

ORCHARD PLANTING AND CULTIVATION.

PREPARING THE SOIL!

One of the best methods for preparing the soil for an Orchard is to turn under a heavy dressing of barn-yard manure on a strong sward the spring previous to planting, this to be followed by potatoes or other root crop, and the following Autumn the land to be trench ploughed as deep as teams and tools will permit. Having thus done the soil will be ready for planting trees—it being understood, however, that the land is thoroughly drained, naturally or otherwise. Should this not be the case the sooner it is attended to the better, as it must be remembered Fruit trees are not like Willows and cannot live in water—consequently care must be taken to get rid of all stagnant water, not only from the surface soil, but from the sub-soil, and this to be thoroughly done involves a heavy outlay in tile draining, which many persons desirous of planting trees feel they cannot afford. A more economical method, which, if not so thorough, has the merit of being tested with success, is the following:—Lay off the ground into divisions of the same width as the distances between the intended rows of trees, and in the direction of the natural drainage or slope of the field; then by repeated plowings, each time turning the furrows towards the centre, gather the soil into broad ridges, on the crown of which the trees must be placed. By this method we rapidly get rid of the surface water and also a portion of that from the sub-soil, and obtain a deep mellow soil to plant the trees in. This may truly be said to be at the expense of the remainder of the land for a time, but the hollows must eventually be converted into drains, and the cold sterile sub-soil, when improved by cultivation and the action of frost and manure, will become equally as good as the rest. This method is more especially adapted to land naturally level or nearly so with no great depth of surface soil. A second method which has been tried with success where the land is rolling and the soil deeper, is simply to trench, plow, or otherwise cultivate to the required depth up and down the hill, a narrow strip for each row of trees, thus enabling the planter to go on with his work at some future time and deepen the whole surface soil.