

READING 20-1

From *Maison Rustique*, or, *The Countrey Farmse*; Compiled in the French Tongue by Charles Stevens (Estienne), and John Liebault, *Doctors of Physicke* (1616 edition, augmented by Gervase Markham).

OF THE APPLE-TREE

The Apple-tree

The Apple-tree which is most in request, and the most precious of all others, and therefore called of *Homer*; the Tree with the goodly fruit, groweth any where, and in as much as it loveth to have the inward part of his wood moist and sweatie, you must give him his lodging in a fat, blacke, and moist ground; and therefore if it be planted in a gravelly and sandie ground, it must be helped with watering, and batling with dung and smal mould in the time of Autumne. It liveth and continueth in all desireable good estate in the hills and mountaines where it may have fresh moisture, being the thing that it searcheth after, but even there it must stand in the open face of the South. Some make nurceries of the pippins sowne, but and if they be not afterward removed and grafted, they hold not their former excellencie: it thriveth somewhat more when it is set of branches or shoots: but then also the fruit proveth late and of small value: the best is to graft them upon wild Apple-trees, Plum-trees, Peach-trees, Peare-trees, Peare-plumtrees, Quince-trees, and especially upon Peare-trees, whereupon grow the Apples, called Peare-maines, which is a mixture of two sorts of fruits: as also, when it is grafted upon Quince-trees, it bringeth forth the Apples, called Apples of Paradise, as it were sent from heaven in respect of the delicatenesse of their cote, and great sweetness, and they are a kind of dwarffe Apples, because of their stocke the Quince-tree, which is but of a small stature.

The Apple loveth to be digged twice, especially the first yeare, but it needeth no dung, and yet notwithstanding dung and ashes cause it prosper better, especially the dung of Sheepe, or for lesse charges sake, the dust which in Sommer is gathered up in the high waies. You must many times set at libertie the boughes which intangle themselves one within another; for it is nothing else but abundance of Wood, wherewith it being so replenished and bepestred, it becometh mossie, and bearing lesse fruit. It is verie subject to be eaten and spoyled of Pismires and little wormes, but the remedie is to set neere unto it the Sea-onion: or else if you lay swines dung at the roots, mingled with mans urine, in as much as the Apple-tree doth rejoyce much to be watered with urine. And to the end it may beare fruit abundantly, before it begin to blossome, compasse his stocke about, and tie unto it some peece of lead taken from some spout, but when it beginneth to blossome, take it away. If it seeme to be sicke, water it diligently with urine, and to put to his root Asses dung tempered with water. Likewise, if you will have sweet Apples, lay to the roots Goats dung mingled with mans water. If you desire to have red Apples, graft an Apple-tree upon a blacke Mulberrie-tree. If the Apple-tree will not hold and beare his fruit till it be ripe, compasse the stocke of the Apple-tree a good foot from the roots upward, about with a ring of a lead, before it begin to blossome, and when the apples shall begin to grow great, then take it away.

Gathering of Apples

Apples must be gathered when the moone is at the full, in faire weather, and about the fifteenth of September, and that by hand without any pole or pealing downe: because otherwise the fruit would be much martred, and the young siences broken or bruised, and so the Apple-tree by that meanes should be spoyled of his young wood which would cause the losse of the Tree. See more of the manner of gathering of them in the Chapter next following of the Peare-tree: and as for the manner of keeping of them, it must be in such sort as is delivered hereafter.

You shall thaw frozen Apples if you dip them in cold water, and so restore them to their naturall goodnesse. There is a kind of wild Apple, called a Choake-apple, because they are verie harsh in eating, and these will serve well for hogges to eat. Of these apples likewise you may make verjuice if you presse them in a Cyderpress, or if you squeeze them under a verjuice milstone.

Vinegar

Vinegar is also made after this manner: You must cut these apples into gobbets, and leave them in their peeces for the space of three dayes, then afterward cast them into a barrell with sufficient quantitie of raine water, or fountaine water, and after that stop the vessell, and so let it stand thirtie daies without touching of it. And then at the terme of those daies you shall draw out vinegar, and put into them againe as much water as you have drawne out vinegar. There is likewise made with this sort of Apples a kind of drinke, called of the Picardines, Piquette, and this they use in steed of Wine. Of other sorts of Apples, there is likewise drinke made, which is called Cyder, as we shall declare hereafter.

Neat wine, Mingled wine

An Apple cast into a hogshead full of Wine, if it swim, it sheweth that the Wine is neat: but and if it sinke to the bottome, it shewes that there is Water mixt with the Wine.

Infinet are the sorts and so the names of Apples comming as well of nature owne accord without the helpe of man, as of the skill of man, not being of the race of the former: in everie one of which there is found some speciall qualitie, which others have not: but the best of all the rest, is the short shanked apple, which is marked with spottings, as tasting and smelling more excellently than any of all the other sorts. And the smell of it is so excellent, as that in the time of the plague there is nothing better to cast upon the coales, and to make sweet perfumes of, than the rinde thereof. The short stalked Apple hath yet furthermore one notable qualitie: for the kernells being taken out of it, and the place fill up with Frankincense, and the hole joyned and fast closed together, and so rosted under hot embers as that it burne not, bringeth an after medicine or remedie to serve when all other fayle, to such as are sicke of a pleurisie, they having it given to eat: sweet apples doe much good against melancholicke affects and diseases, but especially against the pleurisie: for if you roast a sweet apple under the ashes, and season it with the juice of licorice, starch and sugar, and after give it to eat evening and morning two houres before meat unto one sicke of the pleurisie, you shall helpe him exceedingly.