

Editorial Notes and Comments

HOW FRUIT BUDS ARE MADE.

THE common notion that fruit buds are structurally distinct from leaf buds is questioned by Mr. E. S. Goff (American Garden, 1901). He claims to have abundant evidence that leaf and flower buds are in a measure interchangeable; and that by proper pruning a flower bud may become a leaf bud, and that, by ringing, a leaf bud may become a flower bud.

Of course we all know the fact, without knowing the philosophy of it, that ringing, or wrinkling the bark, tends to the formation of fruit buds; and that dry weather is also conducive to the same, but why? Because such conditions are restrictions on the movement of the prepared food in the branches, and the surplus water in the sap is thrown up through the leaves, and the remainder becomes concentrated and rich in

prepared food. Whenever, then, the water supply is increased, the tendency is towards growth and to the formation of leaf buds; and a decrease in the water supply, for the reason given above, tends to make flower buds.

Another significant fact is that as soon as active wood and leaf growth ceases, the formation of fruit buds begins, and may continue until cold weather sets in. This would encourage the present system of our best fruit growers, who cease cultivation in July or August, and seed the ground to a cover crop, thus causing early maturity of wood before cold weather. If a tree were too much inclined to wood growth, and too little to fruit production, it is evident that the earlier in the summer that cultivation ceases and the cover crop is sown, the more hope of a crop of fruit the succeeding year.



FIG. 2599. EXPERIMENTAL PLUM ORCHARD AT JOHN MITCHELL'S, CLARKSBURG, Showing Clean Cultivation, Ready for Cover Crop.