

PROPAGATION AND PRUNING OF CURRANTS.

SIR,—After reading the article with above title in January number, I thought it might interest your readers to have a short sketch of our plan of currant growing. We commence by making our cuttings (either in the fall or early in the spring), cutting them 4 to 6 inches long, these we bury in sand for a few weeks so that they may form a callous. When ready to set, we mark out a furrow deep enough so that we can cover the entire cutting excepting the top bud. We find that cuttings set in this manner will usually throw up one strong thrifty cane, and such a plant we consider the best possible plant for permanent setting in the field. We then set 7 x 7 ft., and instead of pruning to a tree form, we aim to grow a strong thrifty bush that will renew itself from the roots.

Every year we cut out (either in the fall or the following spring) all crooked or weakly young growth, and if any old canes show evidence of disease, they are

taken out also. A weakly side arm is often removed, but main canes are never shortened in. We find that every bush has its own individuality, and it is a harder task to tell just how to trim a currant bush than it is to trim it after you see the bush. We would aim to have from 8 to 10 good strong canes to each bush. If planted closer together than we recommend, it will very likely be best not to exceed 6 or 7. As the bush grows older remove one or two of the oldest canes each year, and leave the same number of the strongest of the new growth. You are thus renewing your bush with young vigorous wood each year. The best of the young growth removed can be used for cuttings for growing new plants.

The currant is one of the easiest fruits to grow, and also one of the most neglected.

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PRUNING CURRANTS.

IN dealing with currants the red and white need similar treatments as regards pruning, but this treatment is in no wise similar to that suitable for the gooseberry. Suppose the bush is in fruiting form, that is, in good cropping condition, the best portion of the young shoots need annual removal, with this exception, that where they are needed to fill up spaces then they should be shortened to, say, 5 in. or 6 in., and close to a bud. In removing all useless lateral shoots up the stem see that a short spur is left, as the fruit is produced from these spurs the following year. This, with the removal of all old

wood and thinning out the spurs when they are crowded, is about all that can be said on this subject. These bushes should also be set as advised for gooseberries, and in the autumn the young shoots are usually cut back to two inches. In pruning the black currant, the plan adopted is almost the same as with gooseberries, but the former does not need such free and vigorous cutting, the growth being much less in comparison. It is important that all dead wood be taken out each year, and the shoots and branches be thinned to let in the light. It will do good also to have all unproductive branches or wood