Practically however, the most of our orchardists pack from heaps in the orchard.

The following suggestions for packing may prove useful to some of the readers of the HORTICULTURIST.

1st—Put the name of the variety on the head of the barrel with a stencil, in the first place, because when headed up mistakes are easily made as to the kind enclosed.

2nd—Take out the bottom end and pack first the end intended as the head, placing in the first two layers by hand with the stems downward, so that on being opened the barrel may present a nice even appearance.

3rd—Select carefully, throwing out all wormy, spotted or bruised specimens, to be sold as culls or made into cider, and making the quality uniform throughout the barrel. The deceptive practice of making a fair show at both ends, and hiding poor stock in the middle deserves the severest censure as dishonest; besides proving the worst policy in the end, for what buyer would be twice deceived by such contemptible fraud.

4th—The barrel should be gently shaken several times while being filled, to settle the apples closely; after which the end will need to be pressed down only about three-quarters of an inch, for which purpose a lever or screw press will be found almost indispensable. Experience