



Healing Plants: The Secrets of *Phytolacca* and Beyond.

The root has reputed important medicinal properties; and, when taken internally, acts as a violent emetic. ANNUAL PHYTOLACCA. *Phytolacca esculenta*. An annual species, with foliage similar to the foregoing. It is much less vigorous and stocky in habit. The seed should be sown in April, in drills fifteen inches apart. The young shoots, or plants, are used in the manner of the species before described. The Cucumber is a tender, annual plant; and is a native of the East Indies, or of tropical origin. It has an angular, creeping stem; large, somewhat heart-shaped, leaves; and axillary staminate or pistillate flowers. The fruit is cylindrical, generally elongated, often somewhat angular, smooth, or with scattering black or white spines; the flesh is white or greenish-white, and is divided at the centre of the fruit into three parts, in each of which the seeds are produced in great abundance. These seeds are of an elliptical or oval form, much flattened, and of a pale yellowish-white color. About twelve hundred are contained in an ounce; and they retain their vitality ten years. Soil and Culture.—Very dry and very wet soils should be avoided. Cucumbers succeed decidedly best in warm, moist, rich, loamy ground. The essentials to their growth are heat, and a fair proportion of moisture. They should not be planted or set in the open air until there is a prospect of continued warm and pleasant weather; as, when planted early, not only are the seeds liable to decay in the ground, but the young plants are frequently cut off by frost. The hills should be five or six feet apart in each direction. Make them fifteen or eighteen inches in diameter, and a foot in depth; fill them three-fourths full of thoroughly digested compost, and then draw four or five inches of earth over the whole, raising the hill a little above the level of the ground; plant fifteen or twenty seeds in each, cover half an inch deep, and press the earth smoothly over with the back of the hoe. When all danger from bugs and worms is past, thin out the plants; leaving but three or four of the strongest or healthiest to a hill. Taking the Crop.—As fast as the cucumbers attain a suitable size, they should be plucked, whether required for use or not. The imperfectly formed, as well as the symmetrical, should all be removed. Fruit, however inferior, left to ripen on the vines, soon destroys their productiveness. Seed.—"Cucumbers, from their natural proneness to impregnate each other when, grown together, are exceedingly difficult to keep true to their original points of merit;" and consequently, to retain any variety in its purity, it must be grown apart from all other sorts. When a few seeds are desired for the vegetable garden, two or three of the finest-formed cucumbers should be selected early in the season, and allowed to ripen on the plants. In September, or when fully ripe, cut them open, take out the seeds, and allow them to stand a day or two, or until the pulp attached to them begins to separate; when they should be washed clean, thoroughly dried, and packed away for future use. For Pickling.—The land for raising cucumbers for pickling may be either swarded or stubble; but it must be in good condition, and such as is not easily affected by drought. It should be deeply ploughed, and the surface afterwards made fine and friable by being thoroughly harrowed. The hills should be six feet apart, and are generally formed by furrowing the land at this distance in each direction. Manure the hills with well-digested compost, level off, draw over a little fine earth, and the land is ready for planting.

This may be done at any time from the middle of June to the first week in July. The quantity of seed allowed to an acre varies from three-fourths of a pound, upwards. In most cases, growers seed very liberally, to provide against the depredation of worms and bugs; usually putting six or eight times as many seeds in a hill as will be really required for the crop. When the plants are well established and beyond danger, the field is examined, and the hills thinned to three or four plants; or, where there is a deficiency of plants, replanted. As fast as the cucumbers attain the proper size, they should be plucked; the usual practice being to go over the plantation daily. In gathering, all the fruit should be removed,—the misshapen and unmarketable, as well as those which are well formed; for, when any portion of the crop is allowed to remain and ripen, the plants become much less productive. In favorable seasons, and under a high state of cultivation, a hundred and twenty-five thousand are obtained from an acre; while, under opposite conditions, the crop may not exceed fifty thousand. The average price is about a dollar and twenty-five cents per thousand. Varieties.— **EARLY CLUSTER.** Early Green Cluster. A very popular, early cucumber, producing its fruit in clusters near the root of the plant: whence the name. The plant is healthy, hardy, and vigorous; fruit comparatively short and thick. Its usual length is about five inches, and its diameter about two inches; skin prickly, green,—at the blossom-end, often paler, or nearly white,—brownish-yellow when ripe; flesh white, seedy, tender, and well flavored, but less crispy or brittle than that of many other varieties. It is a good early garden sort, and is very productive; but is not well adapted for pickling, on account of the soft and seedy character of its flesh. **EARLY FRAME.** Short Green. One of the oldest of the garden sorts, justly styled a standard variety. Plant healthy and vigorous, six to ten feet in length; fruit straight and well formed, five inches and a half long, and two inches and a half in diameter; skin deep-green, paler at the blossom-end, changing to clear yellow as it approaches maturity, and, when fully ripe, of a yellowish, russet-brown color; flesh greenish-white, rather seedy, but tender, and of an agreeable flavor. It is a few days later than the Early Cluster. The variety is universally popular, and is found in almost every vegetable garden. It is also very productive; succeeds well, whether grown in open culture or under glass; and, if plucked while young and small, makes an excellent pickle. **EARLY RUSSIAN.** This comparatively new variety resembles, in some respects, the Early Cluster. Fruit from three to four inches in length, an inch and a half or two inches in diameter, and generally produced in pairs; flesh tender, crisp, and well flavored. When ripe, the fruit is deep-yellow or yellowish-brown. Its merits are its hardiness, extreme earliness, and great productiveness. It comes into use nearly ten days in advance of the Early Cluster, and is the earliest garden variety now cultivated. Its small size is, however, considered an objection; and some of the larger kinds are generally preferred for the main crop. **LONDON LONG GREEN.** M'Int. Fruit about a foot in length, tapering towards the extremities; skin very deepgreen while the fruit is young, yellow when it is ripe; flesh greenish-white, firm, and crisp; flavor good. This variety is nearly related to the numerous prize sorts which in England are cultivated under glass, and forced during the winter. There is little permanency in the slight variations of character by which they are distinguished; and old varieties are constantly being dropped from the catalogues, and others, with different names, substituted.

Amongst the most prominent of these sub-varieties are the following:— Carter's Superior.—Recently introduced. Represented as one of the largest and finest of the forcing varieties. Conqueror of the West.—Eighteen to twenty inches in length. It is a fine prize sort, and succeeds well in open culture. Cuthill's Black Spine.—Six to nine inches in length, hardy, early, and productive. An excellent sort for starting in a hot-bed. Fruit very firm and attractive. The Doctor.—Sixteen to eighteen inches in length, and contracted towards the stem in the form of a neck. In favorable seasons, it will attain a good size, if grown in the open ground. Crisp, tender, and well flavored. Eggleston's Conqueror.—"Very prolific, good for forcing, of fine flavor, hardy, and a really useful sort. Specimens have been grown measuring twenty-eight inches in length, nine inches and a half in circumference, and weighing five pounds." Flanigan's Prize.—An old, established variety; having been grown in England upwards of thirty years. Length fifteen inches. Hunter's Prolific.—Length eighteen inches. Very crisp and excellent, but requires more heat than most other varieties. Spines white; fruit covered with a good bloom, and not liable to turn yellow at the base. Improved Sion House.—This variety has received many prizes in England. Not only is it well adapted for the summer crop, but it succeeds remarkably well when grown under glass. Irishman.—Length twenty-two to twenty-five inches. Handsome, and excellent for exhibition. Lord Kenyon's Favorite.—Length twelve to eighteen inches. A fine sort for winter forcing. Manchester Prize.—This, like the Nepal, is one of the largest of the English greenhouse prize varieties. It sometimes measures two feet in length, and weighs twelve pounds. In favorable seasons, it will attain a large size in open culture, and sometimes perfect its seed. Nepal.—One of the largest of all varieties; length about twenty-four inches; weight ten to twelve pounds. Norman's Stitchworth-Park Hero.—A recently introduced variety, hardy, long, handsome, very prolific, and fine flavored. Old Sion House.—Length about nine inches. This is a well-tried, winter, forcing variety. Like the Improved Sion House, it also succeeds well in open culture. Quality good, though the extremities are sometimes bitter. Prize-fighter.—Length about sixteen inches. Good for the summer crop or for exhibition. Rifleman.—This variety is described as one of the best prize cucumbers. It has a black spine; always grows very even from stem to point, with scarcely any handle; carries its bloom well; keeps a good fresh color; and is not liable to turn yellow as many other sorts. Length twenty-four to twenty-eight inches. An abundant bearer. Ringleader.—A prominent prize sort, about fifteen inches in length. It succeeds well, whether grown under glass or in the open ground. Roman Emperor.—Length twelve to fifteen inches. Southgate.—This variety has been pronounced the most productive, and the best for forcing, of all the prize sorts. It is not so late as many of the English varieties, and will frequently succeed well if grown in the open ground. Victory of Bath.—Length about seventeen inches. Well adapted for forcing or for the general crop. LONG GREEN PRICKLY. Long Prickly. Early Long Green Prickly. This is a large-sized variety, and somewhat later than the White-spined. The plant is a strong grower, and the foliage of a deep-green color; the fruit is about seven inches in length, straight, and generally angular; skin dark-green, changing to yellow as the fruit approaches maturity,—when fully ripe, it is reddish-brown, and is often reticulated about the insertion of the stem; prickles black; flesh white, somewhat seedy, but crisp, tender, and well flavored. The Long Green Prickly is hardy and productive; makes a good pickle, if plucked while young; and is well deserving of cultivation.

It differs from the London Long Green and the Long Green Turkey in its form, which is much thicker in proportion to its length; and also in the character of its flesh, which is more pulpy and seedy. **LONG GREEN TURKEY.** Extra Long Green Turkey. A distinct and well-defined variety; when full grown, sometimes measuring nearly eighteen inches in length. Form long and slender, contracted towards the stem in the form of a neck, and swollen towards the opposite extremity; seeds few, and usually produced nearest the blossom-end. The neck is generally solid. While the fruit is young, the skin is deep-green; afterwards it changes to clear yellow, and finally assumes a rusty-yellow or yellowish-brown. Flesh remarkably firm and crisp; exceeding, in these respects, that of any other variety. Very productive and excellent. Its remarkably firm and crispy flesh, and the absence of seeds, render it serviceable for the table after it has reached a very considerable size. For the same reasons, it may be pickled at a stage of its growth when other more seedy and pulpy sorts would be comparatively worthless. **SHORT PRICKLY.** Short Green Prickly. Early Short Green Prickly. This variety somewhat resembles the Long Prickly; but it is shorter, and proportionally thicker. Its length, when suitable for use, is about four inches. Skin prickly, green, changing to yellow at maturity; flesh transparent greenishwhite, rather seedy, but tender, crisp, and fine flavored. The variety is very hardy and productive, comes early into fruit, and is one of the best for pickling. It is a few days later than the Early Cluster. **UNDERWOOD'S SHORT PRICKLY.** This is an improved variety of the common Short Prickly, and is the best of all the sorts for extensive cultivation for pickling. The plant is hardy and productive. The fruit, when young, is very symmetrical, and of a fine deep-green color. Its flesh is characterized by extraordinary crispness and solidity. When more advanced, the color becomes paler, and the flesh more soft and seedy. The fruit, at maturity, is yellow. **WHITE SPANISH.** The form of this variety is similar to that of the White-spined. The fruit measures about five inches in length, two inches in diameter, and is generally somewhat ribbed. When suitable for use, the skin is white; a characteristic by which the variety is readily distinguished from all others. The flesh is crisp, tender, and well flavored. At maturity, the fruit is yellow. **WHITE-SPINED.** Early White-spined. New-York Market. This very distinct variety is extensively grown for marketing, both at the North and South. The plants grow from six to ten feet in length; and, like those of the Early Frame, are of a healthy, luxurious habit. The fruit is of full medium size, straight, and well formed; about six inches in length, and two inches and a half in diameter. Skin deep-green; prickles white; flesh white, tender, crispy, and of remarkably fine flavor. As the fruit ripens, the skin gradually becomes paler; and, when fully ripe, is nearly white: by which peculiarity, in connection with its white spines, the variety is always readily distinguishable. The White-spined is one of the best sorts for the table; and is greatly prized by market-men on account of its color, which is never changed to yellow, though kept long after being plucked. It is generally thought to retain its freshness longer than any other variety, and consequently to be well fitted for transporting long distances; though, on account of its peculiar color, the freshness may be less real than apparent. For the very general dissemination of this variety, the public are, in a great degree, indebted to the late I. P. Rand, Esq., of Boston, whose integrity as a merchant, and whose skill as a practical vegetable cultivator and horticulturist, will be long remembered.

EGYPTIAN CUCUMBER. Hairy Cucumber. Round-leaved Egyptian. Concombre chaté. Vil. Cucumis chate. This is a tender, annual plant, with an angular, creeping stem, and alternate, somewhat heart-shaped, leaves. The flowers are axillary, about an inch in diameter, and of a pale-yellow color; the fruit is small, oblong, and very hairy. It is of little value as an esculent, and is rarely cultivated. The fruit is sometimes eaten in its green state, and also when cooked. According to Duchesne, the Egyptians prepare from the pulp a very agreeable and refreshing beverage. Plant and cultivate as directed for melons or cucumbers.

GLOBE CUCUMBER. Concombre des prophètes. Vil. Cucumis prophetarum. A tender annual from Arabia. Stem slender, creeping, and furnished with tendrils, or claspers. The leaves are about three inches in diameter, five-lobed, and indented on the borders; the flowers are axillary, yellow, and nearly threefourths of an inch in diameter; the fruit is round, and rarely measures an inch in thickness; skin striped with green and yellow, and thickly set with rigid hairs, or bristles; the seeds are small, oval, flattened, and of a yellowish color. Planting and Culture.—The seeds should be planted at the time of planting cucumbers or melons, in hills four or five feet apart, and covered about half an inch deep. Thin to two or three plants to a hill. Use.—The fruit is sometimes eaten boiled; but is generally pickled in its green state, like the common cucumber. As a table vegetable, it is comparatively unimportant, and not worthy of cultivation.

CALABASH, OR COMMON GOURD. Bottle Gourd. Cucurbita lagenaria. The Calabash, or Common Gourd, is a climbing or creeping annual plant, frequently more than twenty feet in height or length. The leaves are large, round, heart-shaped, very soft and velvety to the touch, and emit a peculiar, musky odor, when bruised or roughly handled. The flowers, which are produced on very long stems, are white, and nearly three inches in diameter. They expand towards evening, and remain in perfection only a few hours; as they are generally found drooping and withering on the ensuing morning. The young fruit is hairy, and quite soft and tender; but, when ripe, the surface becomes hard, smooth, and glossy. The seeds are five-eighths of an inch in length, somewhat quadrangular, of a fawn-yellow color, and retain their vitality five years. About three hundred are contained in an ounce. Cultivation.—The seeds are planted at the same time and in the same manner as those of the Squash. The Gourd succeeds best when provided with a trellis, or other support, to keep the plant from the ground; as the fruit is best developed in a pendent or hanging position. Use.—The fruit, while still young and tender, is sometimes pickled in vinegar, like cucumbers. At maturity, the flesh is worthless: but the shells, which are very hard, light, and comparatively strong, are used as substitutes for baskets; and are also formed into water-dippers, and various other articles both useful and ornamental. The varieties are as follow:—

BOTTLE GOURD. Vil. Fruit about a foot in length, contracted at the middle, largest at the blossom-end, but swollen also at the part next the stem. There is a sub-variety, very much larger; but it is also later.

HERCULES CLUB. Courge Massue d'Hercule. Vil. Fruit very long. Specimens are frequently produced measuring upwards of five feet in length. It is smallest towards the stem, and increases gradually in size towards the opposite extremity, which is rounded, and near which, in its largest diameter, it measures from four to five inches. Its form is quite peculiar, and is not unlike that of a massive club: whence the name.

It is frequently seen at horticultural and agricultural shows; and, though sometimes exhibited as a "cucumber," has little or no value as an esculent, and must be considered much more curious than useful. It is of a pea-green color while growing, and the skin is then quite soft and tender; but, like the other varieties, the surface becomes smooth, and the skin very hard and shell-like, at maturity.

POWDER-HORN. Cource Paire à Poudre. Vil. Fruit long and slender, broadest at the base, tapering towards the stem, and often more or less curved. In its general form, it resembles a common horn, as implied by the name. Its usual length is twelve or fourteen inches; and its largest diameter, nearly three inches.

SIPHON GOURD. Cource Siphon. Vil. Fruit rounded, and flattened at the blossom-end; then suddenly contracted to a long, slender neck. The latter often bends or turns suddenly at nearly a right angle; and, in this form, the fruit very much resembles a siphon. Pea-green while young, pale-green when mature. Shell thick and hard.

THE MELON. Of the Melon, there are two species in general cultivation,—the Musk-melon (*Cucumis melo*) and the Water-melon (*Cucurbita citrullus*); each, however, including many varieties. Like the Squash, they are tender, annual plants, of tropical origin, and only thrive well in a warm temperature. "The climate of the Middle and Southern States is remarkably favorable for them; indeed, far more so than that of England, France, or any of the temperate portions of Europe. Consequently, melons are raised as field crops by market-gardeners: and, in the month of August, the finest citrons or green-fleshed melons may be seen in the markets of New York and Philadelphia in immense quantities; so abundant, in most seasons, as frequently to be sold at half a dollar per basket, containing nearly a bushel of fruit. The warm, dry soils of Long Island and New Jersey are peculiarly favorable to the growth of melons; and, even at low prices, the product is so large, that this crop is one of the most profitable."—Downing. Through the extraordinary facilities now afforded by railroads and ocean steamnavigation, the markets of all the cities and large towns of the northern portions of the United States, and even of the Canadas, are abundantly supplied within two or three days from the time of gathering: and they are retailed at prices so low, as to allow of almost universal consumption; well-ripened and delicious green-fleshed citron-melons being often sold from six to ten cents each.

Soil and Cultivation.—Both the Musk and the Water Melon thrive best in a warm, mellow, rich, sandy loam, and in a sheltered exposure. After thoroughly stirring the soil by ploughing or spading, make the hills six or seven feet apart in each direction. Previous to planting, these hills should be prepared as directed for the Squash; making them a foot and a half or two feet in diameter, and twelve or fifteen inches in depth. Thoroughly incorporate at the bottom of the hill a quantity of well-digested compost, equal to three-fourths of the earth removed; and then add sufficient fine loam to raise the hill two or three inches above the surrounding level. On the top of the hill thus formed, plant twelve or fifteen seeds; and, when the plants are well up, thin them out from time to time as they progress in size. Finally, when all danger from bugs and other insect depredators is past, leave but two or three of the most stocky and promising plants to a hill. When the growth is too luxuriant, many practise pinching or cutting off the leading shoots; and, when the young fruit sets in too great numbers, a portion should be removed, both for the purpose of increasing the size and of hastening the maturity of those remaining.

"Keep the fruit from being injured by lying on the ground; and if slate, blackened shingles, or any dry, dark material, be placed beneath it, by attraction of the sun's rays, the fruit will ripen earlier and better." The striped bug (*Galereuca vittata*) is the most serious enemy with which the young melon-plants have to contend. Gauze vine-shields, though the most expensive, are unquestionably the most effectual preventive. Boxes either round or square, twelve or fifteen inches in depth, and entirely uncovered at the top, if placed over the hills, will be found useful in protecting the plants. The flight of the bug being generally nearly parallel with the surface of the ground, very few will find their way within the boxes, if of the depth required. Applications of guano, ashes, dilutions of oil-soap, and plaster of Paris, applied while the plants are wet, will be found of greater or less efficacy in their protection. The pungent smell of guano is said to prevent the depredation of the flea-beetle, which, in many localities, seriously injures the plants early in the season, through its attacks on the seed-leaves.

THE MUSK-MELON. *Cucumis melo*. Plant running,—varying in length from five to eight feet; leaves large, angular, heart-shaped, and rough on the upper and under surface; flowers yellow, one-petaled, five-pointed, and about an inch in diameter; seeds oval, flat, generally yellow, but sometimes nearly white, about four-tenths of an inch in length, and three-sixteenths of an inch in breadth,—the size, however, varying to a considerable extent in the different varieties. An ounce contains from nine hundred to eleven hundred seeds; and they retain their germinative properties from eight to ten years. Varieties.—These are exceedingly numerous, in consequence of the great facility with which the various kinds intermix, or hybridize. Varieties are, however, much more easily produced than retained: consequently, old names are almost annually discarded from the catalogues of seedsmen and gardeners; and new names, with superior recommendations, offered in their stead. The following list embraces most of the kinds of much prominence or value now cultivated either in Europe or this country:—

BEECHWOOD. Fruit nearly spherical, but rather longer than broad,—usually five or six inches in diameter; skin greenish-yellow, thickly and regularly netted; flesh green, melting, sugary, and excellent. An early and fine variety.

BLACK-ROCK CANTALOUPE. Loud. A large-fruited, late variety; form variable, but generally round, and flattened at the ends; size large,—ten inches in diameter, eight inches deep, and weighing eight or ten pounds. The skin varies in color from grayish-green to deep-green; becomes yellow at maturity, and is thickly spread with knobby bunches, or small protuberances. Rind very thick; flesh reddish-orange, melting, and sugary. It requires a long season for its full perfection.

CHRISTIANA. This variety was originated by the late Capt. Josiah Lovett, of Beverly, Mass. Form roundish; size rather small,—average specimens measuring nearly the same as the Green Citron; skin yellowish-green; flesh yellow, sweet, juicy, and of good quality. Its early maturity is its principal recommendation; the Green Citron, Nutmeg, and many other varieties, surpassing it in firmness of flesh, sweetness, and general excellence. It would probably ripen at the North, or in short seasons, when other sorts generally fail.

CITRON. Green-fleshed Citron. Green Citron. Green Citron Melon. Fruit nearly round, but flattened slightly at the ends,—deeply and very regularly ribbed; size medium, or rather small,—average specimens measuring about six inches in diameter, and five inches and a half in depth; skin green, and thickly netted,—when fully mature, the green becomes more soft and mellow, or of a yellowish shade; flesh green, quite thick, very juicy, and of the richest and most sugary flavor.

It is an abundant bearer, quite hardy, and remarkably uniform in its quality. It is deservedly the most popular as a market sort; and for cultivation for family use, every thing considered, has few superiors. In common with the Carolina Water-melon, the Green Citron is extensively grown at the South for shipping to the northern portions of the United States; appearing in the markets of New York and Boston three or four weeks in advance of the season of those raised in the same vicinity in the open ground. **EARLY CANTALOUPE.** This variety possesses little merit aside from its very early maturity. It is a roundish melon, flattened a little at the ends, ribbed, and of comparatively small size; usually measuring about five inches in diameter. Skin yellowish, often spotted with green, and sometimes a little warty; rind quite thick; flesh reddishorange, sweet, and of good flavor. It is exceedingly variable in size, form, and color. **HARDY RIDGE.** Loud. Fruit rather small, round, depressed, strongly ribbed, and irregularly warted all over its surface; skin dull yellow, mottled with dull green; flesh an inch thick, bright orange-red, sweet, and well flavored; rind thick; weight from three to four pounds. Not an early, but a productive variety. **Large Netted Musk-melon.** Large Netted Musk-melon. **LARGE-RIBBED NETTED.** Common Musk-melon. Fruit very large, oval, strongly ribbed; skin yellow, very thickly netted, sometimes so closely as to cover nearly the entire surface; flesh salmon-yellow, remarkably thick and sweet, but not fine-grained or melting, when compared with the more recent and improved varieties. Hardy and productive. In good soil and favorable seasons, the fruit sometimes attains a length of fifteen inches, and weighs upwards of twenty pounds. **MUNROE'S GREEN FLESH.** Vil. A comparatively new variety. The fruit is nearly spherical, but tapers slightly towards the stem, and is rather regularly as well as distinctly ribbed. Its diameter is about five inches. Cicatrix large; skin greenish-yellow, thickly and finely netted over the entire surface; rind thin; flesh green, remarkably transparent, comparatively thick, very melting, and highly perfumed. **NUTMEG.** Fruit oval, regularly but faintly ribbed, eight or nine inches in length, and about six inches in its broadest diameter; skin pale-green, and very thickly netted; rind thin; flesh light-green, rich, sweet, melting, and highly perfumed. The Nutmeg Melon has been long in cultivation, and is almost everywhere to be found in the vegetable garden, though seldom in a perfectly unmixed state. When the variety is pure, and the fruit perfectly ripened, it is of most delicious excellence, and deservedly ranked as one of "the best." **ORANGE CANTALOUPE.** An oval variety, about six inches in length by five inches in diameter, rather prominently ribbed. Skin yellow, marbled with green, thickly netted about the stem, and sparsely so over the remainder of the surface; rind thick; flesh reddishorange, sweet, highly perfumed, and of good flavor. Very early and productive. **PINE-APPLE.** Form roundish, inclining to oval, either without ribs or with rib-marking, very faintly defined; size small,—the average diameter being about five inches and a half; skin olive-green, with net-markings more or less abundant; rind thin; flesh green, melting, sweet, and perfumed. Season early. It is an excellent sort, easily grown, and very productive. **PRESCOTT CANTALOUPE.** Vil. Fruit generally somewhat flattened, but variable in form, deeply ribbed; size large,—well-grown specimens measuring eight or ten inches in diameter, and weighing from seven to nine pounds; skin thickly covered with small tubercles; color varying from grayish-green to clear-green, more or less deep, changing to yellow at maturity; rind very thick; flesh orange-red, sugary and melting, and of delicious flavor. There are numerous sub-varieties, as grown by different gardeners, varying somewhat in form, color, and time of maturity; all, however, corresponding nearly with the above description, though known by different names, as the "White," "Gray," "Black," "Prescott," &c. Much esteemed in France, and extensively grown by market-gardeners in the vicinity of Paris.

SKILLMAN'S FINE-NETTED. This variety much resembles the Pine-apple. Form rounded, flattened slightly at the ends; flesh green, sugary, melting, and excellent. It has been pronounced "the earliest of the green-fleshed sorts." VICTORY OF BATH. A recently introduced variety of English origin. Fruit egg-shaped, faintly ribbed, rounded at the blossom-end, and slightly contracted towards the stem,—at the insertion of which, it is flattened to a small, plane surface; size medium,—about six inches deep, and five inches in diameter; skin green, clouded with yellow, and sparsely covered with fine net-markings; skin thin; flesh green. PERSIAN MELONS. Trans. These differ remarkably from the varieties commonly cultivated. They are destitute of the thick, hard rind which characterizes the common sorts, and which renders so large a portion of the fruit useless. On the contrary, the Persian melons are protected by a skin so thin and delicate, that they are subject to injury from causes that would produce no perceptible effect on the sorts in general cultivation. As a class, they are not only prolific, but their flesh is extremely tender, rich, and sweet, and flows copiously with a cool juice, which renders them still more grateful. They are, however, not early; and, for their complete perfection, require a long and warm season. Varieties.— DAMPSHA. M'Int. Flesh dark-green near the skin, rather whitish towards the centre, quite melting, and of excellent flavor. The first-produced fruit in the season is somewhat cylindrical, bluntly pointed at both ends; the whole surface being prominently netted, and of a pale-yellow or dark-olive color. The secondary crop has the fruit more pointed and less netted, and the skin becomes much darker. Like the other varieties of winter melons, it may be preserved a long time after being taken from the vines, if suspended in a dry room. Weight four to five pounds. DAREE. Trans. This resembles the Geree Melon in color, as well as in many other respects. It is of the same form; but the rind, when netted, exhibits coarser reticulations. The flesh is white, thick, crisp, and melting; when fully ripened, very sweet, but rather insipid if imperfectly matured. It is always, however, cool and pleasant. GREE. Trans. A handsome green fruit. In shape, it is oval, or ovate; and measures eight inches in length by four inches and a half in breadth. The skin is closely mottled with dark sea-green upon a pale ground, and is either netted or not. In the former case, the meshes are very close; by which character, it may be readily distinguished from the Daree. Stalk very short; flesh an inch and a half or two inches thick, bright-green, melting, very sweet, and highly flavored. Though perhaps equally rich, it is not so beautiful or so juicy as the Melon of Keiseng. A good bearer, but requires a warm, long season. GERMEK. Trans. Large Germek. A handsome large-sized, ribbed fruit, shaped like a compressed sphere; usually six inches in length, and from seven to nine inches in diameter. Skin deep-green, closely netted; flesh from an inch and a half to two inches thick, clear green, firm, juicy, and high flavored. This is an excellent variety, an abundant bearer, ripens early, and exceeds in size any of the Persian melons. GREEN HOOSAINEE. Trans. A handsome egg-shaped fruit, five inches long by four inches broad: when unripe, of a very deep-green; but, in maturity, acquiring a fine, even, light-green, regularly netted surface, which, on the exposed side, becomes rather yellow. The flesh is pale-greenish white, tender and delicate, full of a highly perfumed, pleasant, sweet juice; the rind is very thin; the seeds are unusually large. It is a variety of much excellence, a great bearer, and one of the hardiest of the Persian melons.

GREEN VALENCIA. M'Int. A winter sort. Although not rich in flavor, it is firm, saccharine, and juicy; and upon the whole, if fully ripened, a more desirable melon than many of the summer varieties. ISPAHAN. Trans. Sweet Ispahan. This has been pronounced "the most delicious of all melons." The fruit is eggshaped, varying in length from eight to twelve inches, and weighing from six to eight pounds; skin nearly smooth, of a deep sulphur-yellow; flesh nearly white, extending about half way to its centre, crisp, sugary, and very rich. It is a variety of much excellence, but is fully perfected only in favorable seasons. MELON OF KEISENG. Loud. A beautiful egg-shaped fruit, eight inches long, five inches wide in the middle, six inches wide at the lower extremity; very regularly and handsomely formed. Color pale lemon-yellow; flesh from an inch and a half to two inches and a quarter thick, nearly white, flowing copiously with juice, extremely delicate, sweet, and high flavored, very similar in texture to a well-ripened Beurré pear; rind thin, but so firm that all the fleshy part of the fruit may be eaten. It differs from the Sweet Ispahan in being closely netted. MELON OF SEEN. A fruit of regular figure and handsome appearance, seven inches long by five inches wide. Shape ovate, with a small mamelon at the apex; surface pale dusky yellow, regularly and closely netted, except the mamelon, which is but little marked; rind very thin; flesh from an inch and a half to two inches thick, palegreen, sometimes becoming reddish towards the inside, exceedingly tender and juicy; juice sweet, and delicately perfumed. A good bearer, but requires a long season. Named from Seen, a village near Ispahan; where the variety was procured. SMALL GERMEK. Trans. This ripens about a week earlier than the Large Germek, but is not so valuable a fruit. In form, it is a depressed sphere, with about eight rounded ribs. It measures four inches in depth by four inches and a half in width. The skin is even, yellowish, with a little green about the interstices, obscurely netted; the flesh is green, inclining to reddish in the inside, an inch and a half thick, juicy, and high flavored; skin very thin. The pulp in which the seeds are immersed is reddish. It is not a great bearer, and the vines are tender. STRIPED HOOSAINEE. Trans. Fruit oval and much netted, dark-green in broad stripes, with narrow intervals of dull white, which become faintly yellow as the fruit ripens; pulp externally green, but more internally pale-red, excessively juicy, and more perfectly melting than that of the famous Ispahan Melon. It is sweeter and higher flavored than any other Persian variety, but requires a long, warm season for its full perfection. THE WATER-MELON. *Cucurbita citrullus*. Plant running,—the length varying from eight to twelve feet; leaves bluishgreen, five-lobed, the lobes rounded at the ends; flowers pale-yellow, about an inch in diameter; fruit large, roundish, green, or variegated with different shades of green; seeds oval, flattened, half an inch long, five-sixteenths of an inch broad,—the color varying according to the variety, being either red, white, black, yellowish or grayish brown. An ounce contains from a hundred and seventy-five to two hundred seeds, and they retain their vitality eight years. The Water-melon is more vigorous in its habit than the Musk-melon, and requires more space in cultivation; the hills being usually made eight feet apart in each direction. It is less liable to injury from insects, and the crop is consequently much more certain. The seed should not be planted till May, or before established warm weather; and but two good plants allowed to a hill.

The varieties are as follow:— APPLE-SEEDED. A rather small, nearly round sort, deriving its name from its small, peculiar seeds; which, in form, size, and color, are somewhat similar to those of the apple. Skin deep, clear-green; rind very thin; flesh bright-red to the centre, sweet, tender, and well-flavored. It is hardy, bears abundantly, seldom fails to ripen perfectly in the shortest seasons, and keeps a long time after being gathered. BLACK SPANISH. Spanish. Form oblong; size large; skin very dark or blackish green; rind half an inch thick; flesh deep-red (contrasting finely with the very deep-green color of the skin), fine-grained, very sugary, and of excellent flavor. The variety is hardy, productive, thrives well, matures its fruit in the Northern and Eastern States, and is decidedly one of the best for general cultivation. Seeds dark-brown, or nearly black. BRADFORD. W. D. Brinckle. The Bradford is a highly prized, South-Carolina variety; size large; form oblong; skin dark-green, with gray, longitudinal stripes, mottled and reticulated with green; rind not exceeding half an inch in thickness; seed yellowish-white, slightly mottled, and with a yellowish-brown stripe around the edge; flesh fine red to the centre; flavor fine and sugary; quality "best." CAROLINA. Fruit of large size, and of an oblong form, usually somewhat swollen towards the blossom-end; skin deep-green, variegated with pale-green or white; flesh deep-red, not fine-grained, but crisp, sweet, and of fair quality; fruit frequently hollow at the centre; seeds black. This variety is extensively grown in the Southern States for exportation to the North, where it appears in the markets about the beginning of August, and to some extent in July. Many of the specimens are much less marked with stripes and variegations than the true Carolina; and some shipments consist almost entirely of fruit of a uniform deep-green color, but of the form and quality of the Carolina. Downing mentions a sub-variety with pale-yellow flesh and white seeds. CITRON WATER-MELON. Form very nearly spherical; size rather small,—average specimens measuring six or seven inches in diameter; color pale-green, marbled with darker shades of green; flesh white, solid, tough, seedy, and very squashy and unpalatable in its crude state. It ripens late in the season, and will keep until December. "It is employed in the making of sweetmeats and preserves, by removing the rind or skin and seeds, cutting the flesh into convenient bits, and boiling in sirup which has been flavored with ginger, lemon, or some agreeable article. Its cultivation is the same as that of other kinds of melons."—New American Cyclopædia. CLARENDON. W. D. Brinckle. Dark-speckled. Size large; form oblong; skin mottled-gray, with dark-green, interrupted, longitudinal stripes, irregular in their outline, and composed of a succession of peninsulas and isthmuses; rind thin, not exceeding half an inch; seed yellow, with a black stripe extending round the edge, and from one to three black spots on each side,—the form and number corresponding on the two sides; flesh scarlet to the centre; flavor sugary and exquisite, and quality "best." This fine melon originated in Clarendon County, South Carolina; and, when pure, may at all times be readily recognized by the peculiarly characteristic markings of the seeds. ICE-CREAM. A large, very pale-green sort; when unmixed, readily distinguishable from all other varieties. Form nearly round, but sometimes a little depressed at the extremities; rind thicker than in most varieties; flesh white, very sweet and tender, and of remarkably fine flavor; seeds white. It is prolific, and also early; and is remarkably well adapted for cultivation in cold localities, or where the seasons are too short for the successful culture of the more tender and late kinds. Its pale-green skin, white flesh, and white seeds, are its prominent distinctive peculiarities.

IMPERIAL. Down. This variety is said to have been introduced from the Mediterranean. Fruit round, or oblate, and of medium size; skin pale-green, with stripes and variegations of white or paler green; rind thin; flesh pale-red, crisp, sweet, and of excellent flavor; seeds reddish-brown. Very productive, but requiring a warm situation and a long season for its complete perfection. MOUNTAIN SPROUT. This variety is similar to the Mountain Sweet. It is of large size, long, and of an oval form. Skin striped and marbled with paler and deeper shades of green; rind thin,—measuring scarcely half an inch in thickness; flesh scarlet, a little hollow at the centre, crisp, sugary, and of excellent flavor. Like the Mountain Sweet, it is a favorite market sort. It is not only of fine quality, but very productive. Seeds russet-brown.

MOUNTAIN SWEET. A large, long, oval variety, often contracted towards the stem in the form of a neck; skin striped and marbled with different shades of green; rind rather thin, measuring scarcely half an inch in thickness; flesh scarlet, and solid quite to the centre; seeds pale russet-brown, but often of greater depth of color in perfectly matured specimens of fruit. A popular and extensively cultivated variety, quite hardy, productive, and of good quality. "For many years, it was universally conceded to be the best market sort cultivated in the Middle States, but of late has lost some of the properties that recommended it so highly to favor. This deterioration has probably been owing to the influence of pollen from inferior kinds grown in its vicinity." ODELL'S LARGE WHITE. W. D. Brinckle. Size very large, sometimes weighing sixty pounds; form round; skin gray, with fine green network spread over its uneven surface; rind nearly three-fourths of an inch in thickness; seeds large, grayish-black, and not numerous; flesh pale-red; flavor fine; quality very good. Productiveness said to exceed that of most other kinds. This remarkably large melon originated with a negro man on the property of Col. A. G. Sumner, of South Carolina. Its large size, and long-keeping quality after being separated from the vine, will recommend the variety, especially for the market.

ORANGE. Form oval, of medium size; skin pale-green, marbled with shades of deeper green; rind half an inch in depth, or of medium thickness; flesh red, not finegrained, but tender, sweet, and of good quality. When in its mature state, the rind separates readily from the flesh, in the manner of the peel from the flesh of an orange. When first introduced, the variety was considered one of the best quality; but it appears to have in some degree deteriorated, and now compares unfavorably with many other sorts.

PIE-MELON. California Pie-melon. Plant running,—the foliage and general habit resembling the Common Watermelon, but yet distinguishable by its larger size, more hairy stem, and its more stocky and vigorous character; fruit oblong, very large, measuring sixteen inches and upwards in length, and from eight to ten inches in diameter; skin yellowishgreen, often marbled with different shades of light-green or pea-green; flesh white, succulent, somewhat tender, but very unpalatable, or with a squash-like flavor, in its crude state. As intimated by the name, it is used only for culinary purposes. This melon should be cooked as follows: After removing the rind, cut the flesh into pieces of convenient size, and stew until soft and pulpy. Lemon-juice, sugar, and spices should then be added; after which, proceed in the usual manner of making pies from the apple or any other fruit. If kept from freezing, or from dampness and extreme cold, the Pie-melon may be preserved until March.

RAVENS CROFT. W. D. Brinckle. Size large; form oblong; skin dark-green, faintly striped and marked with green of a lighter shade, and divided longitudinally by sutures from an inch and a quarter to two inches apart; rind not more than half an inch in thickness; seed cream-color, tipped with brown at the eye, and having a brown stripe around the edge; flesh fine red, commencing abruptly at the rind, and extending to the centre; flavor delicious and sugary; quality "best."

This valuable water-melon originated with Col. A. G. Sumner, of South Carolina. SOUTER. W. D. Brinckle. Size large, sometimes weighing twenty or thirty pounds; form oblong, occasionally roundish; skin peculiarly marked with finely reticulated, isolated, gray spots, surrounded by paler green, and having irregular, dark-green, longitudinal stripes extending from the base to the apex; rind thin, about half an inch thick; seed pure cream-white, with a faint russet stripe around the edge; flesh deep-red to the centre; flavor sugary and delicious; quality "best." Productiveness said to be unusually great. This excellent variety originated in Sumpter District, South Carolina. PAPANJAY, OR SPONGE CUCUMBER. Papangaye. Vil. *Cucumis acutangulus*. This is an East-Indian plant, with a creeping stem, and angular, heart-shaped leaves. The flowers (several of which are produced on one stem) are yellow; the fruit is ten or twelve inches in length, about an inch and a half in diameter, deeply furrowed or grooved in the direction of its length, forming ten longitudinal, acute angles; the skin is hard, and of a russet-yellow color; the seeds are black, rough, and hard, and quite irregular in form,—about five hundred are contained in an ounce. Use.—The fruit is eaten while it is quite young and small; served in the manner of cucumbers, or like vegetable marrow. When fully ripened, it is exceedingly tough, fibrous, and porous, and is sometimes used as a substitute for sponge: whence the name. PRICKLY-FRUITED GHERKIN. Gherkin. West-Indian Cucumber. Jamaica Cucumber. *Cucumis anguria*. This species is said to be a native of Jamaica. The habit of the plant is similar to that of the Globe Cucumber, and its season of maturity is nearly the same. The surface of the fruit is thickly set with spiny nipples, and has an appearance very unlike that of the Common Cucumber. It is comparatively of small size, and of a regular, oval form,—generally measuring about two inches in length by an inch and a third in its largest diameter; color pale-green; flesh greenish-white, very seedy and pulpy. The seeds are quite small, oval, flattened, yellowish-white, and retain their vitality five years. It is somewhat later than the Common Cucumber, and requires nearly the whole season for its full development. Plant in hills about five feet apart; cover the seeds scarcely half an inch deep, and leave three plants to a hill. The Prickly-fruited Gherkin is seldom served at table sliced in its crude state. It is principally grown for pickling: for which purpose it should be plucked when about half grown, or while the skin is tender, and can be easily broken by the nail. As the season of maturity approaches, the rind gradually hardens, and the fruit becomes worthless. In all stages of its growth, the flesh is comparatively spongy; and, in the process of pickling, absorbs a large quantity of vinegar. THE PUMPKIN. *Cucurbita pepo*. Under this head, on the authority of the late Dr. T. W. Harris, should properly be included "the common New-England field-pumpkin, the bell-shaped and crooknecked winter squashes, the Canada crook-necked, the custard squashes, and various others, all of which (whether rightly or not, cannot now be determined) have been generally referred by botanists to the *Cucurbita pepo* of Linnæus." The term "pumpkin," as generally used in this country by writers on gardening and agriculture, and as popularly understood, includes only the few varieties of the Common New-England Pumpkin that have been long grown in fields in an extensive but somewhat neglectful manner; the usual practice being to plant a seed or two at certain intervals in fields of corn or potatoes, and afterwards to leave the growing vines to the care of themselves.

Even under these circumstances, a ton is frequently harvested from a single acre, in addition to a heavy crop of corn or potatoes. The Pumpkin was formerly much used in domestic economy; but, since the introduction of the Crook-necks, Boston Marrow, Hubbard, and other improved varieties of squashes, it has gradually fallen into disuse, and is now cultivated principally for agricultural purposes. Varieties.— The following are the principal varieties, although numerous intermediate sorts occur, more or less distinct, as well as more or less permanent in character:— CANADA PUMPKIN. Vermont Pumpkin. The Canada Pumpkin is of an oblate form, inclining to conic; and is deeply and regularly ribbed. When well grown, it is of comparatively large size, and measures thirteen or fourteen inches in diameter, and about ten inches in depth. Color fine, deep orange-yellow; skin or shell rather thick and hard; flesh yellow, fine-grained, sweet, and well flavored. Hardy, and very productive. Compared with the common field variety, the Canada is much more flattened in its form, more regularly and deeply ribbed, of a deeper and richer color; and the flesh is generally much sweeter, and less coarse and stringy in its texture. It seems adapted to every description of soil; thrives well in all climates; and is one of the best sorts for agricultural purposes, as well as of good quality for the table. CHEESE PUMPKIN. Plant very vigorous; leaves large, deep-green; fruit much flattened, deeply and rather regularly ribbed, broadly dishing about the stem, and basin-like at the opposite extremity. It is of large size; and, when well grown, often measures fifteen or sixteen inches in diameter, and nine or ten inches in depth. Skin fine, deep reddish-orange, and, if the fruit is perfectly matured, quite hard and shelllike; flesh very thick, yellow, fine-grained, sweet, and well flavored. The seeds are not distinguishable from those of the Common Field Pumpkin. The Cheese Pumpkin is hardy, remarkably productive, and much superior in all respects to most of the field-grown sorts. Whether the variety originated in this country, cannot probably now be determined; but it was extensively disseminated in the Middle States at the time of the American Revolution, and was introduced into certain parts of New England by the soldiers on their return from service. After a lapse of more than seventy-five years,—during which time it must have experienced great diversity of treatment and culture,—it still can be found in its original type; having the same form, color, size, and the same thickness, and quality of flesh, which it possessed at the time of its introduction. COMMON YELLOW FIELD PUMPKIN. Plant of vigorous, stocky habit, extending twelve feet and upwards in length; fruit rounded, usually a little more deep than broad, flattened at the ends, and rather regularly, and more or less prominently, ribbed. Its size is much affected by soil, season, and the purity of the seed. Average specimens will measure about fourteen inches in length, and eleven or twelve inches in diameter. Color rich, clear orange-yellow; skin, or rind, if the fruit is well matured, rather dense and hard; flesh variable in thickness, but averaging about an inch and a half, of a yellow color, generally coarse-grained, and often stringy, but sometimes of fine texture, dry, and of good quality; seeds of medium size, cream-yellow. The cultivation of the Common Yellow Field Pumpkin in this country is almost co-eval with its settlement. For a long period, few, if any, of the numerous varieties of squashes, now so generally disseminated, were known; and the Pumpkin was not only extensively employed as a material for pies, but was much used as a vegetable, in the form of squash, at the table.

During the struggle for national independence, when the excessively high prices of sugars and molasses prevented their general use, it was the practice to reduce by evaporation the liquid in which the pumpkin had been cooked, and to use the saccharine matter thus obtained as a substitute for the more costly but much more palatable sweetening ingredients. When served at table in the form of a vegetable, a well-ripened, fine-grained pumpkin was selected, divided either lengthwise or crosswise; the seeds extracted; the loose, stringy matter removed from the inner surface of the flesh; and the two sections, thus prepared, were baked, till soft, in a common oven. The flesh was then scooped from the shell, pressed, seasoned, and served in the usual form. By many, it is still highly esteemed, and even preferred for pies to the Squash, or the more improved varieties of pumpkins; but its cultivation at present is rather for agricultural than for culinary purposes.

CONNECTICUT FIELD PUMPKIN. A large, yellow, field variety, not unlike the Common Yellow in form, but with a softer skin, or shell. It is very prolific, of fair quality as an esculent, and one of the best for cultivating for stock or for agricultural purposes.

LONG YELLOW FIELD PUMPKIN. Plant hardy and vigorous, not distinguishable from that of the Common Yellow variety; fruit oval, much elongated, the length usually about twice the diameter; size large,—well-grown specimens measuring sixteen to twenty inches in length, and nine or ten inches in diameter; surface somewhat ribbed, but with the markings less distinct than those of the Common Yellow; color bright orangeyellow; skin of moderate thickness, generally easily broken by the nail; flesh about an inch and a half in thickness, yellow, of good but not fine quality, usually sweet, but watery, and of no great value for the table. It is very hardy and productive; well adapted for planting among corn or potatoes; may be profitably raised for feeding out to stock; keeps well when properly stored; and selected specimens will afford a tolerable substitute for the Squash in the kitchen, particularly for pies. Between this and the Common Yellow, there are various intermediate sorts; and, as they readily hybridize with each other, it is with difficulty that these varieties can be preserved in a pure state. Only one of the sorts should be cultivated, unless there is sufficient territory to enable the cultivator to allow a large distance between the fields where the different varieties are grown.

NANTUCKET. Hard-shell. "Nigger-head." Form flattened or depressed, but sometimes oblong or bell-shaped, often faintly ribbed; size medium or rather small; color deep-green, somewhat mellowed by exposure to the sun, or at full maturity; skin or shell thick and hard, and more or less thickly covered with prominent, wart-like excrescences; flesh comparatively thick, yellow, sweet, fine-grained, and of excellent flavor,—comparing favorably in all respects with that of the Sugar Pumpkin. It is a productive sort, and its flesh much dryer and more sugary than the peculiar, green, and warty appearance of the fruit would indicate. When cooked, it should be divided into pieces of convenient size; the seeds, and loose, stringy parts, removed from the inner surface of the flesh, and then boiled or baked in the skin or shell; afterwards scooping out the flesh, as is practised with the Hubbard Squash or other hardshelled varieties of pumpkins. It is an excellent pie-variety, and selected specimens will be found of good quality when served as squash at the table. It will keep till February or March.

STRIPED FIELD PUMPKIN. Habit of the plant, and form of the fruit, very similar to the Common Yellow Field Pumpkin.