

and colour, being externally white, red, purple, or almost black, and internally white, yellow, or almost black. They differ in flavour and quality, being either waxy or mealy; in their period of maturity, and in their capacity for long preservation.

As with many other plants which have been long propagated by bulbs, tubers, cuttings, &c., by which means the same individual is exposed during a length of time to diversified conditions, seedling potatoes generally display innumerable slight differences. Several varieties, even when propagated by tubers, are far from constant, as will be seen in the chapter on Bud-variation. Dr. Anderson<sup>100</sup> procured seed from an Irish purple potato, which grew far from any other kind, so that it could not at least in this generation have been crossed, yet the many seedlings varied in almost every possible respect, so that "scarcely two plants were exactly alike." Some of the plants which closely resembled each other above ground, produced extremely dissimilar tubers; and some tubers which externally could hardly be distinguished, differed widely in quality when cooked. Even in this case of extreme variability, the parent-stock had some influence on the progeny, for the greater number of the seedlings resembled in some degree the parent Irish potato. Kidney potatoes must be ranked amongst the most highly cultivated and artificial races; nevertheless their peculiarities can often be strictly propagated by seed. A great authority, Mr. Rivers,<sup>101</sup> states that "seedlings from the ash-leaved kidney always bear a strong resemblance to their parent. Seedlings from the fluke-kidney are still more remarkable for their adherence to their parent stock, for, on closely observing a great number during two seasons, I have not been able to observe the least difference, either in earliness, productiveness, or in the size or shape of their tubers."

<sup>100</sup> 'Bath Society Agricult. Papers,' vol. v. p. 127. And 'Recreations in Agriculture,' vol. v. p. 86.

<sup>101</sup> 'Gardener's Chronicle,' 1863, p. 643.