

THE CURRANT.



GOOD many articles appear, in our exchanges, regarding the cultivation of this fruit, and according to our experience, it is less planted as a staple crop in Ontario than its merits deserve. This state of affairs is probably due to the fact that, in early times, there were in cultivation only such small varieties as Red Dutch and White Grape, kinds which not only taxed the patience of the pickers, but which brought a very low price in our market. Then, too, this fruit was looked upon as unworthy of proper care or cultivation, and was only grown in corners of the fences, or in neglected rows along the garden paths, without proper pruning, or proper attention of any kind; besides this, many thought that there was no easy mode of routing the worm; and consequently the currant was the last fruit thought of as worthy of being planted by growers, and given high cultivation as a fruit crop for market.

But, after some years of experience, we have come to a different conclusion. Given a clay loam, well drained, well worked up and well enriched, planted with such varieties as Fay, Versailles or Cherry, all of which go in to market under the head of the latter variety, and bring a cent to two more a quart than the common kinds, and there is no doubt about the profits of currant culture.

The saw fly is easily kept down by hellebore; indeed, were the insect enemies of other varieties of fruit as easily destroyed as this one, the fruit grower might count himself a happy man.

Often there are portions of ground which cannot be put to good use, owing to the partial shade of an orchard; but, even in such unfavorable situations, the currant may often be grown with fair success.

The propagation of the currant is so exceedingly simple that we would not advise any of our readers, who wish to enter into cultivation of this fruit, to go to the expense of buying a quantity of plants from nurserymen. If any neighbor has a plantation of currants of the varieties wanted, he will be only too willing to part with a large quantity of cuttings, at the time of the yearling pruning; for these are worthless to him, unless he intends to use them for propagating. If no such opportunity as this offers itself, cuttings can be purchased from nurserymen at a very small cost. If planted in a sandy loam which is a little moist and not too shaded, there will be scarcely any failures. These, after one year's growth, will be ready for transplanting into the currant plantation, and in two years will begin fruit bearing. Five feet apart each way is a very good distance, because the cultivation will thereby, be rendered very simple; indeed, it will be no more trouble to care for such a plantation of currants, than it would be for an ordinary corn field, for horse cultivation can be in two directions, and there will be very little work left for the hoe.