

Apples of Quality for England

C. P. NORBURY*

The very interesting article by R. A. Nitschke in the July, 1965 issue of this publication prompted me to prepare the following comments about what I feel are the better quality apples, as I know them.

It is interesting that **White Winter Permain**, after having practically disappeared from the United States, is now one of the leading apples being exported by South Africa to Britain. It is said to make more money in Capetown than Golden Delicious. Although Golden Delicious will always make more money here in England, the discriminating people always prefer **White Winter Permain**, not because of its appearance, but because of its excellent eating quality. It will be interesting to see whether this variety is revived in the United States. I would place **White Winter Permain**, as grown in South Africa, as the finest apple offered today.

Regarding English apples, **Cox Orange Pippin**, particularly when grown on heavier soils, is the outstanding variety; but **Ribston Pippin**, as Mr. Nitschke points out, is an excellent apple, and is much easier to grow than in the old days, when it was generally eaten up by woolly aphids. Although it is a triploid, it is a regular cropper provided that it is adequately pollinated.

If we should rate English varieties on the basis of flavor, the first apple really worth eating here in England is **Laxton's Epicure**, a cross between **Cox Orange Pippin** and **Wealthy**. It is closely followed by **Laxton's Fortune**, a product of the same cross,

but different in flavor. Both of these apples are very soft, and do not ship well, but are becoming extremely popular with the British public.

Cox Orange Pippin will see the English consumer through to Christmas. However, at New Years time, one has to turn to something else. For the last few seasons, the Royal Horticultural Society has staged taste panels for late apples; and it is interesting that heading this list, as a rule, is **Ashmead's Kernel**, an apple which originated in 1780 in the garden of a Dr. Ashmead, in Gloucester. This is an excellent flavored, slightly russeted apple for the amateur.

Next in popularity is one of the newer East Malling varieties, **Tydemans's Late Orange**, a cross between **Cox Orange Pippin** and **Laxton's Superb**. Its appearance is poor, and it is rather a tough apple, but is excellent in flavor. Another highly rated variety is **William Crump**, a cross between **Cox Orange Pippin** and **Worcester Permain**. This is possibly one of the best English varieties for February.

Renette du Canada, as grown in France, has a magnificent flavor, especially when kept through the winter in a damp cellar. Whether, however, it will ever become popular outside of France, is difficult to say.

Mutsu has a good flavor, but not as good as **Golden Delicious**. A far better flavored Japanese variety is **Megumi**,† as grown in Japan. Whether it would grow well in the United States, I do not know.

*Fruit grower, Sherridge, near Malvern, Worcs., England.

†Roger Way, of N. Y. Agr. Exp. Station reports has not looked good at all in New York.

It is sad to think that, apart from Cox Orange Pippin and Golden Delicious, the British commercial fruit grower has been so brought up to give

the public what it demands, that the bulk of dessert apples offered today are of very inferior quality compared to the best.

The Eldorado Pear

MILLO D. GIBSON*

It seems to the writer that the recently introduced El Dorado pear will catch on with both commercial growers and the fruit gardener.

The commercial grower will like this pear because it is productive, a pear that will keep until prices are good, and a pear the American public will accept.

The public will like it because it has looks, (a smooth skin and nice finish); because it is what the public regards as pear shaped—Bartlett-like; because it has a pleasing flavor; and because it is not a prima donna pear.

Unlike some pears (Comice for one) you do not have to be an expert to tell when El Dorado is at its peak of perfection; and unlike some other quality pears, its period of perfection is not fleeting, which is to say that El Dorado has a long shelf life. It will stay ripe and good for a week or more at room temperatures.

It is the contention of the writer, that more than anything else, even more than its wide adaptability, the feature that made Bartlett America's leading pear, is its built-in ripeness indicator; when the Bartlett is yellow, it is ripe. There are pears that will be yellow before ripe and others that will stay green when ripe; and the American public hasn't the time nor inclination to fool around learning secret tricks for telling when such

pears are ripe. It wants the pear to tell them. Bartlett does tell by turning yellow. And to a bit lesser degree, but more than many others, El Dorado has this built-in ripeness indicator. How yellow El Dorado will become depends upon the climate in which the pear is grown.

There is some evidence that the El Dorado will finish well under climatic conditions not ideal for the finishing of some other commercial winter pears. In the Portland, Ore. area, where the Comice (that does so ideally at Medford, Ore.) will not take on a fruitstand-marketable finish, ~~El Dorado, in trees of the writer~~ has, for several years past, taken on a finish, that Vaughn Quackenbush (now retired, but for 40 years with the So. Oregon Experiment Station) has stated was better than that taken on by this pear at Medford. The color is a deeper yellow, more like that of Bartlett. In the Medford district the El Dorado develops a high light yellow, with green showing through—a color that would be highly acceptable to the connoisseur, but a color of which the public might be skeptical; a fear that the pear was not quite ripe.

The fruit gardener, home orchardist or hobbyist will like the pear because—besides the commendable traits already listed—it is a winter pear that

*Member of A.P.S. Fruit Gardens Committee from Portland, Oregon.