

Seedless Apples

Editor, THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST: In the January issue of THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST, regarding a seedless apple, I noticed a brief but justifiable precaution used in commenting on this apple. It was stated "Little value is placed on the elimination of the seed." Probably in your zeal to be candid respecting novelties, you have overlooked the very important and exhaustive effect produced on the economy of the tree at the time of maturing and ripening of the seeds, especially during the progress of ripening. We are told by pomologists and observing apple growers that at this time there are heavy draughts made on the vitality or juices of the tree, which are the natural secretions available for the full development of fruit and tree, and that a large percentage of these juices is appropriated by the seed (which contains, in embryo, the perfect plant or future tree) and thus stored for the reproduction of its species. This hypothesis is fully sustained by Prof. H. L. Hutt, B.S.A., in O.A.C. Bulletin 144, where he says: "It is the production of the seed which makes the greatest drain on the tree and soil." If, then, an apple can be produced minus the seed and the full flow of sap diverted to the development of fruit and tree, the probable benefit to fruit may be in size, quality or quantity,—in any one or all of these,—it would be a valuable addition to the present profits of apple growers. This is a desideratum much to be wished for.

In order to further illustrate this theory, Mr. Jas. Fleury, on whose farm the seedless apple referred to was grown, had two baskets of these apples which I was requested to call and see and to express my opinion on their characteristics and also to name the variety, if possible. In color, shape and flavor, they appeared to me as abnormally-grown specimens of Sherwood's Favorite or Chenango Strawberry. I grow this latter variety. On comparing the two, I was convinced that they are identical.

Applying a further test, I cut a couple of these apples longitudinally and was surprised to find in the cavity, small, immature, shrivelled seeds, as though Nature had rebelled against an over-wrought fertilization and resolved to dispense with the natural law of fecundity (as when extremes meet in the animal kingdom).

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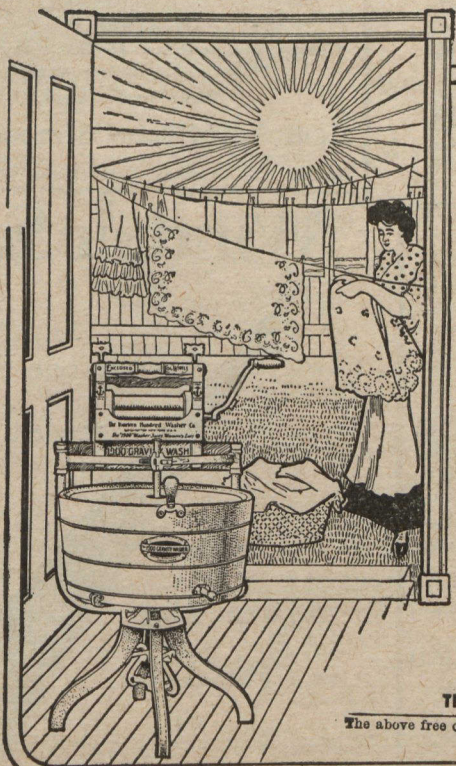
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