



THE GRAY WILLOW.

The culture of the Gray Willow has of late attracted considerable attention, in Illinois and other Western States. Samuel Edwards, Esq., of La Moille, Ills., in a communication to the *Prairie Farmer*, says:

"Since the meeting of the Horticultural Society, I am almost daily in receipt of inquiries relating to the Gray Willow. In the spring of 1845, I obtained a cutting of it from John Moore, nurseryman at Madisonville, near Cincinnati. It was planted on the bank of an old sod fence, and has never since received any cultivation.

Current cuttings planted near it the year before, receiving the same neglect, are now no larger than four year old plants which have been well cultivated. The Willow, a foot from the ground, measures over one hundred inches in circumference. Several years since, struck with its rapid growth, I planted a quantity of it in an orchard screen, at the time supposing, as most of our people have, that the timber was of very little value. Since hearing the evidence of Mr. Fell at the Horticultural meeting, as to the value of the timber for rails, I am fully satisfied that it is the most valuable tree we have for replacing our Locust groves, being killed by the borer, and for giving a new impulse to timber planting on the prairies—the great need of the prairie country.

"With the same cultivation it grows fifty per cent. more rapidly than the cottonwood, splits freely, is not injured to my knowledge by any insect, nor liable to be browsed by stock. It sprouts freely from the stump, though I do not remember to have ever seen a sucker from the root.

"A limb an inch and a half in diameter was cut off last spring; the stub threw out five main branches, which grew from eight to eleven feet in length, besides a number of smaller limbs. With care in cutting off all but one shoot, I hope to be able to show at our Horticultural and Agricultural Fairs next fall, a growth of the present year from fifteen to twenty feet in length.

"Cuttings eight inches long set three fourths their length in the ground, dirt pressed firmly around the lower end, are certain to grow. Let the rows run north and south, say five to six feet apart, two or three feet in the row, cultivate three years. The fourth year alternate plants can be cut out for rails, and in two years more the balance can be cut, as the shoots from the first cutting will occupy the ground.

An excellent fence can be made by setting plants at a proper distance apart for posts; when six inches in diameter, willow rails can be let in, slightly similar to post and rail fence. They soon overgrow the rails, making a very durable first class fence.

A fence of this description on the farm of Major Mary, Marcellus, New York, with Lombardy Poplar posts, lasted over thirty years. Though, like all willows, its choice, were it capable of making one, would be for a wet soil, it grows equally well on dry prairie. It is being tried for hedge in low ground. For this purpose, my plan would be to use large limbs, say two or three inches in diameter, five or six feet long. Sharpen one end, and drive them eighteen inches deep, and at least that distance apart, sloping them in the hedge line at an angle of forty-five degrees, similar to the 'side hill fence' built in some localities in the Eastern States. By leaving the sod unbroken, crowding the plants thus close, and occasionally cutting the tops, it is possible that it may be kept close enough for a good fence against cattle.

Excuse my tediousness—I plead guilty to the accusation of a mania in tree planting, and would that all who read this, in all prairiedom, were not almost, but altogether as much engrossed as a few of us are, in this important subject."

The following on the same subject, is from the pen of R. H. Fell, of McLean County, Ills.

"What, let me ask, is the great distinguishing deficiency, that is apparent to any one, in our prairie homes of the West. All agree in saying that it is the lack of timber properly distributed.

Then the question arises how can that be remedied? We have been trying experiments for the last twenty years, with locust and some other kinds of trees, but with no satisfactory results.

"Now I propose that we try the Gray or Powder Willow. It is more easily produced than any of the kinds heretofore tried, is better adapted to all localities, is a more rapid grower, is more beautiful, will not breed or harbor vermin, will not spread by suckers, and lastly is equal in value to any other fast grower that has been tried, and I think superior. All that is necessary is to stick strips of the willow in the ground, and it will grow, and that rapidly. It is best adapted in its habits to low and wet grounds, but will grow in any kind of soil. Out of one thousand slips there is no need of losing any; they will all grow. Slips one foot long, stuck half way into the ground, will grow in three years from fifteen to twenty feet high, and at

the end of seven to ten years will be large enough to cut into three rail cuts, the first making four rails, the second, two, and the last one is a pole. The cutting of it down does not destroy it, but only infuses a more rapid and vigorous second growth. When once the ground is set with it, it is a permanent thing. It matters not how often it is cut off, it continues to throw up new shoots. Then there is no kind of wood with which I am acquainted that splits with so much ease, and so straightly, as this willow. The rails are easily handled because the wood is light; and they will last, if kept off the ground, thirty or forty years. There is no decay to them when kept off the ground. The bleaching of the rains and vicissitudes of weather will gradually lessen them in size, and they will eventually become too small for service as rails, but not until they have served out their full time. When it comes in contact with the ground it is not a hardy wood. It is also valuable for protection, shelter, or screen for vines; also for boards, shingles and fuel. It is quite equal, I am told, to any of the light woods for fuel.

It is astonishing on what a small amount of ground enough willows can be grown to build and keep up the fences of a farm, and at the same time supply the house with fuel. In many parts of Europe they grow it for fuel, putting it in on the lines between tracts owned by different persons, and in low and marshy places. It is the first thing to throw out its beautiful green leaves in the spring, and is the last to part with them in autumn or early winter. The tree grows straight, and limbs are upright; does not spread about like many other trees, but is really a thing of beauty. From my earliest boyhood it has been familiar to me, and I never look upon it but with renewed pleasure.

I hope the farmers of McLean, and all the prairie regions of the West may be induced to grow the Willow, and thereby beautify their homes."

A WORD TO "SPOUTING" FARMERS.

The *Rural New Yorker* deals some stunning blows to that class of the Agricultural community who, instead of devoting their spare moments to the timely setting in order of home concerns, are excessively fond of prating and speculating about mooted questions in politics, army movements, or governmental quibbles, that can be productive of no possible advantage either to themselves or the public. We are not very frequently bored with such harangues in *Deseret*; nor do we wish to be. If there should chance to be an individual found among the farmers of these valleys having such rambling proclivities, the following is philanthropically recommended to his studious attention and observance. If, on the contrary, none of the class herein personified are discoverable within the confines of these mountains, our gratification at such an assurance will be great; and we shall acknowledge to have published the *New Yorker's* strictures solely to show in what estimation such individuals are held elsewhere:

"They are the fellows who meet at the village tavern, or store, or grocery, and talk over the affairs of the country, and know more about national affairs than the President, his Cabinet and all of the generals. One 'swans' he wouldn't remove 'little Mac,' and another that 'Burns'de's a brick,' and will conquer a peace," or get-whipped. These statesmen are great on war and the salvation of the nation, but not quite 'up to time' in home affairs. Their houses, farms and sheds ought, like some hotels, to be 'closed for repairs,' and if they didn't 'smile' so often—through glasses which make them 'see double'—they might devote more time and labor for the benefit of their families and farms. If they could on'y 'see themselves as others see them,' there would soon be a change in their habits and actions, but every one is a veritable Solomon, and considers himself the *sage* of all wisdom."

NEW MODE OF DRESSING HOGS.

The Canadian farmers have changed their mode of dressing hogs for market. Instead of scalding and scraping them as hitherto, they now singe them and thus remove the hair. This change is said to have been brought about in order to meet the demands of the English market. The English buyers contend that for the purpose of bacon, pork is greatly injured, and of course deteriorated, by being scalded, after the American practice. Whether this be the fact or not, we cannot say; but it is a fact that singed pork brings more, finds a readier sale in the English market than scalded pork. Perhaps our farmer friends can draw a few useful hints from the above statement.

COFFEE IN ILLINOIS.—It is said that G. C. Hoffman, of Effingtonham county, Ill., raised last year two bushels of coffee. The seed was sent him from Australia. The first year the plants were unproductive; the second year they bore a little, and produced a full crop the third year. He thinks thirty bushels can be grown per acre.

GREAT SHOW OF FRUIT.—At the last horticultural show at Namur, Belgium, there were more than 30,000 specimens of fruit exhibited, comprising 8,000 varieties. It required 9,000 plates to hold the fruit. The Belgian gardeners produced the finest pears, the Germans the finest apples, and the French the finest grapes.

THE LARGEST YET.—The editor of the *Alla California* has been presented with a sack of potatoes containing three only—each weighing twenty pounds!

SMILING FACES.

A WORD TO BOYS AND GIRLS.

A smile? Yes, a smile.

"Little things—aye, little things,
Make up the sum of life."

Young friends, are you cheerful?—milingly cheerful? Do you do every thing required of you by your parents and teachers with a glad, cheerful, smiling, obedient heart?

"A pleasant smile for every face,
Oh! 'tis a blessed thing!
It will the lines of care erase,
And spots of beauty bring."

Smile always, little folks; let your whole contour beam forth radiantly the distilling dews of heavenly grace. Smiling costs but little; far less than frowning. Is it not easier, more pleasant, more acceptable to everybody, to smile than to frown? to do good than to do evil? It costs more, ten times more, to be ugly, morose, cross, crabbed, self-willed, despotic, than it does to be kind, gentle, courteous, smiling, benevolent, graceful, heavenly. Oh! how much good in a sweet smile!—Little friends, make trial to this smiling business; the kind, the lovely, the affectionate, the obedient! Put on a sweet, graceful, gentle, smiling, heavenly face—wear this loving contour awhile—a few days at least, and see if it is not far better, easier, less expensive, more pleasant, acceptable and graceful to yourself and to all around you, than the morose, the sour, the sullen, the morbid, the austere, the peevish, or the fretful!

"The sweet look of kindness, the peace-speaking tongue,
So pleasant and lovely, in old or in young,
Will win the affection of all that you see."

We feel doubly assured that every one, having made trial of both sides of the question, will say emphatically, "The ways of wisdom are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Oh! little friends, and great friends, smile! Husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, smile! Children, smile! Man servants and maid servants, smile! Smile all the time; smile as you lie down, as you rise up, as you go out, as you come in—go about your daily toil smiling. Smile in the morning, at noon day, at eventide—smile on, day in, day out. Let your whole life be made up of smiles. Does a stranger call?—go to the door smilingly. Open your lips with a smile, utter every syllable with a smile; smile upon the sinner within thy gates; smile upon the beggar in tattered robes, with haggard look. How much does a smile cost? As much as a frown, a look of disdain? A smile is the cheapest thing in the world: it is free as the air we breathe. How pleasant to associate, transact business with countenances beaming forth with smiles continually! Oh! what a happy world this, were it a smiling world, made up of smiles!

"A smile—who will refuse a smile,
The sorrowing breast to cheer?
And turn to love the heart of guile
And check the falling tear?"

POVERTY.—Bulwer says that poverty is only an idea, in nine cases out of ten. Some men with ten thousand dollars a year suffer more for want of means than others with three hundred. The reason is, the richer man has artificial wants. His income is ten thousand dollars, and by habit he spends twelve or fifteen thousand, and he suffers enough from being dunned for unpaid debts to kill a sensitive man. A man who earns a dollar a day and does not run in debt, is the happiest of the two. Very few people who have never been rich will believe this, but it is true as God's word. There are people, of course, who are wealthy, and enjoy their wealth, but there are thousands upon thousands, with princely incomes, who never know a moment's peace, because they live above their means. There is really more happiness in the world among working people than among those who are called rich.

BAPTISM BY IMMERSION SETTLED.—At a session of a Kentucky court held a few years ago, a negro woman was convicted of a capital crime and sentenced to be hung. In a few weeks she professed to be converted, and the jailer moved his Honor, Judge N—, for an order allowing her to be removed from the jail to be baptised.

"Why not baptise her in the jail?" asked the Judge.

"She wishes to be immersed. She don't believe sprinkling or pouring valid baptism," says the turnkey.

Judge N— reflected a moment and answered: "I have a right to settle that question. Mr. Clerk, make an order that this court being sufficiently advised, decides that sprinkling is valid baptism."

So this vexed question is settled by a Kentucky court.

FACTS AND FICTION.

—The Lafayette (Ind.) *Courier* says that a little girl near that city swallowed a brass thimble, in the early part of last month, and is now gradually sinking under the effects of the poisonous metal, and has been given up to die.

—There is a woman in Perry, Me., who, equipped in bloomer costume, drives oxen, carts lumber, moving the sticks herself, chops wood, and carries on farming operation generally.

—Judge Swayne, who is holding the U. S. circuit court in Cleveland, Ohio, has decided that the law prescribing penalties for the issue of small notes or checks, to be used for currency, was illegal.

—Why did William Tell shudder when he shot the apple from his son's head? Ans.—Because it was an arrow escape for his child.

—Paper is now manufactured at the Salisbury paper mills, in Orange co., N. Y., from "cat tails," the product of the wild flag growing in low grounds all over the north.

—The poorest kind of whisky was recently selling at \$40 a gallon at Holly Springs, N. C.

—The Nashville *Union* of Monday, Nov. 24, says: "The city was very quiet yesterday—only one murder being committed that we heard of!"

—A petition is in circulation in the West, asking the President to give Gen. John Chas. Fremont command of the forces in the Mississippi valley, in reference to which the Chicago *Post* exclaims, "Good Lord, deliver us from a second trial of the 'pathfinder' in the West."

—Owing to dissatisfaction with the printing of the Treasury notes and small currency, Secretary Chase is making preparations to do the work in future in the Treasury building, where it can be under his own inspection.

—There was much rejoicing at Baltimore over the unconditional release of all the Maryland political prisoners from Fort Warren.

—The Empress Eugenie has succeeded in introducing bull fighting in France, and the first attempt caused the death of a young French matador, who was gored through the heart.

—It is affirmed that if the usual force of negroes was available, the largest crop of sugar ever raised in Louisiana would be gathered this season.

—A deranged woman in Ulster country, N. Y., in 1860, while being conveyed to the insane asylum, threw up her hands and said: "In 1861 the war will be begun; in 1862 we'll have all we want to do; in 1863 we'll all be free. Glory to God!"

—*Vanity Fair* states, as a proof of the great value now attached to paper, that the senior editor of the *Tribune* writes all his leading articles upon his old paper collars.

—The people of Washington Territory are troubled with highway robbers, who infest the mining region in great numbers.

—The Missouri river steamboats are now paying \$50 per month for such deck hands as they can get, and they are scarce at that.

—Small pox is prevailing to an alarming extent in Southern Indiana.

—The Turkish Government is about to have its "Great Exhibition."

—Arrangements have just been perfected by the Government whereby the sum of nearly half a million dollars of small currency notes will be printed and issued weekly.

—In Kansas, disastrous prairie fires have recently occurred—many farmers having lost almost everything in the shape of buildings, fences, &c.

—It is stated that the revenue from California this year will exceed fifty millions.

—Coal is \$9 per ton in Boston, ditto in Washington.

—A shrewd girl, not devoid of true modesty, remarked, when at a party with other girls, who were making fun of her short skirts and white hose, "If you'd only pull your dresses about your necks, where they ought to be, they'd be as short as mine!" She was not troubled any more.

—Nearly all the trades in New York have joined in with the "strikers."

—Where Gen. Foster's expedition went—Back again.

—It is calculated that the revenue from the income tax bill will be \$350,000,000 a year, equal to the revenue of Great Britain.

—The New York *Argus*, in recording the wholesale destruction of tobacco at Fredericksburg thus consoles itself: "Very well; if our fellows cannot get any tobacco down there, they will 'chaw up' the rebels."

—Complaint is general at breakfast tables down east that the coffee is not as good as it used to be. The *Argus* says, "This is one of the many social unpleasantness of the civil war," and derives comfort from the assurance of the old proverb, that,

"To him who is fond of drinking,
God always gives enough;
For if there is not beer and wine,
There's ever the water trough."

—The Boston *Traveler* calls England "the Confederate navy-yard."