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Tropical Fruits Other than Pineapples.

Rev. E. V. Blackman,
the Committee.

The mango, as Mr. Boggs told you, has been grown from the seed. Nearly all the mangoes in this county, up to two or three years ago, have been seedling mangoes. A stranger tasting them for the first time would think they were more fit for textile fibre and making rope than for eating; but in spite of the fibrous condition of the mango, it is becoming one of the most popular fruits on the market.

As to my own taste I will throw away a Mulgoba any time for the old-time mango. The flavor is very delicious, more delicate, and to me it is a better fruit all around. Still the time is near at hand when the seedling will take the background, same as with the orange. The time is coming when our trees must be budded to the finest known varieties. People ask for it, they eat the name instead of the fruit.

Take it with the orange; some of the finest oranges we have ever eaten were from seedling trees.

The process of budding is a very simple one, and one that is going to be used successfully here. So long as the green world lasts there will be the old turpentine mango, because people like it. The same is true of the avocado pear. People have been planting the: seed from Cuba, thinking it would be superior to our varieties here. I was foolish enough to pay \$2.00 for Cuban seed because I thought the fruit would naturally be as good as that from the parent tree. It was a snare and a delusion; because if you take mango seed and plant from the tree 100 of them, ninety-nine of them will be different in shape and size. Mr. Filer up here has these pears and I understand a good many were planted from the same tree; now he has scarcely two alike. This fruit, by the way, is coming into market. There is a demand for it. Last year avocado pears brought in our market from 30 cents to \$1.00 per dozen right along through the season. There is knowing how many alligator pears will grow on a full grown tree, because no one lives long enough to know how large a pear tree will grow. The avocado pear is going to be the most profitable fruit for the market.

We might say also of the sapadillo that in some sections of the country it is becoming a popular fruit. It bears shipping well. It must be picked a little green, but will go into market in first-class condition.

In regard to the growing of these I asked a grower the other day what is the best plan for growing the avocado pear and the sapadillo. He said just get as rocky piece of land as you can get, plant your trees and leave it alone for a few years. I asked another; he said, use no fertilizer for several years. Let them grow slowly, let them root slowly, and use stable manure and not commercial fertilizers. I had a little experience; had the fever, planted out some, wanted to see them grow, wanted to get them into market as soon as I could. I put on commercial fertilizer; they stood there for months without a sign

of growing and finally died. Others I used stable manure on, and they have been growing ever since. This has been my experience and that of some others. That is about all I have to say about avocado pears.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. Hampton—I agree with Mr. Blackman in regard to avocado pears; that it is the coming fruit for this section of the country. The range where it can be grown is very limited. That is about its advantage, I believe, to those who grow, not to those who buy, and it would be advantageous to the growers. I have had very little experience, but would agree with Mr. Blackman that it is the coming fruit in South Florida, that is, the semitropical section of South Florida, Dade County. The fruit, in my estimation, will bring fancy prices, and it seems to be taking in our Northern markets. It is a fruit most people acquire the taste of very rapidly, and it is very nutritious. Taking it all in all, I know of no fruit outside of the pineapple that is more a coming fruit that is to be planted for profit, than the avocado¹ pear is in South Florida.

There is another thing that is in its favor. There is nothing injuring to the tree, no insects as with orange, which will take the blight or die-back more or less, but I have never seen a case like that with avocado pear. The sapadillo is another fruit that seems to be very well adapted to this section. The taste for it does not seem to have to be acquired.

Mr. Ellis—I would like to ask Mr. Hampton or Mr. Blackman if seeds of that fruit, the avocado pear, were sent out from the Agricultural Department three years ago? Can they tell us of the Mexican avocado pear?

Mr. Hampton—I do not know anything of it.

Mr. Ellis—I received from the Agricultural Department three years ago seeds of the avocado pear. They fruited last season. I wanted to see whether the experience of others corresponded with mine. I made a report to the Department that it was a very heavy fruit, was not as large and mealy and did not keep. I shipped a crate of them to the Department of Agriculture, and not a dozen arrived in good order. I shipped four crates of the kind we have down here, and all arrived in good order.

Mrs. Haden—we have a dozen trees of this Mexican pear, and while very early they are very superior in quality but very much smaller.

Mr. Pettigrew—I have had a little experience with mangoes and alligator pears. I find the alligator pears almost refuse to grow on high pine ridges. The Mango will grow on that kind of ground. The Jamaica mango I hoped would have fruit on this year, but it is taking up all the time in blooming. It had a great cluster of blooms, but they have all fallen off. The three-year-old blooms very slowly. I have a two-year-old bud that was sent from Miami to me, which covered itself with blossom. From what little experience I have had, I think it would pay to bud and propagate that way and not raise seedlings. I am confident you can get fruit. It is well known that it shortens the time by budding. I think the alligator pear is one of the best fruits we can plant. Member—In regard to the alligator pears, they do fairly well as seedlings. Mrs. Cole of Buena Vista shipped me a tree that was from the seed. This was a special one; she took the fruit off and sold it; she sold between four and five dollars worth that one year.

Mr. Blackman—the reason the alligator pear has been kept in the background in the Northern cities is perhaps the price that has been asked for it. To illustrate this; one of our Florida people who owned some alligator pear trees, had them growing on his place, met a young lady from New York City, to whom he became very much attached, he being a bachelor looking around for a helpmeet. He went up to New York to visit her. Going down Broadway, he saw some inferior alligator pears in a fruit shop. He asked her if she had ever tasted one and she said she had not; so they went into the store picked out three of the nicest ones he could, and laid down a five-dollar bill. To his surprise he got \$2.00 in change.

People cannot eat alligator pears at that price, but when it comes into market at a price we can afford, and we can grow them at a reasonable price to the acre, it is going to be a fruit that will take in the market. In the lower end of Florida there is only a small place where you can grow the alligator pear. With increased growth and increased demand, I will say to every farmer and every fruit grower in all this region, plant alligator pears, and plant largely, and in a few years it will be a gold mine for you.

Mr. Hudson—I would like to ask a question in regard to the use of commercial fertilizers on avocado pears. My own experience coincides with other experiences I have heard. I have five or six trees on my place on Indian River. Two of the trees put out a very heavy crop of fruit, and we enjoyed them very much from September to December. I thought I would have a sure thing this year and fertilized very liberally just as I would for orange trees, and I don't think we will get over half a bushel of fruit as a result. The question to my mind is; is it not unreasonable to think that the nature of the tree is so peculiar that it will not bear the use of commercial fertilizer? I know people who think that commercial fertilizers will kill the orange tree. Is not the fault with us instead of the tree? In case of the alligator pear, we must get a fertilizer properly balanced that will be of advantage to it as well as the orange tree. Can the gentleman offer any explanation why it will not stand commercial fertilizer?

Mr. Blackman—I cannot answer that. Perhaps the quantity of fertilizer I used was too much. I was trying to fertilize some young trees, and used about the same fertilizer I ought to have used on trees five or six years old. There is no question but that there is some commercial fertilizer made that will agree with the alligator pear or any other tree.

Mr. Hart—it seems to me that the gentleman on the right has struck keynote of the matter. There is just as much difference in commercial fertilizers as in the different varieties of fruit of the alligator pear. For instance, with the orange that was mentioned; we know if we give the orange tree an excess of ammonia from organic sources, we will draw it all out of balance; while if we have properly balanced fertilizers and from the proper source, they will make the orange tree healthy and in every way satisfactory. Now, if organic manures will give good results, why not apply fertilizer of about the same analysis as the manures, and perhaps put organic matter with it, compost or something of that kind? I do not think we should discard fertilizers because they are commercial. After a little experience it will be shown what is needed. Organic manures are scarce down here, and we can get commercial fertilizers in unlimited quantities.

Mr. Ellis—I believe the first settlers on Biscayne Bay before commercial fertilizers were used here used logger-head sponge, and they certainly produced very fine crops of

alligator pears. My own experience has been that mineral fertilizers will kill alligator pears, but organic fertilizers or blood and bone will make the fruit. Commercial fertilizers composed altogether of minerals will certainly kill your trees. It has been repeated time and again on the Bay. Mr. Boggs and others use natural fertilizers altogether.