

The ground will be leveled off with a rake, and the lumps will bake slowly, and remain likely enough hard and impervious all summer, if the ground is not deeply worked again. When spading is done in very dry weather, it is not liable to the same objection in degree, yet it leaves the soil always more or less lumpy.

How different is it with the use of the fork. The spading fork is found of various forms in the shops. We prefer one of narrow tines, rather long and very thick, made of good steel. A good quality of steel is very important, for often a single tine striking a stone or stick has to take instantly the whole force of the blow or shove. The tines should be thick, a considerable prying power is often required: and they should be narrow, that the earth may be no more compressed than is necessary.

As a fork like this may be driven much deeper with the same force, it will lift the earth quite as well as a spade, and without packing it. If roots of trees, bulbs or anything of the kind are present, there is little probability that they will be injured, if care is used and the ground may be loosened sufficiently in many cases without lifting the earth at all, in a way to bear the roots.

The fork in fact may be used wherever the spade can be, and a shovel is not more desirable,—we do not claim for its superiority in shoveling sand or gravel, and it may be used in many places where a spade cannot be used. About trees, in raspberry, current or vine borders, especially, will the fork be found of incalculable service, and the spade should be banished forthwith.

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FRUIT PROSPECTS.

The past winter has been very severe upon fruit trees in this vicinity. Some old pears, which had successfully resisted four or five score winters, are entirely dead, and young pear trees of from ten to fifteen years are very generally killed down to the snow line, and some entirely. We used to think that the danger of winter-killing was nearly over with pears when the trees were old enough to have rough bark; but last winter has destroyed such trees, and left young newly-planted dwarf-pears comparatively untouched. Indeed, probably the only way to have pears in this climate at all is to plant dwarfs and keep them almost as low as gooseberry bushes.

Apple trees, though not so much affected as pears, have also suffered very sadly—some being wholly dead, others partially dead, and many in such a sickly state as scarcely to be able to put forth foliage: the pomme grise suffered especially. The immense show of blossoms on all kinds of apples partly accounts for the feebleness of the foliage—and the sharp frosts on the 20th of May, which scorched the blossoms, may also have had some effect upon the leaves. This frost, it was feared, might so injure the blossoms as to render them sterile; but we see plenty of fruit set upon some trees, though it is doubtful if those trees, or portions of trees, which are sickly, will bear fruit. The apple caterpillar has been abundant in the orchards this season, though it has not spread as in the other seasons to the forest trees. The frost did it no harm.

Small fruits have neither suffered from the winter nor the May frost, unless it be raspberries, which are rather sickly in some gardens. Gooseberries look remarkably well, though the late frost caused a considerable proportion of the fruit to fall. The gooseberry and currant caterpillar has scarcely made its appearance this spring in some gardens which used to be badly infested. Perhaps the frost destroyed it.

This frost to which we have alluded, besides killing the potatoes, corn, and other tender vegetables, which were above ground, destroyed all young leaves