

several varieties and subvarieties of the native gooseberry. One is a very tall strong growing kind, the branches bearing strong prickles. The fruit ripens late, of medium size, dull red, insipid and covered with such strong prickles, that it is almost impossible to eat it. Another is a strong growing bush also, though the branches are long and pendant, not being able to support their own weight when in fruit. The branches are free from prickles, and the fruit is a very small, smooth red berry, perfectly worthless as it falls off as soon as ripe. There is a subvariety of this last, the fruit of which is larger and has now and then a small prickle on it, as also a few on the bush, the fruit does not fall off when ripe, but the flavor is poor. The Houghton gooseberry (though it has not yet fruited with me) is evidently, by the leaf, either an improved variety of these last two, or a hybrid between them and the English. There is, however, a difficulty in procuring hybrids between the English and the wild gooseberry, owing to the former flowering a little earlier than the latter. Still it is evident that it does take place sometimes, as one of my 500 seedlings that bore this year is decidedly a hybrid from the first or prickly variety described, there being quite a number of bushes of the latter growing wild in different parts of my lawn not far distant from the garden.

The growth of the seedling is very closely allied to its wild parent, being covered with similar prickles, and growing very tall and straight, its young shoots being about four times the length of any of the other seedlings. The leaf is quite different from either of its parents, and the fruit is about the same size as the wild, of a lively red color, and covered with strong hairs instead of prickles. The flavor, as far as I can judge, there being only six berries on the bush, is very fair, and it ripens at the same time as the English, or a fortnight before the wild.

Having apparently two hybrids now, the Houghton and my seedling, it appears to me the way is open for a rapid improvement, and the obtaining varieties probably equal to if not better than the English, of strong healthy constitutions perfectly free from mildew and adapted to the climate. I intend planting these kinds, beside some of the finest flavored English, such as the Warrington red, and saving the seed, of both kinds in hopes of raising new ones of increased excellence. The bees will take the labor of hybridising on themselves, as there are few other flowers in bloom at the time the gooseberry is in flower.

JAMES DOUGALL.

Rosebank, 10 August, 1850.

IS THE EARTH FULL OF SEEDS?

This question introduced a paragraph in yesterday's Journal. In 1845 while waiting at the foot of the White Face Peak of the Adirondac, for the clouds to remove from the summit, a fire broke out in the woods on the eastern slope of the mountain, and soon this gigantic mountain was wrapped in a sheet of flame. The trees and every combustible substance on the surface was consumed, and the thin covering of loose earth (about a foot in thickness) on the rocks was calcined by the heat. About three years afterward, I again visited the mountain, and found the burnt district a vast field of blueberry bushes. During the fruit season, more than two thousand bushels

of blueberries were gathered in this field for the Montreal market.

About forty years ago, the extensive barrens, lying between the Cumberland and Green River, in Kentucky, were covered with high grass, strawberries, and wild flowers. Among the latter, the morning glory. Every autumn, when the grass had become dry, it was fired either by hunters or from the camp fires of flitters. I have seen a fire many miles in length traversing these barrens with the speed of a race horse. No trees could grow here, but the grass resprouted and appeared to gather new life from the fire. Since the barrens have become settled, the autumn fires have been prevented, and it is now a thickly wooded district. Chestnut, oak, and hickory have sprung up, and when I saw the first early growth, it looked like one vast nursery, bounded on all side by the horizon.

In my examination of the extensive plains lying between Lake Ontario and the river Ottawa, I found that districts of pine timber, which had been swept by the flames, were supplied with a new growth of hardwood in place of the pine. Near the borders of Lake Champlain, on the western side, farmers cultivate blueberry bushes; they pile brush on the ground laid out for the berry field, set fire to the brush and burn it, and the next year the blueberry bushes spring up in abundance.

These facts bear witness to the harmonies of nature, and give evidence of the fertility of our beautiful earth.

The most ancient account of our earth, makes mention of the *"grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself upon the earth."*

The "fireweed" is well known among farmers. This weed is planted by the fire. The place where a coal pit has been burnt, may be easily distinguished by the luxuriance of its products.

When Kotzebue was in the far Northern seas, he landed upon an Island covered with grass. His men in making an excavation found that this Island was a mass of ice, and that the loose earth in which the grass was growing, was not six inches in thickness.

In one of the Northern Lakes, I found the "Lungwort," as large as a teacup, growing on the bare granite rock, with a stem not larger than a common knitting needle, and only a quarter of an inch in length.

I carefully examined a vine which I was cultivating, and when its tendrils were moving in search of an object to cling to, I placed a little stick near it, but at the opposite point from that toward which the vegetable hand was reaching. In an hour after, when I reexamined it, the tendril had turned about, and was winding around the stick.

There is life in everything. The earth is full of life, and it is full of seeds, and they were planted by the hand of Him who made the world.—E. M., in *Journal of Commerce*.