

the trunk where the stem socket is, a piece of cloth is sewed to make a pliable and close fit round the stem when the picker is clasped together.

When the currants are ripe, adjust the picker as high as possible on the stem under the top. Around the lower part of the stem, immediately under the picker, clasp or wind a piece of thick felt; hold it with the left hand, and in the right use a wooden mallet with felt tacked on each end. Gently tap the stem all around, and watch the currants fall. If ripe, scarcely one will be found on the bush. Unclass the picker, let down the legs and empty the contents into a bag or basket. That's picking currants by an improved method, and one that will do away with all hand-picking. If people will let them get ripe, they sell better, are larger, and bring the same price as earlier, as black currants seldom vary in price.

As the fruit comes from the picker, a large amount of dead leaves, stems, etc., will drop also, which necessitates hand-cleaning to make it salable. This is all easily overcome if one has an old fanning mill. Take out all the sieves but the screen; one inch above it tack a canvas, or, better, make a canvas screen. If the currants are large, use the bean sieve; put this as near the hopper bottom as possible. Under the mill where the cleaned fruit comes out, spread a sheet or canvas to catch currants, and pick them up for basketing. Fill the hopper the same as with grain, turn gently, and watch results. This is another labor-saving job accomplished. Why pay pickers 20 cents a basket for picking and cleaning a 10-quart basket, when you can save that much, do ten times as much as one man, and grade your currants, too, if you choose?—R. N. Yorker.

Pruning Fruit Trees.—In pruning fruit trees, attention has to be given to the manner in which the particular kind bears its fruit. The cherry and the pear both bear their fruit on short spurs, and in trimming, therefore, the effort should be to produce a large quantity of healthy fruit spurs. Summer pruning does this admirably. The branches that we want to remain as leading shoots should not be touched; but the weaker ones may be pinched back, about mid-summer, one foot or two-thirds of their growth. This will induce the swelling of a number of buds that will produce flowers instead of branches, and in this way fruit spurs can be obtained on comparatively young trees; but with such kinds as the grape vine, the fruit is borne on the branches of last year's growth, so that the effort should be to throw all the vigor possible into those growing branches that we want to bear fruit the next season. To do this, we pinch back the shoots that we do not want to extend; or even pull the weak shoots out altogether. A little pruning is then necessary, in the winter, to shorten back these strong, bearing canes, or to prune out altogether the weaker ones that we check by pinching back during the growing season.—Meehans' Monthly.