

Garden and Orchard.

Papers for Amateur Fruit Growers.

X.

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CURRANTS.

Dame Nature has wisely arranged the succession of fruits. With a little care in the planting of his garden and orchard, the farmer may have fresh fruit for his table the whole year round. Only yesterday (6th June) we used the last of our Spy apples, and to-day we pick our first strawberries. And then when the mild acid of the strawberry and the delicious sweet of the cherry are beginning to weary the palate, we have a decided change in the pure tart of the currant, just in the very hottest part of the summer, when its cooling juices are most appreciated.

Last season we finished with our strawberries on the 14th of July, and on the same day shipped our first currants; in 1884 it was the seventh, and in 1883 on the twelfth of the same month; thus closely does the one fruit follow the other.

I have already in these pages treated of the most desirable kinds of currants, and recommend the *Red Cherry* as an old and very valuable one; but if neglected and allowed to run to wood, if it is not well pruned and well cultivated, and if it is grown on very light, dry soil, it will produce very little fruit. Give it good cultivation on rather heavy soil; cut back all but five or six shoots every spring, in March, and shorten in those left to bear; scatter plenty of wood ashes about them, and stop the growth of new wood on bearing canes in June or about first of July, that all the strength may go to the fruit; and I venture to guarantee in consequence not only monstrous currants that will astonish the neighbors, but also an abundant crop. But if such attention cannot be given, it is safer to plant such sure bearers as *Victoria*, *La Versailles* or *White Grape*.

The two new rivals of the *Cherry Currant*, viz., *Fay's Prolific* and *Moore's Ruby*, are commended as being better bearers, but in size they are both its inferior.

By the way, let no one be deceived into supposing he is getting some new variety when he buys the *Ruby Castle*. We notice it mentioned of late in some fruit reports, and in the catalogues of several nurserymen, as if it were something different from the old and well known *Victoria*, for which it is but another name.

The gathering of currants is easier than that of strawberries or cherries; indeed, it is quite a treat to be able to sit down on a stool, instead of breaking one's back stooping over strawberry vines, or risking one's neck climbing for cherries. If intended for market, the same care needs to be taken with currants as with cherries. Red and white currants need to be picked with their stems on, and every picker needs to be cautioned to handle them by the stems only, and thus avoid bruising the fruit. The twelve quart peach basket makes a very convenient package for use in shipping currants by express, using red leno as a covering.

White currants are not much in demand in the city markets, but the *Black Currants* usu-

ally sell at least one-third higher than the red. Indeed, if they did not, it would not pay to grow them for market, because the yield is much less, and from their scattered habit of fruit bearing the gathering is more expensive.

By reference to the *FARMER'S ADVOCATE* of last October, the reader will observe two kinds of black currants recommended, viz., *Black Naples* and *Lee's Prolific*. Connoisseurs assure us that the difference between these two kinds is best seen with the eyes shut, as it consists in point of flavor, respecting which the latter is quite the superior.

RASPBERRIES

ripen almost as early as currants. Our *Highland Hardy's* were ready last season on the 15th July, only one day later than the *Cherry Currant*; but the season of raspberries is longer, lasting at least a month, with a judicious selection of varieties. Thus the last of our *Cuthberts* were not shipped until the 15th of August, while the intervening season was filled with such kinds as *Clarke*, *Philadelphia*, *Naomi* and *Turner*; and such black as *Mammoth Cluster* and *Gregg*.

We still read a good deal in some horticultural works and papers about staking raspberry bushes, and in accordance with this advice, I have seen a great deal of money and time thrown away putting up posts and wire, or stakes, and tying up the bushes. A far better and more economical plan is cutting back the young growing stalks in July, for it not only saves expense, but it increases the yield of fruit. With a pair of hedge shears, or a sharp sickle, the work may be easily and quickly done.

Three or four shoots are as many as should be allowed to grow from each stool, and these should be topped at a height of three feet at most. As a result side branches will be produced in abundance, and the plants will grow stocky enough to stand alone.

These remarks are applicable alike to raspberry and blackberry plants.

THE STRAWBERRY PLANTATION

should not be neglected during the summer season, because upon its treatment this summer largely depends the crop of next season. As soon as the plant has perfected one crop of fruit, it sets to work to prepare for another by the formation of new fruit buds.

While therefore this work of storing up the elements of fruit production is in progress, the grower should use every means to make it most effective. The matted rows should be mercilessly narrowed down, and have a good top dressing of well rotted manure; the runners should be kept cut off that the strength of the plant may go into the fruit or buds; and the spaces between the rows should receive thorough cultivation. With such care as this bestowed upon such productive kinds as the *Wilson* and *Crescent*, the best of results may be expected.

A great compliment has recently been paid to the ladies of the United States. The rage for birds for ornaments in hats has caused the destruction of many millions of these innocent creatures to supply the demands of fashion, and entomologists and ornithologists have pointed out the fact that this has been the cause of the rapid increase of those insects destructive to vegetation. It is said that the demand for bird ornamentation has so rapidly fallen off that those milliners who have paid no attention to newspaper reports are about being ruined on account of having purchased an over-supply. Common sense has thus won a victory over the Czar of fashion.

Ripening and Preservation of Fruits.

A paper on the above subject was recently read by Hon. Marshall P. Wilder, President of the American Pomological Society, before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, from which we make the following extracts:

The ripening of fruit depends on saccharine fermentation. This is followed by the vinous and acetous fermentation. To prevent these and preserve fruit in all its beauty, freshness and flavor, the temperature must be uniform and kept below the degree at which the fermentation or ripening process commences.

Late fruits may remain on the trees until severe frosts are feared, but should be gathered with great care. Summer pears should be picked some days before the ripening process commences. A summer pear ripened upon the trees is generally inferior. The process of ripening on the tree, which is the natural one, seems to act upon the fruit for the benefit of the seed, as it tends to a formation of woody fibre and farina. Pears which become mealy and rot at the core if left on the tree to ripen, are juicy, melting and delicious when ripened in the house.

The most common method for the preservation and long keeping of fruits for small establishments and private use is the construction of houses with walls of non-conducting materials and with well-drained and thoroughly cemented cellars. Fruit houses may be thus constructed at a moderate expense, in which fruits may be kept in good flavor during the entire season. The *Anjou pear* has been exhibited as late as the month of May from a retarding house.

A fruit merchant of this city says there is no perceptible difference between a cold storage house controlled by chemicals and one where ice is used. Each has its advocates. One great secret of success begins in the state in which the fruit goes to the cooler. It should be before any sound specimen begins to show ripeness. No single fruit should be stored that has fallen to the ground, for, however perfect it may seem, sooner or later that dropped fruit will tell its own story and often cause the decay of the whole package. Fruits intended for cold storage houses should go directly from the orchard.

The cause of so many failures in storing pears, for instance, is that the fruit is often bought of different parties, much of it so imperfectly packed that it is never fit to go to the cooler. Perhaps it has been gathered weeks previous, or carried long distances, and becomes more or less bruised and rendered unfit for keeping in this way.

The fruit house of Ellwanger & Barry, at Rochester, N. Y., is a building where walls and floor are lined with straw and boards, with cellars underneath for storing fruit. When the mercury goes 10° or 12° below zero, 3° or 4° of frost get in, but the boxes and barrels are all covered with straw mats and are never reached by the frost. When the late fall and winter pears are gathered they are put in bushel or half-bushel boxes, and placed on the north side of a building outside of the fruit house and protected. They are kept there as long as the weather will permit. By that time the room has got thoroughly cooled and ready to receive the fruit. They have both pears and apples there now in perfection.

A Michigan fruit grower has a fruit house constructed on the cold air system without the use of ice. He is able to keep his house within 3° of freezing for five months, and when the thermometer outside changed 60° in twenty-four hours the change in the fruit room was imperceptible. Such results are effected by building a house with triple walls, fifteen inches in thickness, ten inches of which is filled with sawdust.

D. B. Flint said that he once had a crop of very fine *Easter Beurre* pears which were frozen hard on the tree, but he sprinkled them with water, so as to thaw them slowly, after which they hung on the tree for two weeks. They were then packed carefully in a box and