

All about Sorghum.

We should be glad to give our readers in a few words, the sum total of all the information which has been collected, upon the subjects of seed, soil, and planting, but as all know, "circumstances alter cases," and almost anything we might write of a definite nature, would have only a limited application.

As a general summary of the matter we may say that upon the subject of seed, the spirit of the conventions is in favor of the regular Sorgo or Chinese Cane for syrup both on account of quality and comparative quantity of the product. For sugar-producing canes, the preference is given to the Imphee, particularly the *Om-see-a-na* or *Otaheitan*. The so-called early Sorgo, and early black Imphee are believed to ripen from three to four weeks sooner than the regular Sorgo or Imphee; not so productive, but quality of product in syrup not inferior. *Nee-a-zan-a* ripens at about the same time as the regular Sorgo, but may be worked to advantage earlier, before it is ripe. Quality of syrup from this cane, fair; sugar produced sometimes; cane stands up well. The Liberian, highly spoken of by all who are acquainted with it, very productive; stands up well; ripens probably a little later than the regular Sorgo; plant but three seeds in a hill of this cane as it stools out wonderfully.

Upon the subject of manure and fertilizers, much has been said in the conventions. We give as a summary the following:

On old land, strong manure, guano, super-phosphate or almost any thing may be used with advantage. Nothing better than a good clover lay or well rotted manure. On new land, already rich in organic matter and saline salts, strong stable manure is positively injurious.—Plaster, lime, leached or unleached ashes, or well rotted manure may be used with advantage. Deep tillage is highly recommended.—For our part, we would, if necessary, curtail the breadth of the field for the sake of increasing the depth. We believe half an acre subsoiled will produce more and better cane in the average of seasons, than a whole acre, when ploughed in the ordinary shallow way.

Soaking, and even sprouting the seed is an advantage in time, if the ground, when planting the seed is just right; if not bid good bye to your seed and the trouble of soaking and planting. Do not plant immediately after a shower, nor before the ground acquires a good condition.

With regard to manner of planting, some prefer to drill, others to drop in check rows.—Some advocate a distance of four feet between the rows, others think three and a half most appropriate. We think the subject should be determined by the quality of the soil. If the ground is rich and strong, it will support a heavy growth at a distance of three and a half feet between rows, and with eight to ten stalks to a hill, while weaker ground would be overburdened, and yield almost nothing. On prairies, where the two-row cultivators are generally used, we think it will pay to plant in check-rows, and work the cultivator both ways. Some advocate planting in drills and cross ploughing out. This will do when seed is abundant and cheap.

A great majority of those who write or talk upon this subject, advocate planting cane seed very shallow not more than an inch; some say half an inch, and others a quarter of an inch below the surface. If it were common for the majority to be right upon any question, we might have some confidence in its verdict upon this, but it is a conspicuous fact, that the majority is generally wrong, in its first conclusions. With reference to the planting cane seed, it is not probable that this pompous tribunal that dictates so confidently, ever measured the depth of its seed below the surface. If it did what kind of an instrument was employed, to sound the earth, and determine the matter of a quarter of an inch in ordinary rough, cloddy ground? We sagely suspect the majority knows very little of what it is talking about, and we don't hesitate to say, that he is probably an ignoramus and a humbug.

The depth to which the cane seed should be planted is governed, like a good many other things by circumstances; the nature of the soil, its particular condition at the time of planting, fineness, moisture, temperature, the condition of the seed, whether dry or soaked, the period in the season, whether early or late, all are to be considered, and the proper depth to plant is to be determined by these, measured with the rule of common sense, and not an instrument graduated by barley corns and inches. If the soil is fine and damp, and warm, and is to be pressed down snugly upon the seed, and if it is not inclined to crust or bake upon the surface, it is then allowable to plant shallow—very shallow perhaps; but if the same conditions exist, except that of dampness, shallow planting is senseless planting; the seed might just as well be in a dry house. If the seed is to be planted early, when spring showers are likely to occur frequently, and if the

ground is damp and cold and heavy, almost certain to remain moist for some time on the surface, the seed may be left as shallow as possible; if deposited upon the surface and pressed down with the foot or a hoe, it will probably do as well as any way. Seeds left on the surface of the ground all winter from a previous growth of cane usually germinate in the spring. It is desirable to follow with the planting as soon as possible after the harrow, as it gives the cane at least an even start with the weeds, moreover, the state of the ground is the best immediately after being disturbed, both for covering appropriately and promoting an early growth.—*Sorgo Journal*.

Trees: their Æsthetic Influence.

"On for a law, originating in the perception of comfort, and self-imposed, which should make the planting of a few trees an operation as certain as the building of a house! Men would live longer and better for the happiness given to their homes."—*Manse Garden*.

Complaints are not unfrequently made, that the sons of most of our well-to-do farmers are all crowding into the so called learned professions, and instead of pursuing the noble and healthful business of cultivating the soil, have turned aside from the plough, "the first creditor" as Barke has finely remarked, "in every country," and become transformed from independent gentlemen into third-rate physicians, and lawyers, of whom it may certainly be said that they indifferently administer justice. The chief causes of this unfortunate state of things it is not our present purpose to discuss; but the idea has forced itself upon our notice, whether the want of some such wholesome, self-imposed law as that referred in the quotation given above, has not had some influence in bringing it about. In other words, would not the "old homestead" and "ancestral acres" of our Canadian yeomen—our country gentlemen, become more dear to their children if they were made pleasanter? There is a sad want of neatness and external comfort about too many of our farm-houses—a lack of goodly shade-trees and pleasant flowers—of lawns and evergreens clustered thereon, all of which give such a charm to the landscape in "the old country"—the "land of our sires," and let us add, golden links to those homes which stand girt about with beauty.

"Amidst their tall ancestral trees
O'er all the pleasant land."

If it be objected that our climate is against us; that we can never enjoy the varied beauties of the holly, the laurel, or the laurustinus which adorn the shrubberies of England, Scotland, and Ireland; we simply reply that these, however beautiful, are not necessary to make our Canadian homes attractive. We can at least rival Britain in our forest trees, and it is to these that we chiefly refer. Is the beech less superb here than it is in England? Or is "the bonnie birken tree" less beautiful and graceful; or are the bright berries of the rowan-tree less lustrous and cheerful than on the mountains of Scotland? And have we not in addition to these and other trees common to both this country and our loved Mother-Isle, two or three peculiar to this side of the Atlantic. One of these is an evergreen second to none in majestic beauty, though far too little appreciated, perhaps because like its grave, upright companion the pine, it is so common—we refer to the hemlock. Even in "the leafy month of June," when the forest is one mass of varied beauty and verdure, the stately hemlock challenges all its leafy competitors to draw away the admiration of any lover of trees, from its singular combination of grandeur and elegance; especially from the exquisite beauty of the contrast between the vivid light green of its fresh, pensile young shoots and the dark and somewhat sombre hue of its older foliage; while in the long dark months of winter, when most other trees are "barren as lances," it reigns supreme. The other Canadian beauty to which we have special reference is the sugar-maple, which superadds the outward graces of form and beauty to that internal sweetness of disposition which is so strikingly manifested about this season, when "the trembling year is unconformed, and gentle Spring and surly Winter are striving for the mastery!" In

beauty of form and colour, in magnificent umbrageousness, and, above all, in the gorgeous splendor of its autumnal hues, this beautiful tree has no superior. Well may the "sons of the soil" be proud to accept it as the chosen emblem of their country; and the daughters of Canada no less proud to have the bright autumnal flush of its leaves associated with their own blushing loveliness in patriotic verse and music.

Why then, do not our intelligent Canadian farmers shelter and adorn their dwellings with trees? Most of them have an abundant supply of beautiful young saplings on their own land, which only require careful and judicious transplanting, some in groups, some singly, to transform a bare, comfortless looking spot into a cheerful, cosy home. Our pines, birches, maples, spruces, hemlocks, &c., are as beautiful as they are useful; and their wonderful variety of form and foliage was not created without design, by the wise and beneficent Father of all, and that design was obviously the intelligent enjoyment of man. Ought we not then to look about us more and see

"How beautiful is all this fair, free world
Under God's open sky!"

and looking try to enjoy it more, and learn the sweet lessons which the beautiful and interesting "Book of Nature" was designed to teach? If we could only have our homes more adorned with trees and flowers, we believe they would be far pleasanter and more thought of; and the homestead (what a charm there is about this fine old expressive Saxon word!) more highly prized as the magnetic centre of each family, drawing to it every Christmas or Thanksgiving Day the most distant of its members. Ah! how little most of us know, how little we dream how much influence these things have—how strong is the attachment one forms to every individual plant whose growth is watched daily! But,

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever,"

and if such joys are multiplied around our homes, we shall become a more happy and genial people, a home-loving people, and hence, a more intensely patriotic people. Such homes will furnish in abundance good citizens, able legislators, and, if need be, brave and skilful soldiers. We will only add as illustrative of our subject, the following choice extract from that delightful little volume—"Chronicles of a Garden," by the late Miss Henrietta Wilson, of Edinburgh, niece of the celebrated Professor John Wilson.

"There is no season when trees are not a source of pleasure, varied and unwearyed. You may have but one of each kind, and you may think you know that one well, but watch it, study it, and every season of the year, every change in the weather will bring out new beauties.

"No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,
No waste so vacant, but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to love and beauty."

"If, as Arthur Helps, truly says, 'the moral experiments of the world may be tried with the smallest quantities,' so may the pleasures of the woodlands. One tree may afford diversified enjoyment, not only by its form, its shade, or its foliage, but by the effects its leaves give to light, whether it be the 'cool, green light' that is so exquisitely refreshing, or the brilliant glow of carmine or orange seen glinting through the flickering foliage at noon or dewy eve."

HOLLY TREE.

Cobourg, March 7, 1865.

Early Fall Cultivation.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—It is an old saying, and a very true one, that good cultivation is a partial equivalent to manure. Although I do not pretend to be a Solon in these matters, yet I will venture to give a few hints upon this most important, and too often much-neglected principle of husbandry.

Taking a retrospective view, we find that people used to take a great deal of pains in preparing lands for the production of the great staple, viz.: fall wheat, by thorough summer-fallowing and manuring. At the same time lands of any description, and prepared in a very careless manner, were thought good enough for spring crops. The much greater importance and value following the production of spring grains is gradually reversing this mistaken policy, and barley, spring wheat and flax now occasionally gladden the eye on fallow lands, greeting the summer zephyrs with their graceful undulations. Although satisfied of the great advantages from summer fallowing, to clean the land, &c., yet I do not consider it so abso-