

and sprinkled with russet, combined with its exquisite, fine, juicy and vinous flesh, it has scarcely a superior as a dessert fruit. For the amateur it is a veritable treasure trove.

Of the claims of the *Beurre Bosc* to pre-eminence as a table fruit, we do not agree with even so eminent an authority as Mr. Downing, who is particularly partial to this handsome representative of the *Calebasse* type. It is high flavoured and delicious, but is rather lacking in juices, and does not possess that acidulousness to which we have previously referred as one of the great desiderata. It is, however, the beau ideal of shapeliness, which in the pear is pyriform, as best illustrated in this variety. The *Bosc*, in particular, requires to be very ripe to call forth its good qualities.

#### PEARS FOR THE WINTER MONTHS.

We now come to the winter varieties, of which the *Beurre d'Anjou* is, perhaps, the most popular and favourably known. This is a variety, all things considered, that we cannot do without, its size, flavour, and excellent keeping qualities, all render it worthy of a foremost place in the catalogue of desirable fruits.

Among the winter sorts of "name and noble estimate" is the favourite *Winter Nelis*, a Belgian sort, that makes up in quality what it may lack in form and general appearance. It has a great deal of individuality; its melting, buttery flesh being characterized by a certain spicy, nutty aroma, peculiarly its own. It always comes into admirable play as a winter table fruit.

Those who regret the poor keeping qualities of the *Superfin* can console themselves later in the season with the *Beurre Easter*, which is of a similar piquant champagne flavour. In keeping qualities it has no superior. In France, and in this country among careful growers, it attains a very large size. Its good qualities as a fruit are offset in a measure by its slow habit of growth, its tendency to blight, and its only thriving in the best of soil and under careful treatment. In spite of these objections, it is a *sine qua non* among winter sorts, and to every really choice pear garden. *Beurre Easter* is best cultivated on the quince.

Last but not least among the desirable varieties for the amateur is the *Josephine de Malines*, without doubt the most valuable late-keeping pear. For this great acquisition we have also to thank the Belgians. Its skin is of a pale yellow, and its flesh a light salmon colour, and of a most delightful rose flavour, similar to, but not as pronounced as the *Urbaniste*. Of comparatively recent introduction into this country, it is scarcely known in market, but is prized beyond measure by those who are acquainted with it. The *Josephine* succeeds both as a dwarf and a standard.

There are many other excellent sorts that, if not fully equal to those enumerated, are eminently deserving of a hearing which the limits of this article forbid. Tastes differ in fruits as in wines. But there is an acknowledged standard of excellence in both that meets the general taste. A person must indeed be deficient in taste who can perceive virtue in *Surène*, or discover pleasing qualities in a puckery crab. One cannot go amiss on *Lafite* or *Chambertin*, nor can the tyro and the connoisseur in fine fruit fail to agree as to the merits of an *Urbaniste*, a *Gansel's Bergamot* or a *Superfin* pear. Judging from this standpoint, the above varieties referred to as possessing the cardinal virtues comprise the very best among the table sorts, and are amply sufficient for an abundant variety in the largest and most carefully selected orchard. Except where otherwise noted, all are suitable for cultivation as dwarfs.

Our remarks are confined to private gardens only, where quality is desired, if even it be largely at the expense of quantity. But in a well-cared-for fruit garden, with the proper treatment, the poorest bearers may be made, if not to "blossom as the rose," to "give forth their fruit in due season" in comparative abundance. The blight, which still remains as great a mystery as ever, has seriously interfered with pear-culture lately. While this may trouble the professional market grower, it need not interfere with the amateur, who should always have a few good trees in reserve to take the place of those which may not succeed.

#### SUMMING UP—DOCTORS DISAGREE.

To sum up with the *Petite Marguerite*, *Clapp's Favourite*, *Rostiezer*, *Beurre Giffard* and *Tyson* of the summer sorts; the *Beurre Superfin*, *Urbaniste*, *Gansel's Bergamot*, *Bonne*