

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

"PERSEVERE AND SUCCEED."

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The Sweet Chestnut.

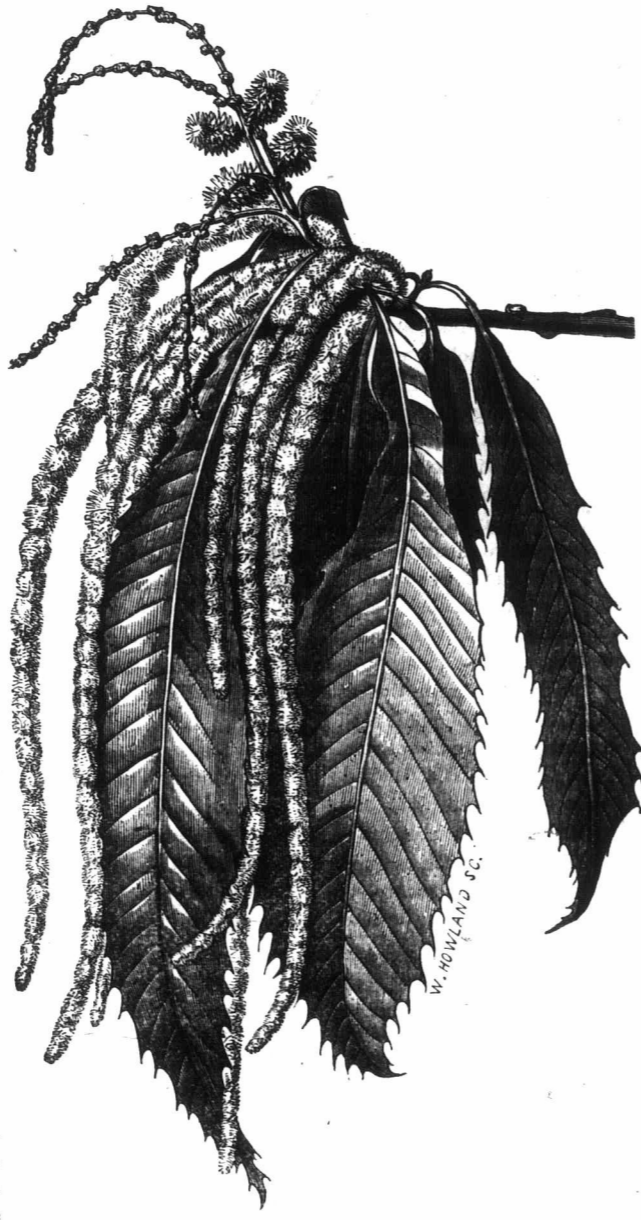
We would call the attention of our readers to the chestnut tree. Many of us have, no doubt, seen the chestnut growing in the wood, as in some parts of the country it is very plentiful; but, taking the country in general, little is known of this very valuable tree; even in the sections where it may be found growing wild, not one farmer in a thousand knows the real value of it. It is very hardy; may be grown in all old settled parts of the country; is of rapid growth; makes a handsome ornamental tree, bearing a fruit pleasing to young and old, and improving in size and flavor by cultivation. One great advantage of this tree is that it is less liable to be killed than most others. If cut down, young suckers spring up from the stumps and in a few years grow up to be valuable trees. They only require to be protected from cattle and thinned out sufficiently. The cutting down should always be in winter. The timber is of a good quality, and for many purposes very durable. It is very handsome when wrought by the cabinet maker. Chestnuts, when gathered for planting, must not be allowed to become dry. The germination of nuts in general is prevented by their being dried. They must not be so heaped together as to cause heating. The best way to preserve them for planting is to mix them with sand in a cool place—the sand damp but not wet. If sown in a seed bed, to be transplanted, sow them in rows a few inches apart. The young trees should be mulched the first winter, after that, mulching will be unnecessary. If planted for timber they may be placed eight feet apart; if for fruit they will require a space of fifteen to twenty feet.

Chestnut trees grow to a very great size. Some of them, in the forests of Carolina, were measured and found to be fifteen or sixteen feet in circumference at six feet from the ground, and in height not surpassed by any other trees. The Great Chestnut of Mount Etna is in circumference 160 feet, and others there are of immense size. There is a chestnut tree near Sancerre, within 120 miles of Paris, said to be 1,000 years old, with its trunk still sound and annually laden with fruit. Its trunk, at six feet from the ground, is thirty feet in circumference. The chestnut trees of Old England are some of the most ornamental objects of the beautiful demesnes. In such grounds it is seen to the best advantage with its beautiful foliage and graceful form.

If old trees are transplanted they are apt to die. They should be planted when young, never more than five or six feet high. In England they plant the nuts where they want the trees to grow in the forest or plantation. Young plants may be successfully moved, and even sent by mail, when quite small.

They bear nuts about seven years after planting, but at fourteen years they will yield about a peck. Chestnuts vary in value. Sometimes they may be had at five dollars per bushel, and again they have brought as high as twenty dollars per bushel.

If some of our farmers who are hoarding their cash away in some society, or purchasing more land, would invest a part of it in planting groves or belts of chestnut trees on their farms, they would find their crops improved, their farms beautified, their fencing and building timber replenished, their families pleased, and their neighborhood and the country generally improved. The chestnut grows well in poor but dry soil where no other crop can be raised with profit. Messrs. Starr & Co., of Painsville, Ohio, U. S., can supply the seeds.



THE SWEET CHESTNUT.

The Cultivation of Barley.

A soil dry, warm and fertile is best suited for the growth of barley. No water should be allowed to lie stagnant in it, and where not naturally dry it should be drained; for the successful cultivation of barley this is absolutely necessary.

Though a soil warm and dry, and not too heavy, is especially a barley soil, a clay soil by being drained and enriched will, with proper tillage, produce a remunerative crop of barley. I have had good barley crops on light, gravelly soil, and on a heavy clay, such as is generally called a wheat soil. On the latter I harvested over 70 bushels per acre

of good malting barley, on a field of 14 acres. The previous year the field had been cropped with potatoes. As it was a heavy soil, I then had it plowed in the fall rough and strong, with a clean, well-cut furrow, and water-cuts opened where necessary. It was re-plowed in spring, turning up the fertile surface that the fall plowing had turned down. Before sowing it was tilled, rolled, and still further loosened with the cultivator, so that the seed bed was in excellent tilth. It was sown on the 5th and 6th of May, and seeded down with clover and grass seed.

What is the most profitable variety of barley? The field I have just spoken of was sown with Chevalier barley. This variety has been tried here and has not met with general favor—an indication, this, that it is not the kind best suited to the climate.

Barley is generally known as two-rowed and four-rowed. The two-rowed is preferred in England as malting barley, and as such commands a higher price; the six-rowed we have always heard there to be reckoned as feeding barley. The classification in America is different, the six-rowed selling higher, and in rich soil it gives a heavier produce, and it ripens the earlier of the two by some days.

Not only is much of the soil of Canada well adapted to the growth of barley, but the climate also is such as to enable us to produce it of a superior quality. In other countries the frequent rains sometimes make it difficult to harvest it in good condition, so as to have the brightness of color and feel, when taken in the hand, that are required to place it in the first class as malting barley. Here the dry sunny harvest is very favorable in this respect. Our suitable climate and our better cultivation of the soil enable us always to produce a better quality of barley than they can in the States, and consequently they are willing to pay us the better price. From the Report of 1874 we learn that in Canada the yield was large, from 25 to 45 bushels to the acre, average over 30; quality very fine, weighing from 46 to 50 pounds per bushel, and was secured in splendid condition.

Of all the cereals barley is the best with which to seed down the land. One reason of this is that it does not impoverish the soil as much as other cereals; another reason is that the ground prepared for barley is in so good tilth, affording to the grass seeds an excellent seed bed. Grass seeds are now much sown without cereals, but when it is thought better to have a grain crop with the seeding, none is equal to barley. Barley, also, while affording to the young grasses a desirable shade, is not so apt to smother them as some other crops are, and the short time between its being sown and harvested is also favorable to their growth. —S.

Spring Wheat or Barley.

What grain are we to sow this spring? Are we to rely on wheat as our spring crop, or shall we sow more of the other varieties of grain, that are less value as breadstuffs? This is a question for our serious consideration, as Canadian farmers. It is