

The chicken cocks, or cockerels, will be first ready for killing, and they should all be killed during the first season; then the extra or old cocks, and lastly the pullets, which are not required to recruit the stock. The old hens should be killed before they are three or, at the furthest, in their third year, as after that they are nearly worthless.

CHINESE SUGAR CANE.

As many of our Subscribers will probably attempt the cultivation of this new plant, we desire to give them all the reliable information in regard to it, that has fallen under our observation. With this view, we publish the following "Circular," from the United States Patent Office:—

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE, Dec. 10, 1856.

SIR:—This new plant seems to be destined to take an important position among our economical products. Its seeds were sent, some sixty years ago, from the north of China, by M. de Montigny, to the Geographical Society of Paris. From a cursory examination of a small field of it, growing at Varrieres, in France, in the autumn of 1854, Mr. D. J. Browne, then on a mission from this Office for collecting agricultural information and products, was led to infer, that, from the peculiarity of the climate in which it was growing, and its resemblance in appearance and habit to Indian corn, it would flourish in any region wherever that plant would thrive. From this source, he obtained some 200 pounds of the seed, which was distributed in small packages, by this Office, among the members of Congress, with the view of experimenting with it in all parts of the Union, and thereby ascertaining its adaptation to our soil and climate. In numerous instances, the results proved highly satisfactory, as it attained the height of 8 or 10 feet, as far north as St. Paul's, in Minnesota, and matured its seeds at various points in Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and other places further south. The following year, while in France, on a similar mission as above, Mr. Browne obtained several bushels of the seed of this plant, grown from that reputed to have been brought from South Africa, by Mr. Leonard Wray, of London, and which has since proved to be identical with that obtained by this Office in 1854.

There appears to be a doubt among many in Europe, as well as in this country, as to the true botanical name of this plant. M. Louis Vilmorin, a scientific cultivator, of Paris, provisionally gave it the name of *Holcus saccharatus*, which had previously been applied to the common broom-corn, if not to other species, or at least varieties, of some allied plant. He also conjectured that it might be the *sorghum vulgare*, (Andropogon sorghum of others,) and thought that it might comprehend a variety of it, as well as *Andropogon cafra*, *bicolor*, etc., of Kunth. Mr. Wray, who has devoted much time and attention to the cultivation of this plant, with the view of extracting sugar from its juice, at Cape Natal and other places, states that in the south-east part of Cafraria, there are at least fifteen varieties of it, some of them growing to a height of 12 or 15 feet, with stems as thick as those of the sugar-cane (*Saccharum officinarum*.) M. Vilmorin, also, says that, in a collection of seeds sent to the Museum of Natural History at Paris, in 1840, by M. d'Abadie, there were thirty kinds of Sorghum, among the growth of which he particularly recognized several plants having stems of a saccharine flavor. Others are of the opinion, that the common broom-corn, (*Holcus saccharatus*), the chocolate or Guinea-corn, (*Sorghum vulgare*), and the Chinese sugar cane, (*Sorghum saccharatum*), all of which, containing more or less saccharine matter, belong to the same species, but are variations caused by differences of soil and climate, or by a disposition to sport, after the manner of Indian corn and other plants under cultivation. The Chinese sugar-cane, however, differs from the others, in containing a far larger proportion of juice, and consequently is more valuable for fodder and other economical uses.

In 1766, a plant analogous to the one in question, was experimented on at Florence, in Italy, by Pietro Arduino, for the extraction of sugar; yet it must have been of a different variety, as he describes its seeds as of a clear brown colour, while those of the Chinese sugar-cane are of a shining jet-black, and in appearance identical with those of the sorghum vulgare, of the old collections.

DESCRIPTION AND HABIT OF GROWTH.

The Chinese sugar-cane, when cultivated on ordinary land, in the United States, somewhat after the manner of broom-corn, grows to a height of from 8 to 16 feet, while in