

THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST

OCTOBER, 1903

VOLUME XXVI



NUMBER 10

SHROPSHIRE DAMSON

ORIGIN: England. A variety of the old Damsons from which class the Domestic plums of Europe are supposed to have originated.

TREE: Vigorous and very productive.

FRUIT: Small, one inch long by seven-eighths broad; form, oval; color, dark purple with thin blue bloom; stem, half an inch long, set in a very shallow depression; suture not traceable.

FLESH: Greenish in color; texture fine, melting; flavor, acid, becoming mild when very ripe; pit a partial cling.

QUALITY: Good for cooking, of no value for dessert.

VALUE: Market, very good.

FOR many years we have had this plum growing in our experimental grounds, and esteemed it of little value on account of its small size. Of late, however, it has risen in our estimation because of its value for culinary uses. For preserving, its small size is not a serious fault, especially since a plum does not need peeling and is not stoned, so that for domestic uses this plum, which has long been a favorite, bids fair still to hold a place in spite of the many new introductions. Indeed, there is a growing demand for this little plum which is not met by the supply, and we doubt not that it would pay to extend its cultivation, for it is a good shipper and could be sent to our northwest markets.

The Damsons, as a distinct race of plums, have been on record from time immemorial.

By many students of horticultural science they are believed to be the stock from which all the finer domestic plums of Europe have originated. There are several varieties of the Damsons, but the one under consideration is an old English variety and one of the favorites. A fruit grower of Northern Missouri says in the Kansas report of 1900:

"From observation, I believe that the Damson will be the best domestic plum here for profit, and for that reason I have planted more of them than of any other variety. After them are those of similar habits, and that seemingly have Damson blood in them, such as the Richland. Of the Damsons I have fifty Shropshires, fine growers, and they bid fair to bear young; also I have fifty common Damsons."

We would be pleased to hear from any readers of this journal who have had experience in growing the Shropshire either for home use or for market.

Mr. E. D. Smith, M. P., Winona, one of our foremost fruit growers and shippers, says:

I regard this as a good variety for growers to plant. There is always a certain demand for Damson plums, and I think there