

told by those who have had thirty years' knowledge of these people that they will almost go without bread to buy flowers. And there is something in the sight of a gaunt, toil-worn Arab, whose sole garments may consist of a piece of coarse sacking and a ragged old turban, with a bunch of delicate spring blossoms drooping their cool freshness against his swarthy cheek, which stirs a strange mingling of sympathy and pity and admiration.—*All the Year Round*.

#### THE RUSSIAN MULBERRY TREE.

This tree was introduced into the United States by the Mennonites, a sect which formerly lived in Germany, but who emigrated because the German government insisted upon their serving in the army, which their religious scruples forbade their doing. The Czar of Russia offered them a tract of land for settlement in 1800, and agreed to exempt them from military duty. From Russia a goodly number have emigrated to this country and settled in Kansas, Dakota and Nebraska. The mulberry tree was introduced into the colonies in Russia by the Czar, for the purpose of silk culture. He compelled the Mennonites to buy these trees of government. Each land holder must plant a certain number. After cultivating them until they learned their value they voluntarily propagated these trees very extensively, and learned that silk culture was not the only consideration in raising them. They found the timber very desirable fuel. It also furnished the finest material for cabinet work, and fence posts made from it would outlast those made from any other timber. The tree soon became the most highly prized of any Russian timber tree. It also bore edible fruit which was marketable in Russia. When the Mennonites came to this country they brought the seed of this

mulberry with them. They brought the seed of several other trees, but planted these more extensively than all others combined. They grow quite rapidly. Trees, the seed of which was planted six years ago, are now twenty feet high and large enough for fence posts. The tree resembles the apple tree in its habits of growth. The Russians say that they grow quite large, often reaching the height of forty feet, and from three to five feet in diameter. They bear fruit very young, frequently commencing when two years old, and bear every year. It varies in flavor from sub acid to sweet, color jet black and reddish white, ninety per cent. being black. The bark is grayish white, and branches drooping. The Mennonites also use it as a hedge plant, and it makes a beautiful hedge and stands shearing as well as any tree.

#### SHAFFER'S COLOSSAL RASPBERRY.

President T. T. Lyon, of the Michigan Pomological Society, thus speaks of this newest novelty in raspberries :

"Last spring I received for trial, plants of the Shaffer Raspberry. Its growth from last spring 'tips' would seem to justify the title Colossal sometimes imposed upon it. Judging from its habit, as well as from the color, texture, and flavor of the fruit, I am led to consider it a hybrid between our two natives, *Occidentalis* and *Strigosus*. It ripened a few berries, on canes of the current year, about the middle of August, 1881. It seems to possess much more than the usual vigor of *Occidentalis*; and, so far, roots from tips only. The foliage, as well as the wood growth, is very vigorous and healthy. Fruit large, dark purplish-red, with a very slight bloom. Texture rather firm, moderately juicy, with a rich, acid, sprightly flavor."—*Rural New-Yorker*.