

doing further mischief. Such we believe to be a fair resumé of the fruit interests in Ontario during the past season. It will be found to be pretty correct as applied to our fruit-bearing districts. It only remains to be added that on the whole the fruit crop is good. Although apple and pear and even plum and cherry trees have suffered, there is in general a good crop throughout the country. The yield of small fruits has been immense. The drought somewhat affected the strawberry crop, but the seasonable rains insured an abundant yield. Blackberries, in favoured and sheltered localities, have done well, and cultivators, as a rule, have had little reason to complain. Currants and gooseberries have been singularly prolific.

It would be well, perhaps, for the reputation of your President, as regards his horticultural knowledge, that he should here call halt! in his annual address. Unfortunately, however, for him, something more is expected, and he has only at this stage approached the subject matter of his address. After casting about in various directions, and throwing himself on the kind offices of friends, especially upon the considerate promptings of Mr. Saunders and Mr. Arnold, I have concluded to speak to you a little *on the cultivation of the smaller fruits, and on the steady onward progress being made in their improvement.*

It is said that a word aptly spoken is good. It may be that the subject of small fruits and the locality where we are met, are suited to each other. For while it must be allowed that the rich and luscious fruits of the west are not well adapted for this region, yet in the cultivation of the small fruits, the Ottawa Valley is not to be beat. Indeed we question if finer raspberries, currants and gooseberries can be found under better cultivation, or anywhere yield a better result, than in Mr. Bucke's garden in the City of Ottawa.

THE STRAWBERRY.

One of the standard questions at our annual horticultural meetings is, "Which is the best variety of strawberry?" For many years past the almost uniform answer has been, from skilled and unskilled, "Why, the 'Wilson's Albany.'" Taken as a whole, perhaps it is the most profitable berry for market and amateur cultivation, but wonderful strides are being made in approaching, if not in transcending its excellence. We do not now speak of any of the best known and most commonly cultivated varieties, but of the famous sorts being introduced by our hybridists. In flavour and quality many of the new varieties excel the Wilson's Albany.

The best mode of cultivating the strawberry is one of our vexed horticultural queries. We are persuaded that there is only one road to be travelled in this culture. The ground must be carefully prepared—we mean enriched and cleaned. The plant delights in a pretty heavy clay loam. A sharp soil with abundance of lime is singularly suitable for their successful cultivation. A common mode of cultivation is to plant, and leave the plants to care for themselves, take two or at most three crops, then plough them down, and then replant. The system is vicious. Strawberries to bear well should be differently treated from those from which you desire to propagate. These should be allowed to throw out all the runners of which they are capable. Fruit-bearing vines should have every runner nipped off, and the stock plant only allowed to bear without a single runner. This mode of cultivation was finely shown by Mr. Biggar's treatment at Drummondville, in the culture he gives his seedling, the New Dominion, and indeed to the Wilson's Albany, and to all his fruit-bearing varieties.

Winter protection is absolutely essential. Different substances have been used for this purpose, but we believe the kind from which the berry derives its name is the best—a straw protection. Mr. Arnold last winter tried wood shavings, and in the former part of the season, during and after the snow had fallen, they did well; but when the black spring frost came they dried and were driven away by the wind—at the very time they were most needed they were found wanting. Straw, after all, is best adapted to the cultivation and protection of this variety of fruit. What we desire to see is the plants and interstices between the rows covered with this mulch, and the plants in spring allowed to grow through the straw. Many growers winter cover the plants and rake off the protection in the spring. What is wanted is a clean seedless mulch for the spring and the warm weather, and nothing affords this so well as good clean straw. The plant seeks sustenance deep in the ground, and man's efforts should be made to assist nature. Pro-

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