

MANDRAKE, OR MAY-APPLE. (*Ripe in August.*)

This was the first native fruit that I tasted, after my arrival in Canada. It attracted my attention as I was journeying through the woods to my forest-home. The driver of the team plucked it for me, and told me it was good to eat, bidding me throw aside the outer rind, which he said was not fit to be eaten. The May-apple when ripe is about the size of an egg-plum, which it resembles in shape and colour. The pulp of the fruit is of a fine sub-acid flavour, but it is better not gathered too ripe : it should be allowed to ripen in a sunny window. The time of its ripening is in August : the rich moist lands at the edge of the forest, and just within its shade, is the place where the May-apple abounds. In the month of May, it may be seen breaking the black soil, the leaves folded round the stem like a closed parasol. The fruit-bearing plant has two large palmated leaves, i.e., leaves spread out like a hand ; the stalk supports the leaf from the centre ; in the fork formed by the leaves a large rose-shaped flower, of a strong scent, rises. Very fragrant at a little distance it is, but rank and overpowering when held too near. The colour of the blossom is a greenish white.

The May-apple makes a delicious preserve. Gather the fruit as soon as it begins to shew any yellow tint on the green rind : lay them by in a sunny window for a day or two ; cut them in quarters and throw them into a syrup of white sugar, in which ginger sliced, and cloves, have been boiled : boil the fruit till the outer rind is tender : take the fruit out, lay them in a basin, sift a handful of pounded sugar over them, and let them lie till cold. Next day boil your syrup a second time, pour it over the fruit, and when cold put it into jars or glasses, and tie down. It should not be used till a month or six weeks after making : if well spiced this preserve is more like some foreign fruit. It is very fine. Some only make use of the soft acid pulp, but though the outer part is not fit to be eaten in a raw state, it is very good when preserved, and may safely be made use of, boiled with sugar and spices.

This fruit might I think be introduced into garden-culture, and prove a valuable addition to our tables : but in event of planting it in the garden, a very rich light mould must be given to feed the plant, which grows by nature in the rich vegetable leaf-mould.

FERMENTATIONS FOR BREAD.

The making and baking of good, nourishing, palatable bread, is perhaps one of the most important duties of the practical housewife : so much of the comfort and health of a family depends on the con-