

"Should it be made compulsory by law to destroy the black-knot on Plum trees?"

Vice-President Roy, Owen Sound, read the following paper on the subject:

This scourge of the plum tree is found in nearly all parts of Ontario, and is so common and destructive that in some districts one seldom sees a plum tree free from knot; and although a great deal has been written in agricultural and horticultural papers, and warnings given by vigilant members of both societies about the injury done to the fruit crop, and the sure death of the tree if not thoroughly cut off and burned, still the warning seems to be of little avail. The disease is spreading very fast, and unless some remedy, either Legislative or otherwise, is found to stop its further progress, the plum crop will dwindle down to very small dimensions. When it gets into a plum orchard it attacks all varieties, but most frequently upon trees standing in wet dark rich soil. If the trees are planted in a dry soil they have a better chance to escape the disease.

Much has been said and written about the origin of black knot. The insect theory has long been abandoned, and nearly all intelligent fruit growers now accept the knot as a vegetable excrescence of fungous origin. Scientific research by entomologists and botanists has given us the cause, nature, and means of propagation of the black knot; it is for us to profit by their instructions, and endeavor by every means in our power to put down and destroy this pest.

It spreads with great rapidity. I lately saw a blue plum tree affected with black knot, and large numbers of suckers growing up all around it, nearly every one of them from a foot high was affected with knot, evidently showing how contagious and hereditary it is; hence the necessity of strong measures being taken to keep it down; what these measures should be is for you to say. From my own observation and experience, I have not much faith in moral suasion in this matter. If you think the evil can be eradicated by act of parliament, and proper machinery put in motion to compel every one to keep their trees free of this ugly and injurious excrescence, it will be a benefit to the community, and put our people largely in possession of a most delicious and nourishing fruit, with millions of bushels surplus for export, which will be real wealth to the country.

There is a Bill now before the Ontario Legislature, in charge of the