

Horticulture.

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THE ORCHARD

The Ribston Pippin.

ESQUZSING, Feb. 23, 1874.

MR. EDITOR:—Some time ago I read in the agricultural columns of the *Globe* that the Ribston Pippin apple was one you would advise those intending to plant orchards to plant largely of. Now, it is my intention to plant out an orchard this spring; and, speaking to a nursery agent about this variety, found that it was not named in his catalogue. He also said he would not advise me to plant of this variety. Your columns also said it was a variety much sought after by buyers for shipping to England, and that it was the favorite in that market. Now, Mr. Editor, which of the two statements is correct? Please answer these queries in your next issue, and oblige,

Yours truly,

A SUBSCRIBER.

[We take much pleasure in assuring our esteemed correspondent that all that has been said in the CANADA FARMER concerning the Ribston Pippin is perfectly trustworthy. It is an apple of fine appearance, good size and excellent quality, and admirably suited to our Canadian climate, where the fruit is of the finest quality, much finer than when grown in the warmer climate of the middle or southern part of the State of New York. Downing who is the great American authority on fruits, at page 333, says: "The Ribston Pippin stands as high in Great Britain as the Bank of England, and to say that an apple has a Ribston flavor is there the highest praise that can be bestowed. In Maine and part of Canada it is very fine and productive."

Having such a reputation in Great Britain, it is very natural that shippers of fruit should seek after it; and we know that fine samples sent from Canada have commanded the very highest price. We have therefore no hesitation in advising those who reside in favorable localities for growing this variety to plant it largely for the British market, being confident that when properly grown and properly handled and marketed, it is one of the most profitable sorts that can be grown. And the climate where our correspondent resides is more favorable for the full development and easy marketing of this variety than the otherwise favored climate of the county of Lincoln.

Turning to *Deadle's Canadian Gardener*, we find this apple spoken of in that work in the following terms: "This is truly a splendid apple with us, and though our cousins over the border do not esteem it as highly as they do the Baldwin, Swaar, and some others, yet in our climate it is one of the very best. The tree is sufficiently hardy to thrive throughout a large part of the Dominion, though it is not able to endure a climate like that of the Ottawa district in Ontario. It flourishes in the apple regions of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, where it maintains fully its high character. This apple commands a ready sale at the very highest prices in the markets of Great Britain, and might be advantageously and profitably planted in considerable quantities by the orchardist, who will carefully gather the fruit early in October, sort it properly, and ship it at once by steamer to the transatlantic markets, where its reputation is fully equal to that of the famous Green Newtown Pippin."

That the catalogue of the tree-peddler did not contain the name of this variety only serves to show that if it was that of a Canadian nurseryman, he did not understand his business; if that of an American, it proves that he does not understand the

wants of Canadians, and does not grow trees with reference to their interests. That the agent should try to dissuade our correspondent from planting this variety is very natural; it is his business to sell trees; the only wonder is that he did not quietly book the order for five hundred trees of the Ribston Pippin, and then bring Baldwins or Greenings, with a label reading Ribston Pippin fastened to them. Tree-peddlers, as a class, are so unworthy of confidence, having no reputation at stake and never expecting or intending to have any, that no reliance can be placed on their advice or representations. Their tricks have been so often exposed, and tree buyers so frequently advised that they should deal only with respectable nurserymen, of whom we have a number of most honorable names, that when we hear of one and another being victimized by their artifices, we are strongly reminded of the verdict of the California jury in a murder case, "Served him right."]

Root-Pruning Fruit Trees.

If the seasons were always so favorable for fruit growing as to enable us to secure a fair crop of fruit annually, and if the soil in all gardens was tolerably drained and of a character suitable for fruit culture, there would be less necessity for any anxiety about the roots. But, unfortunately, a really favorable spring for fruit culture is the exception not the rule, and trees that are only partially cropped have a tendency, in spite of careful summer management, to run into undue luxuriance of growth, inducing a corresponding root action, which still further aggravates the evil. I repeat, if rampant growth could be retarded and kept within due limits by an annual crop of fruit, there would be less necessity for root-pruning. But as that much-desired consummation is not likely to be achieved, as regards our out-door fruits, till March, April and May, we must, in most soils, in the case of all restricted trees, keep an eye upon the underground growth as well as upon what is visible above. In other words, when trees occupy positions where their branch growth must necessarily be restricted in order to keep them within the prescribed limits, some restrictions must be placed upon the roots also, to maintain the balance of power and induce continual fertility. The autumn is the proper time to operate upon the roots of all trees that are unfruitful through over-luxuriance; but no man, however large his experience, can lay down rules to suit all cases. I have, however, always found it a good plan when root-pruning large trees of fifteen, twenty, or more years' growth, to open a trench from three feet to four feet from the trunk, only halving the tree at one time, leaving the remainder to be done a year or two after the result of the operation had manifested itself. In the case of old trees, it is a decided advantage to remove all the exhausted soil taken out of the trenches and from among the roots, and fill in with fresh soil, either from a heap specially prepared for the purpose, or, if this cannot be done, then exchange it with soil from the vegetable quarters that have not been exhausted by fruit trees. This, of course, involves rather more labor, but it will have a far more decided and lasting effect, and it is far more profitable in the long run to do a thing well, even if it should be necessary to incur a little expense at the time, than to half-do anything. In the case of all trees of a manageable size, (say under ten years old), I prefer taking up the trees carefully and replanting, at the same time laying the roots out straight without any severe pruning, merely shortening back long naked roots, and carefully smoothing all wounds, working in also a little fresh loam to encourage the production of fibres close at home. This is the best plan to adopt with young trees that are late in coming into bearing, and it will be crowned with success invariably.—*N. Y. Times*.

Wash for Fruit Trees.

The following is a wash used by William Saunders, of the Government Gardens at Washington:—Put half a bushel of lime and four pounds of powdered sulphur in a tight barrel, slacking the lime with hot water, the mouth of the barrel being covered with a cloth; this is reduced to the consistency of ordinary whitewash, and, at the time of application, half an ounce of carbolic acid is added to each gallon of the liquid. Mr. Saunders says:—"I generally apply it in the spring, before the leaves make their appearance, but I am convinced that it would be more effective if applied later, but then it is difficult to do so when the tree is in foliage." Mr. Saunders applies the wash not only to the stem of the tree, but, to some extent, to the main branches.

Undeveloped Fruits in America.

I have been much surprised that more efforts have not been made to improve our native fruits. I have occasionally met with Persimmons so exquisite in taste as to surpass the finest dates. Such Persimmons have few seeds, they become when fully ripe quite sugary and so dry that they may be carried any distance without being mashed, while those commonly seen in the market are astringent, full of seeds, and so soft that they require a spoon for handling. Our Papaws differ greatly in character, some being quite large and luscious. It may be that they are not brought into cultivation because they commonly grow in swampy ground, and it may not be generally known that the trees succeed perfectly well on upland. That our wild plums are not more cultivated is mainly attributable to the ravages of the curculio, which will scarcely allow a plum to ripen.

I have seen American chestnuts as large as the generality of Spanish chestnuts, and when they are so they will bring as high a price, and they are in fact worth more, as uncooked they are very superior to the Spanish, and I would recommend that the improvement should be effected by means of grafts rather than from seed, as the result would be less doubtful. Chestnuts grow well from grafts, making a growth of three or four feet the first season.

I have no doubt experienced nurserymen would succeed in grafting the hickory. My few attempts have failed, but if the finest shell-barks could be grafted on the common hickory it would prove very advantageous, especially when it is considered that ground too rocky or too swampy for cultivation, is perfectly satisfactory to these trees. It has been matter of astonishment to me that another native fruit has not been more extensively cultivated—the service berry, or June berry *Amelanchier botryoparum*. The fruit is delicious. It ripens when other fruits are not plentiful, and sells readily when taken to the Philadelphia market. Few persons are acquainted with it, for the trees do not bear well unless where they are cultivated. Though plentiful in the woods, the trees bear few berries of small size, and these are claimed by the birds as soon as they redden.—*Rural Home*.

Liquid Grafting Wax.

Mr. L'Homme-Lefort invented, not many years ago, a grafting composition, which is very cheap, very easily prepared, and keeps, corked up in a bottle with a tolerably wide mouth, at least six months unaltered. It is laid on in as thin a coat as possible, by means of a flat piece of wood. Within a few days it will be as hard as a stone. It is not affected by severe cold; it never softens or cracks when exposed to atmospheric action. When applied to wounds in trees, it acts as an artificial cuticle. After a few days' exposure to the atmosphere in a thin coat, it assumes a whitish color, and becomes as hard as stone, being impervious to water and air. As long as the inventor kept the preparation secret it was sold at very high prices.

It is made after the following formula:—Melt one pound of common rosin over a gentle fire; add to it an ounce of beef tallow and stir it well. Take it from the fire, let it cool down a little, and then mix with it a tablespoonful of spirits turpentine; and after that about seven ounces of very strong alcohol (95 per cent.), to be had at any druggist's store. The alcohol cools it down so rapidly that it will be necessary to put it again on the fire, stirring it constantly. Still the utmost care must be exercised to prevent the alcohol from getting inflamed. To avoid it, the best way is to remove the vessel from the fire when the lump that may have been formed commences melting again. This must be continued till the whole is a homogeneous mass similar to honey.

This is undoubtedly a valuable recipe. I have found that gum shellac, dissolved in alcohol, was one of the most useful preparations that a gardener could have, and it should always be kept on hand and used like paint to coat over any wounds in trees. In budding, it is a great saving of labor, when you wish to cut away branches; to give the new one from the bud an opportunity to grow, as it excludes the air until the wound heals.—*Tribune*.

The best way to get rid of ants that we know of is to trap them with a sponge. Procure a large sponge, wash it well and press it dry, which will leave the cells quite open; then sprinkle over and into it as much as possible some fine white sugar, and place it where the ants do congregate. They will soon collect upon the sponge and enter into its cells, and then you can cut short their career by dipping the sponge into boiling water.—*Mobile Register*.