CHAPTER XXI.

SEEDLING APPLES.

"Our duty down here is to do, not to know;
To live as though life were earnest,
And life will be so."

One day, about a month after my family was sent East, I was in a lot near the barn eating a pail of apples, Mr. Philips had brought out to me, when a strange man came out where we were. He said he was from Illinois, and said to Mr. Philips, "I have heard that you have a lot of seedling apples that you have been testing, and I came to see them if you have time to show them to me."

"I generally take time to do such things whether I have it to spare or not," said Mr. Philips, "I am some like Mr. Springer, of Waupacca County, I do a great amount of work for others."

"I guess that is true," the man said, "I saw Mr. Springer and Mr. Plumb, both Wisconsin men, at New Orleans, and they both appeared to take great pleasure in instructing others."

"Well," said Mr. Philips, pointing to a tree near the corner of the barn, "That tree there is a sweet apple. I call it Eureka; it is good in quality and a good seller. It is a seedling of the Tallman Sweet. My father planted the seed, which produced it, in 1866. The trees I have of it have been bearing about twenty years.

"The very large tree next to it is a McMahan, and I have too many of them. It is a large white apple and you can see,
as late as it is, some on the tree yet. It originated in Richland County, Wis. Mrs. McMahan planted the seed back in the seventies. The fruit is fair in quality and keeps nearly as long as the Wealthy. Its color is against it, for shipping, it being quite light. It was grafted and disseminated by Freeborn & Hatch, of Ithica, Wis.

WM. SPRINGER, Fremont, Wis.
Originator of Wolf River Apple.

"This one we are passing is the Ocheda Plum. I found the old tree of this variety at Lake Ocheda, Minn. It is hardy, productive, and very good in quality. It is now being grown in several western nurseries.

"The next large tree there, near the shop, is a Peerless, it originated about nine miles from Owatonna, Minn. I have been to see the old tree twice, was sent there by the Depart-
ment of Agriculture. The seed, which produced it, was planted by a Mr. Miller. O. F. Brand, of Faribault, Minn., bought the cions and propagated it and sold it for a very high price, ten dollars for six trees and, it was said, he made some money out of it, and he ought to, too, to pay him for all the roasting he received about it. It is a very good nursery tree, slow coming into bearing and the fruit is not as good as the Wealthy. It has not given satisfaction, except to a few planters. Its friends have tried hard to get it into the first list in Minnesota, but, so far, the better judgment of the Horticultural Society has kept it in the second list.

"The next two trees are the Dominion Winter, a seedling that first came into notice in Canada, in 1886. It is very hardy and does not blight, is a prolific bearer, and bears young, is very good in quality and keeps till March. I first saw it bearing in Wisconsin sixteen years ago, on the farm of W. H. Chappel, of Oregon. T. E. Cashman, of Owatonna, saw it bearing here, in my orchard, and liked it, and ordered some cions of it and is propagating it. I have propagated it some and have had it bear at six years old in the nursery row. Its color is against it, it being a dull yellow.

"That next large tree there is a Wealthy, but, of course, you know all about it."

"No, I do not," said the man, "I know that it originated in Minnesota and that is about all I do know."

"Is that really so, why, I supposed that everyone who knew anything at all about apples knew all about the Wealthy," said Mr. Philips, "Well, I'll tell you about it. The seed was planted by Minnesota's veteran horticulturist, Peter M. Gideon, near Lake Minnetonka. And I am proud to know that I there saw the original tree. It has been planted across the continent more extensively than any other seedling ever known, and it has been the parent of more good seedlings than any other variety. Mr. Gideon deprived himself of needed clothing, one winter, in order to send for the seed from which the great Wealthy grew."
And Minnesota and other northern states owe him a debt of gratitude that can not be estimated. I could talk to you all day about the Wealthy and Peter Gideon, but I have not the time. The Wealthy has made many people happy. It was named in honor of Mrs. Gideon."

PETER M. GIDEON
Originator of the Wealthy Apple.

The man then pointed to a large tree and said, "What is that big, tall tree there?"

"That is the Whitney Crab," replied Mr. Philips, "It originated in your own state, near Franklin Grove. I went to see the old tree three times before I bought any, as Mr. Whitney was afraid it would not be hardy so far north, but it is hardy here and an abundant bearer, and the fruit is of good quality."
It is the best tree to grow for fence-posts I know of. I have more than a mile of wire fence on them, and, when they bear plentifully, I feed lots of them to my cows. I planted the first large lot of them that Mr. Whitney sold in Wisconsin."

"That next tree is the Peter, a seedling of the Wealthy and though it is a good apple, it is so near like its parent that some wanted it struck from the list for Minnesota, but out of respect for Mr. Gideon it was retained, which I think was all right.

"The next tree is a Doylstown, an apple of excellent quality, and it originated in Columbia County, Wis., where I first went to see the original tree. I have a few top-worked trees of it. It is a fall apple and the girls and boys all like it to eat. I have plenty of cions of it and consider it worth propagating in small quantities for home use."

"That is the most seedling history I ever heard," said the man, "Are you near through?"

"No, indeed, not half through," Mr. Philips replied.

"Well," said the man, "I would like to hear the balance, but am in quite a hurry as I am going to Blair, but will be back in a week or ten days when I will stop and see you again and learn some more about seedlings, if it is not putting you to too much trouble because it is very interesting to me."

Mr. Philips told him to come again, that he would be glad to give him all the information he could. That same day Mr. Philips went back to town and I did not see him for more than a week. I began to think he had forgotten his promise to take me down town to live, and I could not keep from getting lonely, and, as the days went by, I missed my daughters and granddaughters more and more. But when Mr. Philips came he cheered me up quite a bit, as I found he had not forgotten his promise. He came into my stall and said, "How goes it Queen? I declare, it makes me homesick to come here and see only you left out of my nice little herd of cattle! I know I received a big price for them, but there is something more and better than money in this world. I was so proud of my cattle and did so
enjoy their companionship, and when the train, which carried
them to Massachusetts, pulled away from the station, at Salem,
I felt more like crying than anything else. And, Queen, from
what I hear you are homesick too. The man says you don’t
eat good and only give two-thirds as much milk as you did
before your companions went away,” then putting his arm
around my neck he continued, “but you must brace up old lady
and we will make the best of it. My wife and I have been
talking the matter over, and we are going to take you down
town this winter so we can have plenty of good milk and butter
and so we can take good care of you,” just then he looked out
of the door and said, “well, as sure as you live, if here don’t
come our seedling apple man back again, so I will have to go
out with him and after he is gone I will tell you what I told
him.”

When the man came in Mr. Philips said to him, “Good
morning.” The man returned Mr. Philips’ greeting and said,
“You see I took you at your word and am back again, and
want to look over your trees and get some more seedling apple
history before you forget it.”

So they went out into the orchard and were gone quite a
while. Mr. Philips said to him, “You see that large tree there
that looks like a Duchess? Well, that is a seedling which
originated in Maine and is called Dudley’s Winter. Mr. Dudley
wrote me that it was as hardy as the Duchess, and as produc-
tive and good in quality as the Wealthy and keeps six weeks
longer, but so far with me it does not quite fill the bill, as it is
a hard bill to fill. It blights some, but the apples are large and
handsome, but with me it is only a late fall apple. It is sold by
some nurserymen as the North Star. I do not propagate it any
more, as I have better ones.

“That next tree is a Virginia crab, top-grafted to the Mil-
waukee. It is a fine grower and, in some places, bears fine
fruit, which it does with Mr. Leatch, a good apple grower, near
Lake Minnetonka. It was originated near Milwaukee, by
George Jeffrys, with whom I am well acquainted. It is not as profitable as the Wealthy. I have a half dozen of the trees, some on their own roots and some top-grafted. Cotta & Son, of Freeport, in your state, make quite a specialty of it. It is good for some localities."

C. G. PATten, Charles City, la.
Originator of Pattens Greening Apple.

"In that same row farther up are some large trees of Patten's Greening. It is one of the hardiest and most productive of the new seedlings. The fruit is good for cooking and excellent to dry. It was originated at Charles City, Iowa, by that veteran in horticulture, C. G. Patten, from Wisconsin seed. He is very proud of it because whoever plants that tree and takes care of it
is sure to have fruit to eat and sell, but, of course, it does not sell like a red apple, which the market demands."

"Those large trees, over the fence, in the pasture, are the Avista. The seed was brought from Vermont by John Clark, who is still living. As Mr. Clark had no place to plant them he gave them to a farmer, by the name of Chauncy Elwell, Mrs. Tillson's father, who too is still alive, she is well known to many of my Minnesota readers. He planted them and raised about five hundred seedlings. That was nearly fifty years ago, and the only one left of the lot is this Avista, and when I found that it bore annually and kept well through the winter, and was good to bake and eat with cream I began to propagate it. It is a tree that likes to be let alone after the top is shaped in the nursery, as if pruned much it blights a little in some localities. In our trial orchard at Wausau I never saw a blighted twig on it, and the old tree bore thirty-one consecutive crops for me, and then, to save its life, I had it grubbed out.

"That row of trees along the fence are the Malinda. It is a seedling, Mr. Hoskins claimed, that came from Vermont. It is very hardy, and, towards spring, is quite good in quality. It is slow coming into bearing, so, to hurry it up, I usually top-graft it. The Department of Agriculture sent me to Iowa to look it up, as Mr. Edson Gaylord, of that state, had, that spring, sent some very fine specimens to the Department. One of the requirements for the one thousand dollars premium, offered by Minnesota for the best seedling apple, is that it shall keep as long as the Malinda. This apple produced the seeds from which were grown the one hundred and fifty varieties, by Mr. Perkins, of Red Wing, Minn., which were shown, a few years ago, in Boston, by Wyman Elliott, of Minneapolis, at which show the Wilder gold medal was awarded to them.

"A little farther down, there are ten large trees of the Okabena. I have visited the old tree, on the bank of the beautiful lake of that name, in western Minnesota. They are hardy and productive, and at our trial orchard, in Marathon County,
Wis., this variety and Patten’s Greening seem to be standing it better and bearing more fruit than the N. W. Greening or Wealthy. On that cut-over soil, where hemlock, maple and pine grow, it seems to be at home, and if I had similar soil I would plant largely of those two varieties and hold them in cold storage for winter. These Okabena trees were given to me for trial, by the Jewell Nursery Co., of Lake City, Minn. They bought the old tree and are propagating it. J. M. Underwood is the president of the company.

"That modest looking little tree has never borne any fruit because it has only been planted one year. It is called the Yahnke because a German, by that name, near Winona, Minn., origin-
ated it, or, more properly speaking, the good Lord, with whom Mr. Yahnke is on quite friendly terms, did it for him, for when the sprout came up Mr. Yahnke cut it down, for three successive seasons, because, German-like, he wanted the ground to grow cabbages for sauerkraut, but the Lord persisted in keeping the tree alive, so Yahnke gave up and let the tree grow, and, at this time, I think it is about as near capturing the one thousand dollar premium as any I know, because such good judges as Wyman Elliott and Professor Green scored it one hundred in quality. I consider it more vigorous and hardier than the Duchess on Mr. Yahnke’s ground. I have visited the old tree about a dozen times. One time I was there Mr. Yahnke showed me four rows of trees which were planted at three years of age, and all the same day. Across the south end of the rows was a Minnesota crab, next a Yahnke, then a Fameuse and last a Duchess. I noticed that the Yahnke looked the most vigorous, so the next time I was there I went out to the trees, with Mr. Yahnke’s son, and with a tape-line measured the circumference of them one foot above the ground. The Minnesota measured twenty-six inches, Fameuse twenty-five and one-half, Duchess twenty-eight and one-half and the Yahnke forty-two inches. Mr. Yahnke says it has produced more bushels of apples than the Duchess near it, and, with me, it keeps full as long as the Malinda. So there you have my reasons for saying what I have about it, and you can take them for what they are worth. I think on Mr. Yahnke’s location it is valuable.

“Over there by the fence, you see that beautiful, top-worked tree. It is a seedling of Scott’s Winter. The seed was planted at a time when we Wisconsin fellows thought Scott’s Winter was a western seedling, which was found growing near La Crosse, by Mr. Wilcox. I like the quality full better than the parent; it keeps full as well, is handsome, and with me does not blight as bad as Scott’s Winter, but it has not been propagated any. I have six or eight top grafted trees just beginning to bear and I wish I had two hundred. I have shown
it for two winters at the Minnesota Horticultural meeting, in December, and President Wedge, as the darkies say, took quite a shine to it. I have named it Philips' Winter.

E. H. S. Dart. First Supt. of Minn. Tree Station.

"Come over this way and I will show you a handsome tree that has not borne any fruit yet. Some years ago I was visiting my genial old friend, E. H. S. Dart, and we were looking through the trial station, which he had managed, ten years, for
the State of Minnesota. I asked him if, in all the work he had done for the state, he had produced anything better than the Wealthy. He studied a moment then said, 'No Sir.' I then asked him to show me the best winter seedling he had produced in all that time. He took me along a row of trees and showed me a very handsome, hardy looking tree and said, 'There it is, I call it Phoenix, Number Fifty, as that is the number Phoenix sent it under.' Well, I took a half dozen cions and top-grafted this handsome tree. I visited Mr. Phoenix the next fall to find out about its parentage, but he could not tell me anything, except that it was among some cions somebody had given him. I do not think it an early bearer as it is among his early plantings, but it is worth watching.

"Here are two trees, that, for seedlings, have a strange history. I found the original tree in the fall of 1897, it was apparently, a sprout from a tree which had died, or, in fact, two sprouts from the same root. The shape of the apple resembles the Plumb Cider. On one sprout they were the richest kind of a deep red, on the other they resembled, in size and color, the Plum Cider. About the first of October, I took a peck of them to the Omaha Exposition. It was the only apple among our lot of seedlings on our tables that the Southern growers asked for cions of. The apples were just as handsome as could be, and the ladies would stop and look at them and say, 'Arn't they lovely?' I did not offer anyone a cion, although I had acquired control of the tree. I thought, like we experimenters are wont to think, that my fortune was made and that I would soon be building homes and hospitals for worn-out horticulturists and abused animals. I hardly dared tell the secret of my good fortune to my wife for fear she might, accidentally, give it away. I hardly dared tell anybody in what county, in Wisconsin, it originated for fear they would find out where it was. I cut cions enough to graft one hundred trees which I set out next spring, but did not raise one decent tree. I, also, top-worked some trees and gave them extra care. So
far I have raised one little, scrubby apple, and the old tree has never, since then, borne an apple that was fit to show at a fair, although it bears some on alternate years.

"'Now, have you heard enough about seedlings?' I asked him, he said, 'No, but I know you are in a hurry to go to town because you talked so fast. Several times I wanted to ask you a question, but I could not get a word in edgewise; however, it has been very interesting to me, but I can't for the life of me see how you can remember so much, and if I come through here again in the spring, which I now think I will, I will stop and have you tell me about some more seedlings.'

"I told him all right to come again, that I knew a lot more about seedlings which I would be pleased to tell him."

After Mr. Philips had told me all he had told the man about seedling apples he said to me, "I hate it awfully, Queen, to go away and leave you when you are feeling so sad and lonely, and I am sorry I can't take you down town with me now, but I have to go away on a short trip, but cheer up and keep up your spirits for as soon as I return home I will come and get you, it will not be more than two weeks at the outside, so good-bye."

I did not expect to see Mr. Philips for two long weeks, but he happily surprised me by coming back the very next day, but I was disappointed to find that he had not come for me. He said to me, "Well, Queen, you didn't expect to see me quite so soon, did you? After I went to town yesterday I sold the two young bulls, so had to come and get them. One of them I will have to take to La Crosse in a wagon, so will have to bring the team back when I will tell you about the sale."

The next evening he returned and said that he sold my great-grandson, King Armand, 7,292, to Mr. Hunter, at Picketts, near where my son, Salem's King, was sent. Mr. Philips fed him before he started, then put in a jug of milk for the express man to feed him on the way. I thought that was surely being kind to a calf.
The other calf, King Herron, 7,291, which had no Yeksa blood, he sold to C. L. Hood, of La Crosse. He took him to him in a wagon, and said that while on the way he saw some boys catching frogs in a pond near the city. They would tie strings to the frog’s legs and hang them up on a fence wire and shoot at them with air guns. He said he stopped and told them that they must stop such cruel sport; that it was cruel and wicked and a good start for them to become murderers when they grew to be men. One of the boys said that they were having fun with the frogs the same as men did with pigeons at a “pigeon shoot.” It made me wonder why men were not more careful about the examples they set for boys to follow.

“I must tell you good-bye again Queen, said Mr. Philips, “but I will not disappoint you again, for the next time I come it will be for you, so keep up your courage and be good for I will come and get you in two weeks at the farthest.”