

The Canadian Horticulturist

Vol. XXX

APRIL, 1907

No. 4

Selecting and Planting Fruit Trees

G. Reynaud, La Trappe, Quebec

GREAT care and attention are required in the choice of varieties of the fruit we wish to grow. Avoid, first, varieties which cannot become acclimated; second, varieties that are unprofitable; and third, any inferior variety.

Regarding the first it is clear that the trees must be able to stand the cold of our winters. Buy the plants from reliable nurseries situated in Canada that sell only what they have grown themselves. One is then sure of having acclimated plants. Regarding the second, there are some varieties which enjoy a striking fertility; others, while giving fine fruits, are of little or late bearing. These are less advantageous. Regarding the last, by inferior qualities we must understand fruits poorly adapted to the intended trade, which sometimes is the only practicable trade. For instance, far from trade centres, the summer varieties are of no benefit because they do not keep, and the time for selling is very short. In this case, plant winter fruit, and especially those most in demand in the market. If a large business centre is near by, the earliest bearing varieties pay the best. The sale of early fruits, of *primeurs*, even if they are not quite ripe, always brings forth a sure profit.

When there is danger of making a costly mistake ask advice from some expert in the matter. The provincial and federal governments have established in several places experimental fruit stations precisely with the view of studying the values of the different varieties. There, may be found, at any time, exact and disinterested information.

Short trunk trees stand the wind better and facilitate the accumulation of snow, so necessary to protect the roots against late colds; but they present the serious inconvenience of rendering cultivation excessively difficult. It is better to buy medium-sized trees. Young plants with five or five and a half foot trunks are high enough to possess all the advantages of any other kind, without the inconveniences.

PLANTING

If everything is not ready for planting when the plants come from the nursery,

they must be placed slightly inclined, one by one, in a trench with the roots covered with earth. When ready to plant the plants can be distributed one by one in the holes, but the roots must not be left uncovered, because they suffer from exposure. Place with the roots at the bottom of the hole and cover with two or three shovelfuls of earth.

When trees are sent from the nurseries during periods of extreme cold, the box or package should be wrapped and placed in a cool cellar for a few days, where the trees will slowly regain their normal temperature.

Advanced Wonderfully

THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST has advanced wonderfully in the last two years. I believe that it is the uniform opinion of the fruit growers of the province that the paper is the best fruit growers' paper now published, and that there is no longer any necessity for going to the United States for such a publication.—P. W. Hodgetts, secretary Ontario Fruit Growers' Association, Toronto.

Planting must be done in dry weather so that the soil will fill in all the space between the roots. Before putting the trees in the ground they must be pruned, which consists in cutting sharply all the wilted extremities of the roots, and shortening at least by half the branches at the head. This is necessary to give the tree a systematic shape and robust growth. Throw enough earth, mixed with matured and good fertilizer into the hole so that the tree will stand in the ground at about the same height as in the nursery. Place the tree and arrange the roots in their natural position, then cover with more good soil and slightly pack it down. When the roots are completely covered, fill with the surface soil.

CARE FOLLOWING PLANTING

The wind in shaking the young trees sometimes prevents them from taking

root. The remedy for this is props. These are placed at the time of planting before the holes are filled up, on account of the danger of breaking the roots if put in later. The trees are bound to these by means of strips of cloth or some linden bark fibre.

The bark of a young tree changes a part of the sap into a wood-making substance, called "cambium," which becomes an integral part of the fibrous body of the trunk and adds to the growth of the roots. It is, then, important to keep the bark in good shape to prevent it from drying and to stop any foreign growth on its surface. To obtain this it is useful during August to wash the bark of the young trees with water in which are dissolved a little soap and some phenic or carbolic acid. This saves the trees from the ravages of insects.

If the planting season is dry, water the trees often, but only a little at a time. In rapidly drying ground, loose soil on the surface will retain moisture.

In the fall, do something to protect the young trees from late spring frosts, on account of the extreme sensitiveness caused by the small extent of their radicular system. One way of doing this is to pile up earth around each tree to about one and a half feet in height; another, to throw in the same place and after the first permanent snow, some strong manure. This manure will prevent the snow from melting rapidly; it creates in the soil at the foot of the tree a constant and regular coolness which keeps back vegetation and saves the young plant from the dangerous results of frost and thaw. Remove the earth or manure as soon as danger is passed.

One must abstain from pruning young trees during their first year in their new place. It would stop the growth of fresh roots and result in the death of the tree; or, if it lived, through it would cause in the tree an excessive sensitiveness to the inclemency of the weather. Notwithstanding, all branches grown on parts of the tree where they are useless ought to be cut off in the fall. In cases where it is feared that snow might break the branches, they should be bound to the aforementioned props.