

GOOSEBERRIES AND THEIR CULTURE.

As a class, the small fruits, such as gooseberries, currants, strawberries, raspberries, &c., receive but a moiety of the attention which they merit. They all ripen at a season of the year when other fruit are scarce, and fill an important place in the luxury of a well furnished table.—True, almost every one has currants, small, acid things, the product of stunted and neglected bushes, and sometimes you will find a wild gooseberry bush transplanted into some fence corner, where, choked by grass and weeds, its fruit is even poorer than when in its wild state; or if the improved varieties are planted the want of care renders them unproductive, or they are destroyed by mildew, and hence many persons have come to the conclusion that they are not worthy of cultivation. But give them a good location and proper culture, and the sight of the bushes loaded with fine, large berries, would tempt the most unbelieving to give them a trial.

With good treatment none of the small fruits produce more abundantly than the gooseberry. It succeeds best in a deep, sandy loam with a northern aspect, but will thrive well in any soil provided it be made deep and rich. It should be trenched, or else worked two spades deep, and thoroughly enriched with any well rotted manure.

Many consider mulching absolutely necessary to prevent mildew, but that depends much more upon the situation and treatment than upon mulching. If they are fully exposed to the sun, as upon the south side of a fence, or in any soil with an unbroken southern aspect, nothing short of mulching, or *shading the ground around their roots* in some other way, will save them from mildew. But plant them on the north side of a board fence, hedge, or stone wall, two or three feet from it, work in a liberal supply of fine compost every spring, (if placed around them in autumn and turned under in the spring, so much the better,) and keep the surface mellow through the heat of summer, and there will be no trouble from mildew.

Like currants, they are easily propagated from cuttings and layers.—*R. N. Yorker.*

TO CLEAN BRASS.—Rub it over with a bit of flannel dipped in sweet oil; then rub it hard with finely powdered rotten stone, then rub it with a soft linen cloth, and polish with a bit of wash-leather.

PRUNING.

PRUNING, properly speaking, is the judicious removal of encumbering and useless wood every year, so as to regulate the branches in every part of the tree, and thus give access to the sun and air to freely penetrate through the whole tree; this is necessary, for if the air and sun cannot get freely to the fruit and the leaves, they are imperfectly matured; the leaves cannot properly perform their functions, thus the sap is imperfectly elaborated, and both the wood and fruit are imperfectly ripened.

As to the time to prune, there is a diversity of opinions, whether it should be performed in the fall, after the leaves are off, or early in the spring before the buds break. This is immaterial; it is only a disagreement whether trees should be pruned at the beginning or end of their dormant state, but it amounts to nothing; pruning may be done any time during the dormant state of the tree; it should however, be performed before the sap begins to flow in the spring. In these remarks we allude to what is termed winter pruning—summer pruning is a different operation, of which we shall speak on a future occasion.

In pruning it is necessary to be well acquainted with the nature of the tree to be pruned; without this, it is impossible to prune to advantage. All trees are not alike in their nature; some produce their fruit on the young wood of the previous year's growth, others on spurs which grow from the old wood, and others on the young wood of the present year's growth; these points require attention by the operator, to enable him to perform the operation aright.

Apple, pear, plum and cherry trees bear principally on spurs which grow or arise out of the wood of two or three years' growth. These branches with spurs continue to bear for several years.

In pruning these trees, due regard should be paid to the production of these spur branches, by shortening the young wood on the main branches; the main branches should be regulated as to distance from each other, so as to give the tree a uniform appearance, and to keep it open for the admission of the sun and air.

Peaches, nectarines, and apricots, produce their fruit on the young wood of the previous years' growth; in pruning them, care will be necessary to retain the strongest and clearest