

and they melted away, they developed a very tangled mass. Many of the shoots, from the weight that had been lying over them, were bowed to the earth, never to rise again by their own strength. Other shoots were half recumbent, and so they might be seen in all parts, in all shapes and conditions. Those which suffered most, in many instances *died out*, thus introducing a system, though not a very judicious one, of pruning. As a matter sure to follow where such a course was tolerated, the stalks grew more and more feeble, the leaves prematurely fell from them, while the fruit from exhaustion of the stalk, diminished in size and flavor, and the old bushes were pronounced "used up." They now stood a very good chance of being abandoned to any fate that might follow. Sometimes, it was probably the case that new plantations were formed from the old; and then the new, in its turn, was left to work out for itself a similar destiny of ruin. The roots were left wholly uncared for. If the grass matted around them, it was thought of little consequence. It would have been thought a waste of manure to apply it to a currant bush, and a very great waste of time to have raked leaves and placed around them.

As fond as the masses are of currants, and as useful and necessary as they can be made in household economy, and as easily as they are grown and perfected, we are reluctant to believe that a course similar to the one we have described is tolerated by any one in the present age of fruit culture. Indeed, we would not suppose the thing possible, had we not, in our rambles a few days since, seen just such a mass of tangled material as the one we have above alluded to. We fear, then, that they may still be found too common every where. But why shall we speak of it, or try to point out a better way through the Horticulturist? People who raise such currant bushes do not take the Horticulturist. We know that fact as well without asking, as we should if they said so under oath. Not only the currant bushes, but every thing about the garden, testify that they do not take that paper, or any other one devoted to rural improvement. They *may* take a story paper or a political one, because the children like to read stories, &c. It is there that we find the difficulty of reaching such people, when we wish to tell them how this rough, tangled mass of ill-looking brush can be renovated and made very beautiful, and produce fruit so improved in size and flavor,

that when they see it laid side by side with the old product, they would never believe that both came from the same garden, if they did not know the fact. Yet we hope something will throw what we have to say before them, and they will try "just one bush," if no more, to see if we tell the truth.

The reader who has experience in horticulture will observe that we are not speaking now of setting out new plantations of the currant, or of their after management. The whole topic lies in the renovation of the old one; a plantation that perhaps somebody's grandfather or great-grandfather put out, away back towards "the days of the Revolution". A precious relic of by-gone days, and one worthy to be preserved and made valuable.

The course of management is very simple, and can be soon told. The first requisites are a sharp knife, and an industrious hand to use it. With these, cut out all old and straggling shoots, and reduce the mass so that at most not more than four or five are left in what constituted what was called a bush at the time of planting. Let the shoots that are allowed to grow be young shoots, and straight, erect ones. Then, if any grass is matted around them, dig it up and destroy it. If weeds have sprung up there, annihilate them entirely. Spade or fork up the ground as best it can be done; and if manure is applied, it will pay good interest. But if manure is too valuable or too scarce, a coat of chip dung will do well, or what is better, gather up leaves from forest trees, and place them liberally around the roots. Many can do this, and accomplish the double object of getting them out of the way and into a place where they become available. The leaves are a good mulch, such as the currant loves, keeping the earth clean, light, and moist. They in due time become a valuable natural manure to the plant. The first season an improvement in the fruit, both in its size and flavor, will be evident; but the matter must not stop so. In each successive spring the thinning-out process must be gone through with, and the mulching with leaves, the oftener the greater success. We have seen this course pursued with ample and astonishing success; and yet it is so cheap and so simple, that any one can raise improved fruit on old bushes, or bushes springing from old roots, by adopting it.

[Mr. Bacon has very truthfully described what is still too common a sight all through our farming districts. The neglect that