

thin fruit in the blossom. I think that is one of the most important questions we have before us in regard to fruit growing. Our plum trees and many of our trees set two crops instead of one, and very often the tree is ruined by growing too heavy a crop. If we could control it in the blossom I think it would be a grand thing for fruit growers.

Mr. WHITNEY: I think it is not a very difficult matter with one pair of proper shears to go through the tree and clip out certain spaces just as little as of the twig as possible, just the blossom, and a man would go through a large number in a day. There is a great advantage in thinning the blossoms instead of the fruit, because if you let the fruit grow to the size of a walnut or hickory nut it so far exhausts the tree and exhausts the fruit buds that are then for ming for the next season; and it seems to me if it costs more to do it in the blossom that it would pay, because it would be less exhaustive to the tree. I think that would be a strong argument.

Mr. GRAHAM: Would it not be well to have extra pruning? Has it not been stated that to produce a blossom was very hard upon the tree, even as bad as if it was killed by frost?

Prof. MACOUN: The thinning would consist in killing the blossoms. You do not know beforehand what kind of a crop you are going to get. Sometimes flowers set very well, but you do not know how the fruit will turn out.

The CHAIRMAN: Very often the heavier the bloom the less the fruit.

Mr. PATTISON (Grimsby): I have always understood that it was the ripening of the seed that was the strain on the tree.

Mr. CASTON: This was advocated both in the United States and here in our horticultural journals. Perhaps Mr. Powell can give us something.

Mr. POWELL: The question of thinning has been very carefully experimented in New York State, particularly at our experiment stations. So far the effort has been confined largely to thinning the fruit, and while the expense is considerable, yet in every experiment that has been tried it has proven to be an exceedingly profitable operation. When the fruit is set, then you have the entire control in your hands. You can detect much of the defective fruit, and with the same clippers or shears that you would prune the blossoms you can prune away the defective fruit and leave your finest fruit upon the tree. There, I think, would be the advantage in pruning away the fruit rather than the blossom. The point that was made by the gentleman in relation to pruning is a good one. I think we fail very much indeed in sufficient pruning of our trees. By judiciously cutting out each year all the different varieties we can maintain a better uniformity all through the trees in the distribution of the fruit upon the tree. Now we are carrying too much wood. There is too much vitality expended in carrying wood upon our orchards. We could save by judicious pruning, thinning out, more properly cutting out, and thereby reducing the expense of thinning out, by a systematic judicious plan of cutting away the wood. I think one reason of our failure in plums is that they set altogether more than they can possibly carry. Now, if we would reduce perhaps from a quarter to a third of the wood in each of our plum trees we would save that very heavy drain on the trees, and we would get stronger, more vigorous, healthy trees that would carry a much finer quality of fruit. I think that the judicious pruning of the wood is one of the first and most valuable things to do. Then after that go through with the pruning shears and take out as far as possible all defective fruit. (Hear, hear).

Mr. TWEEDLE (Fruitland): I agree very heartily with the remarks of Mr. Powell on that point. I believe that the great amount of surface at the time of the bloom requires a great deal of vitality to keep it in perfection and set its fruit; and I think we have an old saying that the heavier the bloom the less fruit we have, and experience seems to bear that out in my case. Last year I