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The Culture of Old Country Gooseberries

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I was in eighteen hundred and ninety-five that I first thought of growing gooseberries in Canada, but as I was told by everyone to whom I spoke concerning the matter that I would be troubled with mildew and would perhaps be unable to grow them, I started on a small scale. I sent to Scotland and obtained twelve plants. I met with such success with these that three or four years later I purchased about one hundred and ninety more plants from the same company. I received these plants late in the fall, and so was forced to wait till spring before planting them out. Nevertheless, I did not lose one. My method of keeping them over the winter was by putting them in the cellar and covering the roots with soil. Since this time I have grown my own plants for increase.

My patch is on a southerly slope; the soil being a heavy clay loam, which is naturally well drained. The last two features are essential to success. I once tried to grow some berries on light soil, but had poor results, being troubled with mildew. Good drainage is necessary for almost every crop, and gooseberries are no exception.

I plant the bushes so that the rows are five feet apart, and the bushes three

feet apart in the rows. I plant the bush as follows:

A hole is dug, and a considerable amount of well rotted manure is placed at the bottom. Soil is then spread over this, upon which the roots and root fibres are carefully spread out in a natural position. Soil is now spread over the roots and another layer of the manure put on and finally the hole is filled with earth. This method has given me the best results.

After the patch has been set out, I do not think that too much cultivating can be done from spring till fall. If the bushes are arranged as described, most of the cultivating can be done with a horse, so that the work is materially lessened.

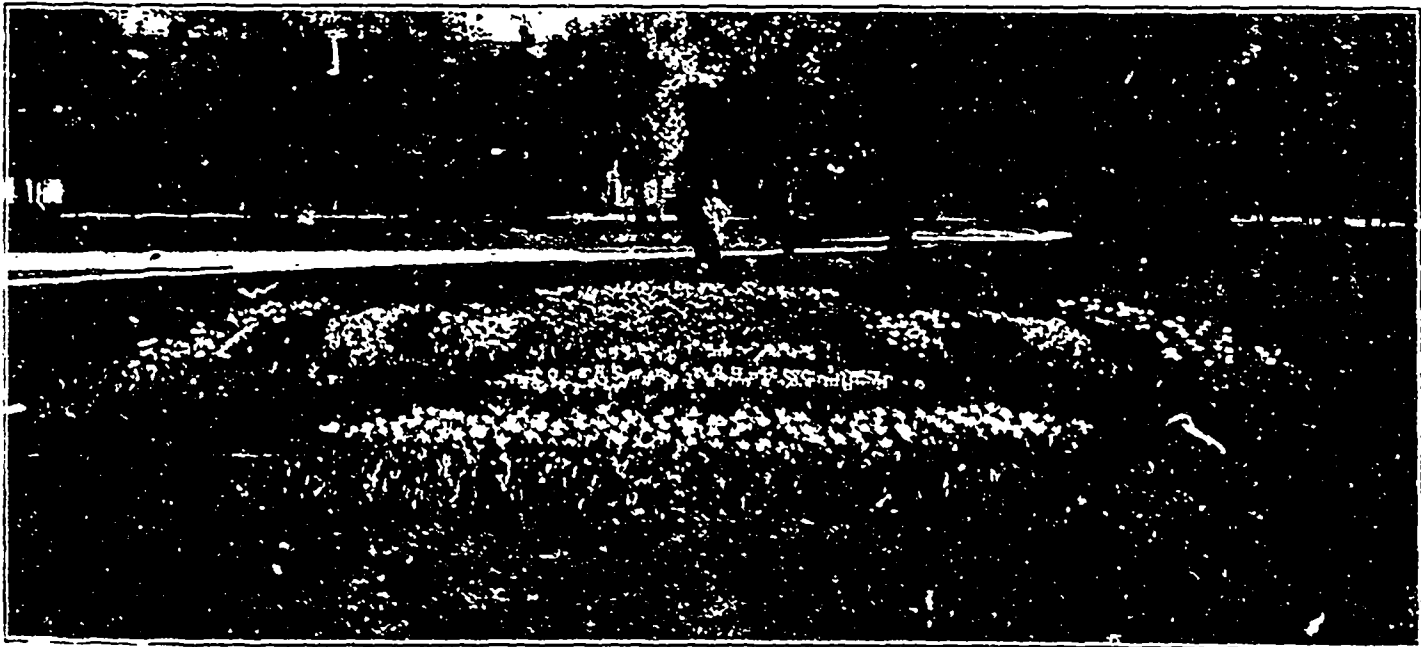
PRUNING

It is best to do all the pruning in the fall. All the old wood should be removed except when the new growth has not been sufficient to warrant this. I consider that it is best to prune so that four shoots are left, each one coming directly out from the roots, thus giving the bush type of plant. This form, I think, is better than the tree type, in which the shoots are allowed to come from a single stalk, which alone comes from the roots. In the former all the old wood can be

removed while in the latter the old stalk has necessarily to be left. The advantage of this is readily seen when it is remembered that the largest and best berries grow on, and are produced by, the new wood.

Fall is the best time to carry on the work of propagation. The method which has given me the best results is as follows: The year's growth, which it is desired to use for this purpose, is laid down upon the ground, covered with manure and then with soil. This causes roots to grow where a bud would otherwise have appeared. These roots are now cut off with a fair length of the wood, and the whole is then planted. If the propagation work is carried on late in the fall no shoots appear until spring, which does not give as good results as doing the work early in the autumn.

Let me again emphasize that I believe it absolutely necessary that gooseberries should be grown on heavy, well-drained soil. Following the methods I have outlined, I have met with gratifying success and have never been troubled with mildew. The berries have been not only delicious in flavor, but have also been of such a quality as to stand shipping. This is indicated by the fact that I have



[Spring's Welcome Harbingers of the Gladsome Summer. Fine Tulip Beds in the Normal School Grounds, Toronto, Ont.]