

ning, it is we repeat far worse than no pruning at all. One thing is certain, that the more Apple trees are pruned the less they bear ; and the same may be said of pear trees.

The author of one of our best practical works, having described how an Apple tree should be managed for the first three or four years, remarks, "after this nothing more will be necessary than to look them (the trees) over from time to time, *cutting out carefully any superabundant branches* that may appear, particularly those which have a tendency to injure the proper figure of the head, or are likely to become stronger than the rest : these latter, if suffered to remain, will injure any description of tree, whether it be a standard, an espalier, or whether it be trained against a wall. This is the best advice that can be given to those who have the management of Apple trees in an orchard. It is like the worthy Mr. GASSÉ's instructions to "let them alone." But our Suffolk correspondent's trees are in a state of ruin. They seem to be like the Devonshire trees, which Mr. BELFIELD describes "with heads tangled and matted together so as to set both sun and air at defiance ; live wood struggling for existence amongst the dead, and all hoary with Moss and premature old age.

With such trees the pruning knife and saw must be used unsparingly ; and if that is what our Suffolk correspondent's gardener means by "scientifically" we agree with him. Not that there is much science in the operation. The *first* thing to do is to cut down to the quick every dead branch, limb or spur ; they can do no good, and are mischievous on account of the interruption they offer to the sun and air, which are as necessary to the tree as to the gardener. Until that has been done live wood should remain untouched. *Secondly*, as soon as the dead wood is gone, and the gardener can see *distinctly* what has to work upon, he should prune out every shoot that whips or crosses or rubs against another, so as to leave plenty of room between the shoots ; a foot is not too much.

In doing this the weakest shoots should be removed. *Thirdly*, all the thinning having been done, the end of each branch should be stopped by removing more or less of it according to its strength. *Fourthly*, after the stopping all loose bark and Moss should be scraped off the branches and main stem with the blade of an old hoe or some such blunt edge, and the scrapings should be burnt. In this way alone can insects with their eggs be destroyed with certainty. Such scrapings can do no harm ; and in addition to the removal of insects it enables the tree to breathe more freely, a very important matter, for the living bark is as much a portion of an Apple tree's lung as the leaves are. This done, skill can go no further, and it is only necessary afterwards to leave the tree to its vital powers ; watching however how the new shoots grow, and cutting out from time to time all such as in any way whip, chafe, or cross each other.

In these remarks the state of the soil is not noticed. If however there is any doubt about its being thoroughly drained, that also must be carefully looked to, for no apple trees can retain their health in waterlogged ground. Neither can they prosper when soil is exhausted of all its nutritive matter. When that is the case weak manure, such as plenty of decayed leaf-mould, burnt weeds, or any similar material should be employed. Strong ammoniacal manure is to be avoided.—*Gardener's Chronicle*.