

Growing Fruit in Manitoba

Interesting Paper by Mr. Bedford, of the Manitoba Experimental Farm.

There is a constantly growing interest in fruit culture in Manitoba, and everything authoritative on the subject is read with eagerness by hundreds throughout the province. Fruit can be grown successfully in the western Manitoba is now fully proven, but the possibilities of the west and northwest of the province have more problems and difficulties for the reason, the following paper by Mr. S. A. Bedford, superintendent of the Brandon Experiment Station, is of special interest. The paper was read before the recent meeting of the Western Horticultural Society and is now given in full.

Judging from the many enquiries made at the experimental farm this subject is receiving increasing attention, and this is to be expected for the farmers on the older districts are now in easy circumstances and their better home surroundings is becoming very general. The success met with by such pioneers as Mr. A. P. Stevenson and the Most Rev. Archbishop McCray and other well located fruit growers, encouraging not only the situated to make an effort in a more humble way. The experimental farm at Brandon is doing all means an ideal spot for fruit growing; the altitude (1,170 feet above sea level) being too high and the very dry southern slope encourages the sap to start too early in the spring. But there very unfavorable conditions have this advantage that we can rest assured that we can find hardy at Brandon will succeed almost by part of the province.

Apples.

Recognizing the fact that this is the most important fruit grown in Canada, our director, Dr. Wm. Saunders, early in the history of the experimental farm, during the year 1891, forwarded a large collection of apple trees to Brandon. These trees of 120 varieties, and named seedlings included all the better known sorts of eastern Canada as well as many seedlings of European and Russian varieties. These were planted under the protection of hedges, but after half a dozen years, not one was alive. It is noticeable, however, that these few surviving trees are beginning to show additional hardiness, and as none of them have yet fruited this is unnecessary for me to name any. Instead of this, I have encouraged our director call about for a number of the apple trees that are harder than the hardest iron clads. He found it in the berries crab (pyrus baccata). The first of these planted on the western experimental farms were grown from seed imported from Russia, and from the very outset they proved perfectly hardy at Brandon, in fact I consider them even harder than our native leaf maples. The seedlings of which do occasionally kill back in early spring. This hardy group includes many varieties, varying in form of tree and in size of fruit, some of the trees are very tall in appearance and when loaded with fruit as most of the trees at the experimental farms were last year they are exceedingly handsome. The position of their fruit, even on the western branches, are unable to shake it off. This fruit varies in color from that of the golden crab of the transcendent crab, and most of it makes excellent preserves.

Some of these varieties are: Golden rata nungues, pyrus baccata lutea, and pyrus baccata prunifolia. With a view to increasing the possibilities of this crab Dr. Wm. Saunders commenced some years ago a series of experiments in cross breeding with the pyrus baccata as the female parent, while for the male parent he used the varieties: Golden rata nungues, Wealthy, Talman's Sweet, etc. The crossing was successful and a number of cross-bred seedlings eventually resulted, some of which have already fruited at Ottawa and a number of them are now provided with seed upon the pyrus baccata. A number of these have been named: Novella, Novella and Aurora. Although none of them have as yet fruited at Brandon all of them have fruited hardy and we trust that by this means some excellent fruit trees will be obtained, suitable for all parts of the province.

Success So Far Achieved.

Satisfactory results have also been obtained at Brandon from the planting of a large number of seedlings of the following varieties of crab apples: Wealthy, Novella, and Golden rata nungues. Although a large proportion of these have been found tender, Wealthy, Novella, and Golden rata nungues, thoroughly hardy and this year two of these have fruited. One was specially worthy of attention, being a large bearer, the fruit, a light yellow, the tree is very bushy and in the respect fully equal to the transcendent crab and at the same time much more hardy. It has been growing at Brandon for five years, and has not killed back in the least. Such specimens are highly to be recommended as exceedingly useful for acorns to be grafted on pyrus baccata.

I would like to call attention to the desirability of united action on the part of residents in every portion of the province towards taking particular note of isolated hardy apple and crab trees, in their own neighborhood. For instance, in the town of Rolland I found a large sized apple tree growing close to the sidewalk apparently perfectly hardy, but no one knew its name or history. Just south of Brandon, also north of Neepawa there are isolated specimens quite hardy, but in both cases without name. Now we are in a position to propagate these will be no difficulty in propagating by grafting any specimen trees of this variety. I am glad to say we now have two larger apples that promise to be hardy, viz. Wealthy and Golden rata nungues. Mr. A. P. Stevenson, both fruited this year, but the ever present small boy has been before the fruit has grown. We have also a single specimen of the transcendent crab planted in 1891, and this year it fruited by placing nail kegs around it and although not quite hardy it has borne a few crops of excellent fruit.

Plums.

The prospect for the successful cultivation in Manitoba of a really good plum is a matter of great importance, means as promising as in the case of the apple, the greatest drawback appearing in the history of this fruit in this season, there is not being sufficient time for the fruit to ripen. Between the varieties of Prunus Americana standard plums were tested, and at the present day none of these survive. The varieties of Prunus Americana have been reduced for experimental work is the wild plum of America, (Prunus americana) and the Manitoba wild plum (Prunus Nigra). A large number of seedlings of the following named varieties of Prunus Americana have been tested at the experimental farm: Cheney, Hungarian, De Soto, Yosemite Purple and Albion. These have generally proven quite hardy and many of them have fruited, last season a very large crop of ripe fruit being harvested. A wonderful variation was noticeable, as many as eighty-four distinct types being noted and recorded. Among these were some very fine fruit well worthy of propagation, but in most cases the seedlings are to be recommended for general cultivation, as, like their parents, they are too late in ripening to be of any special open seasons like 1901. The most promising of these are Cheney, Weaver and Hungarian. It seems probable that for permanent success we will have to confine our attention to the growing of our native plum (Prunus Nigra). In its wild state the fruit is very large and of a fine color, some of fair size and good flavor, others quite small and astringent. This variation argues a great possibility of careful and continued selection and at present we are working along these lines, named seedlings under trial. One of these named Brandon Ruby is remarkably hardy, and fruited in early August. At this time the fruit is small but thin skinned and of a pleasant flavor. It is probable that this will be largely propagated and distributed for trial.

Pears.

Although twelve named varieties of the hardest pears have been tested at the experimental farm in addition to the pear named Beurre d'Angers, all were found to tender for the climate.

Cherries.

Sixteen varieties of cherries have been tested at the farm, with the addition of 150 seedlings from named varieties. None of these have proven hardy and our list is now reduced to

two, viz. the Sand Cherry (Prunus pumila), and the Rupert Cherry, a cross between the Sand Cherry and the plum. The latter is of upright habit and so far has been hardy here, though not yet fruited. The Sand Cherry (Prunus pumila) is subject to great improvement by selection, and we have on hand several selected bushes, which produce a much finer fruit, both in size and flavor than the average plant. The fruit of the plant is dwarf and bushy and is extremely productive, the fruit being produced in great quantities. The Sand Cherry and proved varieties is fairly sweet and may possibly be evolved into a very useful fruit.

Raspberries.

Provided that a good situation can be obtained, there is no doubt that nearly all the varieties of this fruit will do well in Manitoba. There are now forty varieties under test at the Experimental Farm, including Black Caps. As is the case with nearly all the gentle slopes to the north is undoubtedly preferable to any other as when planted thus they do not suffer from the rays of the sun, which is especially detrimental in the early spring. For some years we have adopted the plan of laying down the plants and covering the tips with soil thrown over from the plough. The data from this experiment have been sufficient to warrant the general adoption of this plan, and it is still in continuation. The red varieties of raspberries have given the best satisfaction as to hardiness. Culbert, Turner, Philadelphia, De Soto, and Large Red. Of the yellows, Golden Queen and Caroline are by far the most promising, and a Black Queen Hillbary is undoubtedly the hardiest.

Currants.

Up to the spring of 1902 these were represented on the farm by forty-six varieties of red, white and black currants, and an addition of forty-six varieties was made during the spring of 1902, making a total of ninety-two varieties. Most of the red and white varieties have been fairly hardy in conditions, but the blacks appear to be of a somewhat more tender nature than the reds and white varieties. In the selection of varieties, of the reds the following have proven the most satisfactory: Cheney, Prolific and Cherry Red. The first mentioned is a vigorous grower, and produces a large crop of small branches and berries are somewhat small. Prolific, although not so productive as Cheney, is of an exceptionally large size, and makes an ideal exhibition variety. Cherry Red produces a large crop of berries, and others having larger sized berries than Ruby Cast, though considerably below Cheney in size. Prolific is not so productive as Ruby Cast. Of the white varieties, White Grape and White Dutch are the only two which have yet fruited. Both are very productive and quite hardy. In the black section, Climax, Black Champion, Lee's Prolific and Stewart have proven to be the hardest of all varieties tested, and are thoroughly tested. All of these are moderately productive, and can be recommended for general cultivation. In the Missouri Tree Currants (Crandall's Black).

I would call your attention specially to this variety. The bushes are quite tall, extending the height of the ordinary currant, and the fruit is large and is thoroughly hardy and invariably produces a good crop of fruit which, however, is somewhat unsatisfactory. This is fully true, and is often three times the size of the average black currant. The bushes are of a moderate size. There was a magnificent sample exhibited at your horticultural show in 1901, and I am sure you will remember, and which drew forth many expressions of admiration. I would highly recommend this for general cultivation through the province.

Gooseberries.

The gooseberry has proven to be one of the easiest of small fruits to grow successfully at the experimental farm. Thirty-two varieties have been experimented with, and nearly all have fruited, owing to the severity of our winter. Of the small-fruited varieties I am following have given the best results, viz. the black berry (called by us Sand Hillbary), Smith's Improved and Houghton. The first mentioned was received from the

Sand Hills, southeast of Brandon, and is a much better fruit, both in size and flavor, than the average native. Smith's Improved is evidently an improved native form, being somewhat larger than the foregoing. Of the large varieties, the following, though not perfectly hardy, have produced small quantities of fruit for the past two or three seasons. The varieties are: Jacket and Industry, and I am of the opinion that, were the conditions more favorable, these varieties would do fairly well.

Tenders for City Supplies.

The Winnipeg city council is calling for tenders for supplies to the city, at present. One thing wanted is a big pumping engine for the water works. Turbines are also wanted to the extent of 100 cords is also wanted for the waterworks. Another demand is for 15,000 to 20,000 barrels of cement. A quantity of water pipe and special is required. The works committed 1,500 cords of cedar wood, presumably for paving.

Trade Notes.

United States railroad earnings in December compared with the same month of the year by 9.5 per cent, and those of 1901 by 16.4 per cent.

Not many rubber producers of footwear are busy on special orders. Export activity in rubber goods has reduced to a low point. Some varieties of leather have advanced in price, and tanneries of hemlock sole have only limited stocks.

Pig iron continues scarce, prices generally advancing during the past week in the United States. The export advance of \$1.10 a ton, was made in wire products. Much new business has come forward, especially on bars and sheets, where there is a vigorous demand for structural material to be used in bridge work and car building. The price of steel has advanced activity in this industry is confidently anticipated.

After a month's recovery last month's decline in the United States. Stocks of cotton goods do not accumulate. The price of cotton has ruled very firm with business held by the reserve of sellers. Prices for wool have advanced, and the opening level of the season and in some cases further advances are asked. New rates of sailings will be opened next week.

Ernest Tuwiel, manager of the Imperial Hotel, has been elected to the Winnipeg, has sold out his interest in that business to Mr. Adams (another name), and will retire from the management. E. R. Sinclair, secretary-treasurer of the company, will be the manager.

G. W. Baldwin, for whom Winnipeg, has moved his place of business to the premises of H. & A. Leaday, on Ross avenue, where he will hereafter be found. Mr. Baldwin is one of the most widely known fur buyers in the west, and his office here represents the same house here for many years.

It is expected to be made at the next session of parliament for an act to incorporate the Regina and Hudson Bay Railway, and to construct a line from the international boundary between the second and third ranges, northward to the north to Regina; then northward to Churchill, on Hudson Bay.

W. R. Houshrough, who is widely known throughout the west, has accepted a position with The Marshall-Heide Co. as traveller. He will do the travelling for the company, which was formerly covered by E. B. Loucks.

H. W. Hamby, an old Ontario farmer, has been invited to join the staff of this house at Winnipeg, and will have Southern Manitoba as his territory.

Foley, Lock & Larson, successors to Lock Hough & Co., Winnipeg, have secured small premises occupied by the Canada Cycle & Motor Co. for temporary quarters for their new large building. The premises are on the corner of Princess and McDermott streets, and were at one time occupied by the firm of Peck & Peck. The fruit department will be continued in the present premises on the corner of the same streets to commence as soon as the weather will permit on the new building to be occupied by this firm.

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