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## **BANANA CULTURE.**

### **The Splendid Fruit Grows Naturally in Florida—How to Cultivate.**

[After three paragraphs about general cultivation of banana plants, the article addresses the Shakers and their experience with growing them].

As stated in last week's *St. Cloud Tribune*, the Shakers in their pretty little settlement have given considerable attention to banana raising, and they find that it is a fruit which offers fair returns for the labor and expense involved. The experiment was started by planting about one-quarter of an acre of muck land in which about 170 plant were set eight feet apart each way. As the plant in this latitude is hardy, the plants of course commenced growing right away, and in a little less than a year the first flowers appeared, and then the bananas. It is stated that the plants in this first experiment had, in that brief 12 months, attained a growth of stalk and foliage of nearly 20 feet, and having five and six giant plants in each hill. In January of that year there was a slight frost, and nearly all these large leaves were killed, but it was not long until new leaves began unfolding from the center stalk, and in less than two months the plants were just as big as ever. In a year and a half from the time of setting out the first plants, fine bunches of fruit were harvested, and these banana plants have been yielding ever since. The Shakers think that the "Hart's Choice" or "Lady Finger" banana is the variety best suited for this section of Florida, as it is very hardy and the fruit is of superior flavor. It is a dwarf variety and does not produce so much fruit to the bunch as the Martinique, for instance, but it is thought that the quantity is abundantly compensated for in quality. To the real banana lover there is no comparison to be made between the home-grown banana and that which is shipped from a distance. The shipped banana must necessarily be green and must ripen after the huge stalk is cut off. It is thought that banana growing will become one of the great industries of Florida with proper culture as a fruit venture.