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THE SECKEL PEAR.

Our readers are presented this month with an accurate colored picture of the venerable original pear tree from which the thousands and tens of thousands of Seckel Pear trees now growing in Canada and the United States have sprung. It is a tree to be held in remembrance, one to which the lovers of pears of high quality might well make a pilgrimage, and standing with bared heads in the presence of this ancient tree, reverently look up upon its time-scarred branches, and count the generations that have gathered its luscious fruit for mayhap two centuries gone. This picture is copied from a photograph taken in 1880, and published in the *Gardener's Monthly* for September of that year. At that time the trunk was a mere shell, one-half of it entirely gone, but Mr. Bastian, the owner, who first knew it forty years ago, said it was much the same when he first knew the tree as now. It measured at three feet six inches from the ground, five feet four and a half inches in girth around the half trunk and across the exposed diameter, and was twenty-six feet high. No one knows who planted this old pear tree. Perhaps it was

never planted, but Topsy-like, it "grewed;" and the imaginative reader may draw such portrait as fancy pleases of the one who dropped the seed in the fertile soil, in the long time ago, whence sprang this tree. Downing says that the late venerable Bishop White used to say that when he was but a lad, a well-known cattle dealer of Philadelphia, known as "Dutch Jacob," used in the early autumn to present his neighbors with pears of an unusually delicious flavor, but would never divulge the place where they were procured. In course of time "Dutch Jacob" purchased from the Holland Land Company the parcel of ground on which stood his favorite pear tree; but as time rolled on it came at length into the hands of Mr. Seckel, who introduced the pear to public notice, and after whom it was named. The farm now belongs to Mr. Bastian, who has owned it for more than forty years, and was told when he moved there that the Seckel family had known the tree for eighty years before.

In 1819 this pear was sent to Europe, and the fruit pronounced by the London Horticultural Society to exceed in