THINNING FRUIT.

S ANDSTEN (Maryland Exp. Sta.) has been conducting experiments in thinning, and in Bulletin 82 calls the attention of fruit growers to its importance. He says it pays to thin peaches and plums after the June drop, the former to not less than five inches apart and the latter two or three inches apart. Apples and pears should be thinned when about the size of small crab apples, leaving the fruit four or five inches apart.

Among the advantages to be gained are more regular crops, stronger and more shapely trees, less disease, and larger, better colored, more uniformly ripened and more saleable fruit.

These excellent results, however, need not be expected by the fruit grower who neglects the other requisites to successful fruit growing, such as pruning, spraying, fertilizing and cultivation.

That even a worthless orchard can be made to pay by attention to these details has been proved by Mr. Tweedle, of Fruitland; and by many others. Card (Rhode Island Sta.) has issued a bulletin showing the excellent results of three years' work on less than an acre of orchard. Though previously worthless, the third year's crop of apples sold for about \$80; showing that few parts of the farm can be made to pay better than a well managed apple orchard.

THINNING PEACHES AND PLUMS.

PROF. BEACH, of Geneval has made some experiments in the thinning of peaches and plums, and has not met with such results as would lead him to advise it in commercial orchards. Thinning, he thinks, should constitute the last resort after details of fertilizing, cultivating, draining, pruning, ctc., have been attended to. He thinks, indeed, that pruning is the most economical method of thinning the crop. The professor should mention the varieties treated; for this would, no doubt, be the key of the problem. We have seen too many experiments tried in thinning out the fruit of over-loaded Alexander peaches to doubt its importance. The size of the fruit remaining was doubled, and consequently sold at a proportionately higher price, but the number of baskets gathered was as many from the thinned trees, as from similar trees not thinned.

Prof. Beach does, however, gran: "that systematic thinning of fruit, combined with skillful care in other directions, may materially strengthen the tendency of the tree to bear annually."

THÎNNING THAT PAID.

A FTER all facts are the best proofs, and these are constantly accumulating in evidence of the advantages to be gained by the enterprising fruit grower by judicious thinning. Of course it will not pay in every instance, and no rule will fit all cases. A young vigorous tree will carry a much heavier load of fruit without its size being lessened than an older tree, while on poor soils even close thinning will fail to produce large sized fruit.

The following effect of thinning was observed by A. T. Jordan (Amer. Agr. 1902) on two trees set in 1897. The set of fruit on one tree was 862 peaches, and on the other tree 852. From the first tree 69.5 per cent. of the total set of fruit was removed, ·leaving to mature 263 peaches. From the second tree 31.9 per cent. of the fruit was taken, leaving to mature 580 peaches. From the tree which had been most heavily thinned 2.83 baskets of fruit were obtained. The average weight of the peaches from this tree was 4.48 ounces, the price offered per basket by the leading grocers was \$1.00, and the total value of the peaches from the tree was \$2.83. From the tree less severely thinned 3.92 baskets of fruit were obtained.