

neckcloth betokened his calling. It would seem he was in search of some house that he could not readily find, for he peered curiously at several through his spectacles as he passed them. As he neared one, a handsome house with a green verandah, a cab, painted black, came dashing up, stopped, and there descended from it a gentleman and his servant in the deepest mourning. The stranger approached the master, and courteously touched his hat.

'I beg your pardon,' he said, 'can you obligingly point out to me the rectory?' I understand it to be somewhere here.'

'At the end of the street, five minutes lower down. Opposite the church.'

'This end of the street?' resumed the stranger, pointing to the way he had been journeying.

'I'll show the gentleman which it is,' cried a fine boy of fourteen, who appeared to be growing out of his jacket.

'What, is it you, Arthur?' said the owner of the cab. 'Where did you spring from?'

The young gentleman had sprung from behind the cab, but he did not choose to say so. 'I say, sir,' he exclaimed, slipping the question, 'you have not seen mamma anywhere, have you?'

'No.'

'Oh, well, it's not my fault. She told me to meet her somewhere here as I came home from school, and she'd take me to have my hair cut. Old Brooks did not do it to please her last time, so she said she'd go and see it done. Now, sir,' he added to the stranger, 'I'll show you Mr. Leicester's?'

They walked along together. 'Do you know,' said the boy, suddenly looking at his companion, 'I can guess who you are? You are the new curate.'

The stranger smiled. 'How do you guess that?'

'Because you look like it. And we know Mr. Leicester had engaged one; the other did not suit. He is too ill now to do it all himself. Mamma says she is sure he won't live long. Do you know Mr. Castonel?'

'No. Who is Mr. Castonel?'

'Why, that was Mr. Castonel, and that was his cab. Did you see how black they were?'

'Yes. He appeared to be in deep mourning.'

'It is for his wife. She was so pretty, and we all liked her so. She was Ellen Leicester, and Mr. Castonel ran away with her, and she died. That was last spring, and it's since then that Mr. Leicester has got so ill. His first wife died too.'

'Whose first wife?' returned the stranger, scarcely making sense of the boy's tale.

'Mr. Castonel's.'

'Are you speaking of the gentleman of whom I inquired my way? He looks young to have had two wives.'

'He has, though. He is a doctor, and has all the practice. He keeps two assistants now. Do you know Mr. Tuck?'

'I do not know any one in Ebury.'

'Oh, don't you? There's Mr Leicester's,' added the lad, pointing to a house, lower down, as they came to a turning in the street. 'And now I have shown it you, I must go back, for if mamma comes and I don't meet her, she'll blow me up.'

'I thank you for bringing me,' said Mr. Hurst. 'I hope we shall soon be better acquainted. Tell me your name.'

'Arthur Chavasse. I am to be what you are. A parson.'

'Indeed. I hope you will make a good one.'

'I don't know. Last week when I sent the ball through the window and gave Lucy a black eye, papa and mamma were in a passion with me, and they said I had too much devil in me for a parson.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' was the grave answer.

'I have not got half the devil that some chaps have,' continued Master Arthur. 'I only leap hedges, and climb trees, and wade streams, and all that. I don't see what harm that can do a fellow, even if he is to be a parson.'

'I fear it would seem to point that he might be more fitted for other callings in life.'

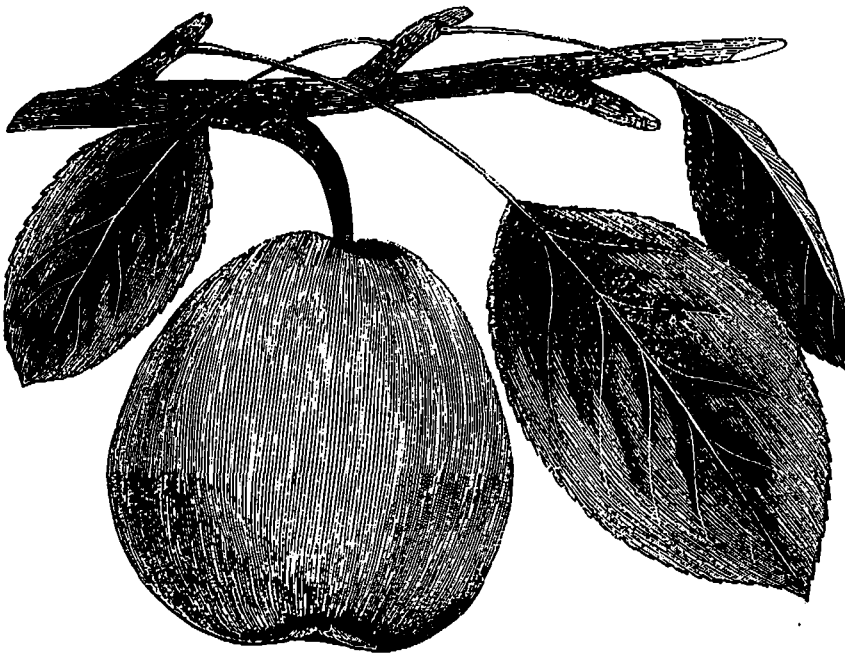
'Then I just wish you'd tell them so at home. I don't want to be a parson; it's too tame a life for me. Good-by, sir.'

He flew away, a high-spirited generous lad; and the curate—for such he was—looked after him. Then he turned in at the rectory gate.

He was shown into the room where the

Reverend Mr. Leicester and his wife were sitting. Two sad gray-haired people, the former very feeble, but not with age. Arthur Chavasse had given a pretty accurate account of matters. From the time that their only child had run away with Mr. Castonel, they had been breaking in health; but since her death, which had occurred six months subsequently, the rector may be said to have been a dying man.

There was certainly a fatality attending the wives of Mr. Castonel, and he appeared to mourn them with sincerity, especially the last. His attire was as black as black could be: he had put his cab in black; the crape on his hat extended from the brim to the crown, and he wore a mourning pin and a mourning ring with Ellen's hair in it. He abstained from all gaiety, took a friendly cup of tea occasionally with Mr. and Mrs. Chavasse, and paid a formal visit to the rector and Mrs. Leicester once a month.



THE BEURRE CLAIRGEAU PEAR.

The new curate, Mr. Hurst, was approved of by Ebury. He was possessed of an amazing stock of dry, book erudition, but was retiring and shy to a fault. He took up his abode at the parish beadle's, who let furnished lodgings, very comfortable and quiet. One day he received a visit from Mr. Chavasse, a bluff, hearty, good-tempered man, who was steward to the estate of the Earl of Eastberry, a neighbouring nobleman.

'I was talking to Mr. Leicester yesterday,' began Mr. Chavasse, shaking hands, 'and he told me he thought you were open to a teaching engagement for an hour or so in the afternoons.'

'Certainly,' answered the curate, coughing in the nervous manner habitual to him when taken by surprise, 'I would have no objection to employ my time in that way, when my duties for the day are over.'

'That rascal of a boy of mine, Arthur—the lad has good abilities, I know, for in that respect he takes after his mother and Frances, yet there are nothing but complaints from school about his not getting on.'

'Do you not fancy that his abilities may lie in a different direction—that he may be formed by nature for a more bustling life than a clerical one?' the curate ventured to suggest.

'Why, of course, if he has not got it in him, it would be of no use to force him to be a parson; but there's such an opening. Lord Eastberry has promised me a living for him. Now it has struck me that if you would come, say at four o'clock, which is the hour he leaves school, and hammer something into him till half-past five, or six, you might see what stuff he is really made of. What do you say?'

'I could accept the engagement for every evening except Saturday,' answered Mr. Hurst.

'All right,' cried Mr. Chavasse. 'One day lost out of the six won't matter. And now, sir, what shall you charge?'

The curate hesitated and blushed, and then named a very low sum.

'If it were not that I have so many children pulling at me, I should say it was too little by half,' observed the straight-forward Mr. Chavasse; 'but I can't stand a high

figure. My eldest son has turned out wild, and he is a shocking expense to me. Shall we begin on Monday?'

'If you please. I shall be ready.'

'And mind,' he added, 'that you always stop and take your tea with us, when you have no better engagement. I shall tell Mrs. Chavasse to insist on that part of the bargain.'

Thus it came to pass that the Reverend Mr. Hurst became very intimate at the house of Mrs. Chavasse.

A FRUIT ORCHARD.

As the period will soon arrive when those who desire to make due preparation for setting out a fruit orchard will have to take the preliminary steps for carrying out so laudable a purpose, it may not be regarded as inopportune if we point out some facts which

of his land admits of a choice in the matter.

One other essential to success in fruit culture is deep cultivation. Previous to planting out the young trees, the ground should not merely be deeply plowed, but should also be well subsoiled. The greatest possible benefit is invariably derived from loosening the soil, either by trenching or by the use of the subsoil plow to a depth of at least two feet—but if the ground is naturally wet, under draining must precede the trenching or subsoiling, or the trees will not be benefited by any amount of labour that may subsequently be bestowed upon them.

As a general rule, fruit trees planted in early spring are believed to succeed best, because the temperature of the air and the greater frequency of warm rains facilitate their growth, whilst the mellowness of the soil at that season of the year admits of being more thoroughly pulverized, and of course of the freer expansion of the roots when they take a start to grow.

There are, nevertheless, occasions when fall planting may be pursued with more than ordinary success. It is usually a period when labor can be best spared from the customary field operations, and therefore the work required to be done can be performed more thoroughly than in the spring, when every species of farm work demands immediate attention. Moreover, wherever the winter seasons are not of extraordinary rigor, as is mostly the case in this latitude and to the South of us, fall-planting, if the trees are well staked, has certain advantages which should be duly considered. In trees set out in the early part of the season fresh roots are formed and additional supplies of nutriment stored up ready for spring use; and at the first commencement of warm weather the foliage puts out as freely as if the tree had never been removed.—Rural Register.

THE BEURRE CLAIRGEAU PEAR.

We give this week an engraving of this new French variety of pear, which is cultivated to some extent in this vicinity. It was originated by M. Clairgeau, of Nantes. The fruit is large, and is considered a valuable acquisition. We give the following description by Col. Wilder:

'Size—extra large. Form—oblong, ovate pyriform, outline a little irregular. Stem—short and stout, set obliquely and without much depression. Calyx—open, segments short, moderately sunk. Color—brownish green, coarsely clotted and almost entirely covered with russet, sometimes intermixed with dull red, on the sunny side. Flesh—melting and juicy, with an agreeable sub-acid flavor, resembling the *Baronne de Mello*, but with more aroma. Class—good; will probably prove very good.'

'The *Beurre Clairgeau* has fruited in several gardens in the vicinity of Boston and New York, and promises to be a great acquisition. The tree is a strong, thrifty grower, either on the pear or quince root, and comes early into bearing, many trees which were grafted in the spring of 1851 being now full of fruit buds.' This pear ripens during the last of October, or early in November.

THE PRETENSION OF "TASTE."

Taste has frequently an imaginary existence, unconnected with the intellect. It is merely hereditary or acquired, and descends from father to son, with his prejudices and estate. Certain authors are adopted into families. Bunyan has the sacredness of a legacy; the songs of Watts are bound up with earliest days at a mother's knee; and Gray's 'Elegy' incloses a domestic interior of warmth and affection in every stanza. There are hymns which have been intoned through the noses of three generations, and will probably reach a tenth, with all the music and endearment of their ancestral twang. In such cases the heart, not the understanding, is the source of interest, and admiration is only a pleasure of memory. Taste is often one of the aspects of fashion. Folly borrows its mask, and walks out with wisdom arm-in-arm. Like virtues of greater dignity, it is assumed. The furniture and decorations of a room are arranged to indicate the serious and graceful sentiments of the occupant. Addison sketched a student of this order, in whose library he found Locke 'On the Understanding,' with a paper of patches among the leaves, and all the classic authors, in wood, with bright backs. To such readers, a new book of which people talk, is like a new costume which a person of celebrity has introduced. It is the rage. Not to be acquainted with it is to be ill dressed. The pleasure is not of literature, but of vanity. The pretended taste is a polite fraud of society.