

## FERTILIZING APPLE ORCHARDS.

Dr. Reynolds writes in the *American Agriculturist* showing the necessity of thoroughly enriching the ground about apple trees in order to grow fine fruit. He points out that the common method of placing manure on the surface of unploughed orchard ground, was of little benefit to the trees, because the roots of the grass absorbed most of the nutriment, and very little of it ever reached the roots of the trees. The only plan, without ploughing, would be to so thoroughly mulch the whole surface of the ground that the grass would be destroyed, and then the fertilizers could have some effect upon the apple trees. Of course, no one would think of seeding down a young orchard, it is therefore only an orchard that has reached bearing age that is under consideration. The great difficulty, in our opinion, in carrying out the doctor's plan of mulching, is to find material enough, unless for a very small orchard. When an orchard covers ten acres, or fifty acres of ground, it would be simply out of the question to provide mulch sufficient to keep down the grass. In such cases, the only possible plan we can see, to keep the orchard as it should be kept, is by frequent cultivation. At Maplehurst, where we have about one hundred acres of orchard to care for, we plough up in parts, working up one portion for two or three years, until the trees have reached a vigorous state, as a result of both cultivation and manure; and then seed it down to clover for two or three years, while another portion is undergoing the same treatment.

The question of fertilizers for the garden and orchard is one of the most perplexing that faces the ambitious fruit grower. Stable manure is perhaps the best of all for general application, but what farmer ever has any to spare for his apple orchard? He never has enough for his field crops, upon which so much of his labor is spent, how then could he spare any for his orchard, which shifts for itself. In most parts of the country, wood ashes may be had for a very little cost, and it is by this means alone that we have been able, so far, to solve this question. We find that by giving the trees which are being worked up, one half to a bushel each year during their turn of cultivation, the result will be evident for several years thereafter, and the fruit will be larger, of better quality and of a better color.

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THE PARKER EARLE STRAWBERRY.

OUR colored plate this month represents one of the latest competitors for the coveted honor of being heralded as the "coming strawberry." It is named in honor of the president of the Illinois Horticultural Society, Mr. Parker Earle, of Cobden, Illinois.