

HAWKE'S BAY.

Picking and marketing late varieties of apples will at the end of April still require attention. Select and cull out as much of the fruit as possible at picking-time, and thereby conserve haulage to the fruit-store. No grower should have reject fruit at the store—it should all be culled in the orchard.

Where orchard planting or extension is contemplated the land should be prepared at once, so as to ensure a good tilth prior to planting. The varieties should be selected and the order for trees placed early.

A start can be made in May with the pruning of stone-fruits. Rake up all prunings, fallen leaves, &c., and destroy all orchard-refuse.

As soon as the foliage has fallen it is desirable to spray many of the stone-fruits with bordeaux, 8-6-40. This will be found especially useful in controlling die-back on peaches and nectarines. All stone-fruits infected with San Jose scale should be sprayed with lime-sulphur, 1-15.

—*W. H. Rice, Orchard Instructor, Hastings.*

NELSON.

Spraying: Orchard-trees infected with aphid, red mite, or leaf-hopper may still be sprayed with Blackleaf 40 or red oil with great advantage.

Storing the crop: While the ordinary cool store is necessary for storage over long periods, and is a great convenience at all times, many growers find that an insulated store, without refrigeration, is very useful in the orchard. Indeed, it is claimed by some that Washington, Rokewood, Commerce, and similar varieties of apples keep better in such a store than in a refrigerator. No doubt most late sorts will keep for three months in a store only insulated if the conditions are right.

Before using a store of this kind it should be thoroughly cleansed, all decaying vegetation being removed and the place washed out with lime or bluestone, or fumigated with sulphur. Fruit should be rigidly culled before storing, grading out all that are bruised, broken, or punctured, as such will not keep under any circumstances. The goods may be stored in clean orchard-boxes, the stacks being placed on a false slatted floor to allow free ventilation. For the same reason a small space should be left around each case as when stacking in a refrigerator, and occasionally between stacks a 4 in. interval will be an advantage.

Yet another factor must be considered if the store is to be a success, and that is the intelligent and consistent management of the ventilators. The object is a low even temperature. This is usually obtained by shutting up the vents during the day to exclude the warm air, and opening them after sundown to allow the cold night air to blow through. These conditions are more easily secured if the store is surrounded by a grove of pine-trees or other evergreens.

Drains: Drainage is of the first importance in Nelson District orchards. The drainage-system is often rendered useless by being blocked up or overgrown. Trim down the sides of open drains and clean up the bottom, and see that drain-pipes finding an outlet there are clear and working satisfactorily. Any depressions likely to hold up surface water should have channels cut to let the water off. This may be often done by a single stroke of the plough.

—*William C. Hyde, Orchard Instructor, Nelson.*

CANTERBURY.

By the time for which these notes are intended the fruit season will be practically over. Growers will be able to "balance the ledger" and see whether their operations for the season have been successful or not. Unfortunately, the growers in this district have had a very bad time with frosts and gales, resulting in serious losses to many. Unfortunately, too, many growers neglected spraying because of the small crop of apples; consequently the orchards are not in as good a condition with regard to pests and diseases as they might be. Evidence of this can be plainly seen in the markets and the quantity of the fruit that has had to be condemned and destroyed. Woolly aphid has been very bad, and will require strict attention during the coming dormant season. Good results were obtained where growers sprayed with red oil, at strength of 1-60, during the last month or so. The proper grading and packing of fruit has not received sufficient attention in this district in the past, but it is hoped that, with the help of classes, a decided improvement will be noticed another season.

Now is the time for a general clean-up in the orchard before the winter operations commence. Stack away all empty cases and keep them dry; they will come in handy next season. Growers are advised to see that their spraying-apparatus is in good order and everything in readiness, so that no time will be wasted when spraying actually commences.