

Horticulture.

FRUIT AND ITS PROSPECTS.

Contrary to all appearances and anticipations, the fruit crop is a failure in the whole Northern and Eastern States. The period of blossoming promised abundance, but an unpleasant and cold east wind followed—the stamens failed to develop the pollen—impregnation did not take place—and nearly the whole proved an abortion. This cause of failure only applies to the apple. The peach crop is shortened from a cause, called the *Curl*, which showed itself three or four years ago, and has been gaining until this year it has become an alarming disease to the lovers and growers of this delicious fruit.

At the period of blossoming, when the leave has nearly attained its full size, the fleshy covering commences enlarging without a corresponding growth of the frame work or centre stems and ribs; the result is a folding and corrugation of the web or covering until it is twice as large as it should be, and very much thickened. Circulation and elimination ceases, the whole leaf mildews and falls off, and if there is no dormant buds on the limb or at the terminal point, it gums and perishes, and in most cases the peach in its incipient state is lost before the new leaf is able to carry on the vital process.

Many persons are disposed to attribute this disease to insect depredation, as they do every disturbance of the functions of all fruit and vegetable productions; yet in all cases the insects will be found to be the natural enemies of the plant, or the effect and not the cause.

We understand the *Curl* has more or less affected the peach over the whole continent, but less at the South and West.—*Rural New Yorker*.

LOW HEADS FOR FRUIT TREES.

Some writer, no matter who, gives the following recommendations for the shape of fruit trees. They are commended to all who raise such trees.

It is said to be much better to grow fruit trees with their heads and branches near the ground, than to have them branching over head, for various reasons.

1st. The sun, which is, perhaps, in our hot and dry summers, the cause of more disease and destruction in fruit trees than all other diseases together, is kept from almost literally scalding the sap, as it does in long, naked trunks and limbs. The limbs and leaves of a tree should always effectually shade the trunk and keep it cool. The leaves only should have plenty of sun and light: they can bear and profit by it. If trees were suffered to branch out low, say one or two feet from the ground, we should hear much less of "fire blight," "frozen sap blight," black spots, and the like.

2nd. The ground is looser, moister, and cooler under a low branching tree than under a high one. Grass and weeds do not grow a hundredth part so rank and readily, and mulching becomes unnecessary.

3rd. The wind has not half the power to rack, and twist, and break the tree and shake off the fruit; a matter of no inconsiderable consequence.

4th. The trees will be much longer lived, and more prolific, beautiful, and profitable.

5th. The trees are more easily rid of destructive insects, the fruit is much less damaged by falling, and the facilities for gathering it are much greater; there is less danger of climbing, and less of breaking limbs.

6th. The trees require less pruning, scraping, and washing, and the roots are protected from the plough, which is too often made to tear and mutilate them.

These seem to be indisputable facts, sufficient to silence all objections. An apple or cherry tree is nearly twice as valuable for shooting out low, near the ground, especially on the south-west sides.

SAP OF PLANTS.

Knight teaches that the sap of plants *ascends* through the whitewood, and *descends* down the bark, depositing the matter of the new wood in its descent, but without its becoming changed into it. That the matter absorbed from the soil and air is converted into the true sap or blood of the plant *wholly in the leaves*, from which it is discharged into the bark, and that such portions of it as are not expended in the generation of new wood and bark, join, during the Spring and Autumn, the ascending current in the wood, into which it passes by the medullary process. As the Autumn approaches, however, and the ascending sap is no longer expended in generating new leaves and blossoms, or young shoots, that fluid concentrates in a concrete state in the sap wood of the tree, as in the tuber of the potato, and the bulb of the tulip, and joints of the grasses, whence it is washed out in the Spring, to form a new layer of bark or wood, to form leaves, and feed the blossoms and fruit.

STRAWBERRIES. — Cutting of the runners of Strawberry plants during summer has been pretty generally recommended by gardening authors. This, I believe to be an error in practice, and should therefore be discontinued and that they be not removed until they have completely struck root, or even afterwards. If cut off too soon, the plants, from causes only to be understood by a thorough knowledge of vegetable physiology, will continue to send out their stolens or runners, to the great detriment of the parent plant; whereas, if left on until that they have become well rooted and established, or if left on (if not wanted for new plantations) till autumn, the old plants instead of being weakened as heretofore often supposed, will be materially strengthened and improved.—*Fragaria*.

TREES and vines which are kept the cleanest, bear the best; like the human body, the pores of their skin become clogged with dirt, and retain gases which should escape. Trees, the bark of which has been scraped and scrubbed, become more thriving and more vigorous.