

Pruning.

712. SIR.—When is the proper time to prune, and do pears require much pruning, and do they require iron filings about them?
B. F. Q.

Pruning of the apple and pear may be best done during any of the mild days between the fall of the leaf in autumn and the swelling of the buds in spring. Iron filings about a tree are not *necessary* in any case, but as the air acts upon them, causing rust or oxide of iron, a useful fertilizer is provided.

How to Prevent the Ravages of the Onion Fly.

Reply to question 684.

After twenty-eight years' experience, and trying about as many remedies for the Onion Maggot, I have found the following the most effective, in fact, I have never known it to fail when properly applied :

Procure some perfectly dry, fine soot, sow sufficient of this broadcast to thoroughly dust the plants. Apply very early in the morning before the dew is gone, or immediately after a rain, so that the soot will stick to the plant, thus preventing the fly from depositing its eggs in the young growth, as it seems to have an abhorrence of the soot and will not come near it. The first application to be made when the young onions are about three inches high ; four applications in four weeks, one each week, I have always found ample. In very showery weather, apply oftener.

"Inglewood," Hamilton.

W. HUNT

* Open Letters. *

Experience in 1894.

SIR,—The frost and drouth of last spring and summer reduced the strawberry and raspberry crops to about one-quarter the amount we had the preceding year. We would have lost all our strawberries had we not thrown straw over the rows when the plants were in blossom, thus saving them from the last two heavy frosts. Our apple crop promised to be very heavy, but the fruit dropped off until very few apples were left, but they were of good quality considering the unfavorable season. Our cherry crop was good and there was no black knot upon the trees. Our young strawberry plantation did well, considering the drouth. We kept the weeds out and the ground well pulverized on the top, and we even took the trouble to cover the runners as they grew. Had we not done this, our chance of a crop next year would be poor. When the fall rains came, those plants just pushed ahead and went into winter quarters well rooted, although the tops were not large. In November we gave them a top-dressing of ashes and lime. The object of the latter was to sweeten the land, because we believed it somewhat soured on account of the presence of a great deal of sorrel. Then we mulched them with long coarse manure. The Smith's Giant raspberry and Michel's Early strawberry came to hand from the Fruit Growers'