

CROSS BETWEEN BLACK CURRANT AND GOOSEBERRY.

A hybrid between the black currant and gooseberry was described in the "Gardener's Chronicle," September 3, 1892. We reproduce the illustration that accompanied that description. Another plant presents some interesting features in which it differs from the for-

leaves, marbled with white, whilst B. Comtesse de Louise Erdody has silvery leaves veined with green and margined with purple lakes. The most usual methods of propagating foliage begonias are by division of the plants and propagation from the leaves. Division of the plants is most conveniently carried out at potting time, September and October being the best months, the fleshy stems being carefully

leaves must be pegged or pinned into the soil with wire pins, or small pebbles may be placed here and there on the leaf to keep it in position. Plunge the pan in cocoanut fibre refuse, cover with a sheet of glass, and place in a temperature of not less than 65 degrees. The leaves must be well shaded from the sun, and the soil be kept nicely moist and, in time, young plants will be produced at each cut made in the ribs of the leaves, and when they are large enough to handle, as Fig. 4, they should be carefully lifted and separated, and potted singly into small pots.



Hybrid between Black Currant and Gooseberry.

mer hybrid. The fruits are somewhat similar except that in the 1892 hybrid they were somewhat hairy (though this character was accidentally omitted in the figure), but whereas in that specimen the general resemblance was rather towards the currant, the new hybrid is decidedly inclined to the habit of the gooseberry. This is shown by the smaller leaves, and especially by the presence of numerous prickles or thorns, which were absent in the former examples. The green shoot has an unmistakable odour of the black currant and the flavour of the latter is also perceptible in the fruits, which are very little larger than good-sized currants.

separated, and each potted up into a four or five inch pot. August is one of the most suitable times to propagate begonias from leaves, the operation being most interesting and instructive. Sound, fully-matured leaves should be selected, and be prepared by turning the underside upwards and making a cut half through the main or thicker ribs or veins just be-

GLIANTHUS.

The gorgeous clusters of bloom which our native parrot beak plants present at this season is one of the features of colonial gardens. There are two varieties of the red flower, viz: Glianthus puniceus and C. puniceus magnifica; the former is the one most familiar in our gardens, the latter is said to be an improvement, foliage more handsome, and the colour of the flowers deeper. We have grown both varieties, but cannot see much difference; the flowers certainly are a shade deeper, but we see no difference in the foliage. The white variety lately introduced is certainly very showy; it is a vigorous grower, and the flowers are creamy white. We find it does best treated as a climber, and trained against a wall.

A PLEA FOR THE THRUSH AND THE STARLING.

We have heard it asserted that thrushes and starlings do damage on the farm, and in the garden, but we have yet to learn in what way they damage anything of value. It is amusing to watch the nimble thrush in early morning getting the shell broken off a big shellback snail. If a small stone is placed near the haunts of the shellback, you will soon find beside it a lot of broken shells. The thrush grabs the

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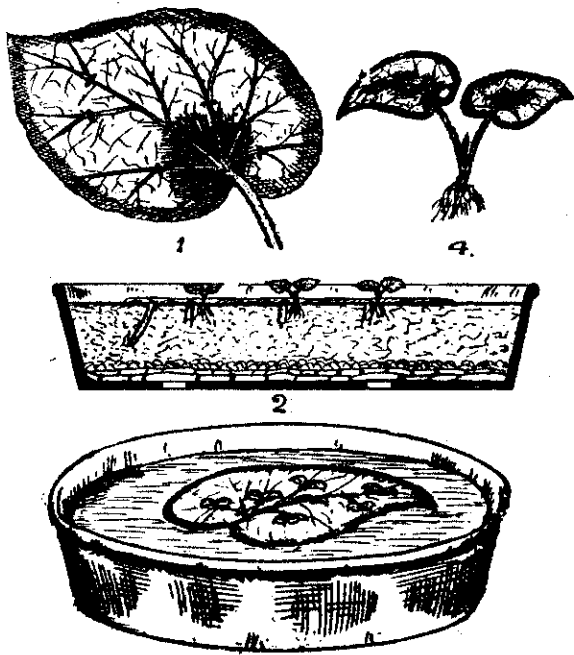
CULTURE AND PROPAGATION.

Begonia Rex, from which many beautifully marked and highly decorative foliage begonias originate, was introduced into this country from Assam, and forms a most useful subject for ornamental purposes. This class of begonia does not require much heat, from 60 to 65 degrees during summer and from 50 to 55 degrees during late autumn and winter being sufficient.

Although many foliage plants require abundance of sunshine to bring them to perfection foliage begonias must be grown in partial shade, as any great amount of direct sunshine quickly injures the leaves, and gives them a shrivelled appearance. The plants do well either in pots or planted out on rockwork, but perfect drainage must be provided in any case, whilst a free, open, and gritty soil is necessary, compost consisting of equal parts loam and peat pulled to pieces by hand, half a part of good leaf soil, half a part of thoroughly decayed manure, and a sixth of a part of silver sand and charcoal being suitable.

Whilst growing, foliage begonias require plenty of moisture at the roots, and periodical doses of liquid manure after the plants become well established are also beneficial during the summer; during the winter the roots must be kept comparatively dry, very little water being necessary.

Begonia Rex, the parent plant, has leaves of dark green of metallic lustre ornamented by a zone or ring of silvery white. The following forms a brief list of other really good varieties of foliage begonias: Princeaux Charles of Denmark has leaves which, when fully developed, are a brilliant carmine with silvery horse-shoe and carmine margin. Louise Choson, a handsome and distinct type of begonia, has dark foliage, the leaves being a very dark maroon, with crimson horse-shoe markings. Begonia Eudora is a very pretty plant, having bronze leaves freely spotted with pink and white. B. Charles Hovey has dark green



Propagating Foliage Begonias.

low where the smaller and the main ribs form a junction, as shows by the black lines on Fig. 1 of the accompanying sketches. Several cuts may be made in each leaf, and from each out the ripe sap in the ribs will form a callus or foundation for the formation of roots.

A well-drained shallow pan should be prepared and filled with sandy compost consisting of equal parts peat, loam, and sand, the surface being made firm and level, and then watered, allowed to drain, and afterwards covered with fine sand. The prepared leaf or leaves should be laid on the surface, the cut or underside downwards, the leaf stalk being inserted in the soil as shown in Fig. 2. Each cut portion of the ribs must be in contact with the soil, and to ensure this the

snail by the head and pounds his shell on the stone until "peeled." One gentleman asserts that where thrushes build their nests in apple trees the apples will be free from Codlin moth. If this is so, we feel sure the thrush will be protected; at all events, we have no grievance against him, and never destroy or allow to be destroyed any nests. Starlings, we know, are one of our best friends in the garden, and goodness knows what we should do, or where our plants would be were it not for the good work done by great flocks of starlings. We have observed this bird for many years, and never yet knew of any authentic case of his departure from the path of rectitude. By all means protect our thrushes and starlings.