

THE CHINESE SUGAR CANE.

A specimen of this plant, which is attracting much notice in the United States, was exhibited at our Provincial Show at Kingston, last September, by Mr. S. J. Lyman, of Montreal. By some oversight or other it was not reported on by the Judges. It was grown in the vicinity of Montreal; and although the seed had not fully ripened, the plant had attained to a great size, indicating that it might, by proper culture, be fully matured as far north as this Province. It is stated, indeed, that Mr. Eliot, of Sandwich, on the Detroit river, had succeeded in bringing it to perfection last Fall, and secured a considerable quantity of good, sound seed, which he intended for distribution. We shall, therefore, know something more decided next season, in regard to the economic uses of this plant, and its adaptation to the climate of this country.

This plant, as its popular name indicates, is a native of China; but for several years it has been successfully cultivated in South-Eastern Caffraria, whence it passed into France and Algeria: in the latter it is brought to great perfection. It has succeeded well—considering the limited knowledge of its habits yet attained—in the district of Columbia, and the middle and Southern States; and even as far north as the New England States, it has been so far matured as to yield a considerable amount of crystallised sugar, which appears to increase in proportion to the diminution of the latitude. In its appearance, habits, and culture, it may be said to resemble Indian corn, and may probably be raised to advantage within the usual limits of the latter. From all we can learn, it appears to be excellently adapted as a forage crop—cattle and pigs devouring the leaves and stalks with the greatest avidity.

The following is from a United States paper:—

NEW SUGAR PLANT.—The Chinese sugar cane seed, distributed by the Patent Office last spring, promises to be a complete success at the north. A package of seed was planted in Bucks county, Pa., latitude $40\frac{1}{2}$ degrees north, and has arrived at maturity. The maximum height of the stalk was ten feet, and the product in grain much greater than any cereal under cultivation. The stalk is perfectly green after the seed has reached maturity, and the saccharine principle is then fully developed. The juice, which is most abundant, is very saccharine—quite as much so as the variety cultivated at the south. Whether the juice contains the same amount of crystallisable sugar, remains to be tested. Should it be found equal to ordinary cane in that respect, a new era in the agriculture of the north will be inaugurated, and an immense breadth of land be devoted to its culture as soon as the necessary seed can be obtained, which will require another year at least. The seed having been disturbed late in the spring, which was cold and backward, there is good reason to believe that much planted did not reach maturity. Should the plant fail, so far as the manufacture of sugar is concerned, yet its value as a forage crop cannot be over-estimated at the north. Cattle, horses, and hogs eat the entire stalk with avidity, and no doubt would fatten rapidly on it. The seed, which is small, has a thin black hull, which can be taken off, leaving a fine white flour as the residue. We have no means at present of estimating the value of this flour as an article of food, but no doubt its merits will be fully investigated. The culture required for the plant is similar to that adopted for Indian corn when planted in rows, and the seed should be put into the ground about the same time. As it is a quick and strong growing plant, it should be well manured.