

The "Downing" Gooseberry.

The accompanying woodcut is an illustration of the new American gooseberry, known as "the Downing gooseberry," of which great things are spoken by our neighbors. Mr. H. J. Hooker, of Rochester, writing on this subject says:

I was struck with the fact that we had accomplished very little yet in improving this fruit, by finding on the coast of Maine, an abundance of wild gooseberries with fruit nearly as large and good as the Houghton; growing without care from man, among rocks and in poor soils. If we have stock as good as this to start with, it does not speak well for us that we have thus far done so little to secure superior varieties adapted to the wants and tastes of our citizens. Experience with other fruit shows that we must look to native grown seedlings for our most

3. The "Smith's Improved."—This variety presents the habit of growth, slender branches, and moderately rapid growth of the Houghton, with much larger fruit, of a pale yellow or greenish yellow color, and excellent flavor, thin skin, and excellent table cooking qualities. More vigor of growth in this sort would be desirable, its disposition to bear a very heavy crop of fruit being prominent.

I am inclined to think pruning and liberal culture will suit this variety, and with these I do not see how it can fail to please. The accompanying cut was correctly drawn from a well grown plant in full fruit of the NEW DOWNING GOOSEBERRY. This sort grows more in the style of some of the foreign varieties, but with much greater rapidity and vigor of root and branch. It has stout heavy wood, very thorny, and with an abundant, rich foliage, which in our grounds resisted all disease, and held on with re-

Evergreens among Pear Trees.

Ben. F. H. Hyde, Vice-President of the Connecticut State Board of Agriculture, planted a number of small evergreens in a circular form around some pear trees, simply for ornament, intending to keep them down in the front of a hedge, and to allow the pear trees, "for effect," to appear above them. The plan was neglected after a while—as many such plans are—and the evergreens soon out-stripped the dwarfs, and towered up above and nearly encircled them. It came to be noticed after a while that while the pear trees away from the evergreens were irregular bearers of rather inferior fruit, those within the circle were almost invariably prolific, and the fruit was of superior quality. There was no other apparent cause for this result than the influence of the evergreens, hence the inference in favor of protection would seem to be a just one.



excellent and profitable sorts. Little can be done to change or modify the constitution of a plant by special care or culture; we must go to the seed for all reliable variations; and when any disposition to vary from the original wild type is discovered, we must follow it up, and, in the end, secure the results most desired.

So far as I know, the gooseberry has not in this country produced many new and promising varieties; it has held well to the habit of all wild fruits; not to show much change, until, in the hand of man, those conditions are secured which give safety to, and use for, individuals whose merit is not so much in hardihood of constitution, as beauty, abundance and excellence of fruit. The only improved American gooseberries which have come under my observation, are the following:

1. The "Houghton Seedling."—This strongly resembles the wild type, but is more productive, somewhat larger, and better flavored than those found growing wild, retaining the vigor and hardiness of the original.

2. The "Mountain."—This is very different from the first, and offers peculiarities of merit quite distinct and interesting. The plant grows tall and very large, abundantly productive of fruit varying from large to quite small upon the same branch; with a tough skin, wild flora, and disposed to hang long upon the bush. Both this and the Houghton are red in color.

markable persistence, until severe freezing removed it. This heavy foliage proves of value to the fruit, not only in the certainty of maturity, but by shielding it from sun scalding, which sometimes injures other sorts. I cannot say that I have found the fruit of "Downing" any great improvement in flavor over the "Houghton," but it is twice as large, and the pale green color is preferable, as most of the gooseberry crop is now used for various cooking and canning purposes; it will, I think, be found that its increased size, remarkable vigor and productiveness good color and certain crop, will place it among the real acquisitions in this fruit. I looked upon these new sorts as additions of real merit in themselves, and a strong assurance that from their progeny we may reasonably expect soon to see a list of gooseberries possessing all the good qualities of the foreign sorts, with the added recommendation that they are perfectly adapted by nature to our climate. When we have these improved sorts we shall find an extensive use and enlarged market for the fruit now so little valued.

Some gardeners and agricultural writers lay much stress on the value of forest leaves as a fertilizer. Dr. Nichols of the Boston Journal of Chemistry says that reckoning good stable manure at \$8 per cord, a cord of dried leaves (about 100 bushels he makes it) is worth about 50 cents. They are of some value as an absorbent in stables, but less so than straw, as they "lack its reedy character and decompose far more slowly." This will doubtless surprise some readers, but it is probably correct.

This discovery, however, is not a new one. The influence of shelter belts on fruit trees, as well as on farm crops, has long been known and taught by enterprising horticulturists, but like other improvements not yielding immediate revenues, have been slow to adopt the plan. There is not a particle of doubt as to their good effects both for shelter and for beauty. An orchard of any kind interspersed with them would without doubt yield better returns, even with one-quarter or one-third the space given to evergreens. Their pyramidal shape makes the shade they cast comparatively small, hence that is a slight objection. If inclined to occupy space at the expense of necessary convenience, they can be clipped, headed back or sheared into almost any form, and their density of foliage only be increased thereby. If largely planted over the country as screens, shelter belts, or only interspersed here and there through orchards and farms, they would not only exert a special protection on adjacent orchards, and vastly beautify the landscape, but would effect a general amelioration of the climate, which would be a universal benefit. The culture of evergreens is only in its infancy as yet, and every fact or incident tending to promote taste or inquiry in that direction may justly be regarded as a public benefit.—The Working Farmer.

—Farming should not be looked upon merely as a means of subsistence, but adopted partly with the view of enabling us to cultivate the moral, intellectual and social powers, and to discharge the duties devolving upon us as citizens, under circumstances the most favorable. It should not tend to make men mere machines, who toil for the sole purpose of gratifying their appetites, but to elevate and refine to the highest degree of perfection, all the better faculties of our nature.