



Where the Apple is King.

Wherever there are pies the apple is king. Other fruits may excel as dessert, or in preserves, but here the apple reigns alone. I once knew an old lady, a Frenchwoman, who could bake apple pies. She had, indeed, the rare gift of making everything eatable appetizing. "Oh, sir," she said to me once, when I praised her skill, "you don't know. If I had only a dozen frogs' legs!" She touched nothing she did not adorn. But her apple pies were works of art. Not that the recipe was elaborate, or contained spicery and stimulants. It was, on the contrary, very simple. I could give it here as she gave it to me, and as I saw her follow it in creating the pies; but I am sure it would help no one. There was an individuality—a *genre*, one might say—about those pies that no recipe could teach. Only close imitation in the presence of a master, combined with sympathetic study and a reverent spirit, can make one gradually proficient in any art. All shades of brown, from light to deepest dark, colored the crust, blending the undulations and rugosities of the main surface with the artistic edgings on the margin and the arabesque cuttings of the centre. The quality of the crust was a combination of extremes; it was at once crisp and porous, firm and mellow, coherent and flaky. The apples, too, were in keeping. They preserved their natural flavor. They were soft and juicy, yet were not altogether disintegrated. One could eat a section of such a pie only with closed eyes, and slowly ruminating. I do not expect ever again to taste anything, whether stew or roast, or soup or cake, quite so acceptable to the palate as those pies.

Apocryphal of the properties of the apple, I read, the other day, a book on this fruit, written by a Frenchman, who evidently was speaking from experience and wide knowledge of the subject. Soothing, medicinal drinks, he says, are prepared from it. A thick apple marmalade, incorporated with aromatic substances, formed the original "pomade" of the boudoir. Baked apples were once considered beneficial when applied to

tumors, and gave relief to inflamed eyes. They were believed to counteract a bilious tendency, and, as a matter of fact, the writer vouches they should be eaten freely by any one who is disposed to be melancholy. "But one remarkable and peculiar singularity apples possess in common with figs: they do not digest well with wine. And thus it is that these two fruits are admirably adapted for the use of those who have to drink water."

The Importance of Horticulture.

The department of horticulture embraces the cultivation and care of orchard trees and garden fruits, vegetables, and flowers. The importance of this department of general farm work is evident because:

(1) An orchard of good bearing trees of standard fruit is a valuable permanent improvement on a farm. "Be aye plantin' a tree," says a canny Scotch proverb; "when ye're sleepin', it's growin'."

(2) Land, anywhere, that will grow cereals can be made to grow choice varieties of apples, pears, plums, and cherries; peaches and grapes also can be raised, with some little protection, much farther north than their present range; while small fruits are hardy and prolific in any temperate climate.

(3) The market for fruit is practically unlimited. Fruit is a necessary article of diet, and the more produced, the wider its use becomes. By drying and canning its distribution is extended over the whole year.

(4) Fruit-growing is a profitable industry, and, upon the whole, a pleasant occupation, requiring arduous work at times, of course, and much vigilance and prudence always; but the returns more than compensate for the more minute care necessary in this than in other departments of farm work. Fruit farms have not fallen in value, as other kinds of farms undoubtedly have. On the contrary, \$200 and \$300 an acre for small farms are not unusual prices, and are amply warranted by returns.