

trim off great quantities of blighted limbs, and the evil, I fear, is not over yet. I propose to return to my old mode of culture, and mulch both in winter and in summer.

In a part of my front green, I have purposely kept the ground free of weeds and grass. Every tree on this particular plot has suffered; my pear trees have actually died out, and my apples have greatly suffered. I intend in the spring to sow grass seed or clover to protect the roots of my trees. After all, there is something in this grass theory and practice. I am satisfied that a good crop of weeds has something to do with a good growth of wood, and with the fertility of fruit-bearing trees. Some manure which I once employed as a top dressing was full of groundsel seed. A luxuriant crop of what was esteemed a noxious weed was the consequence. Not a single bough, however, blighted, notwithstanding the luxuriance. Thinking it proper and right, I got rid of the groundsel, and have for these two years kept my ground clean, but undug. This tidiness on my part has been further carried out by an orderly and painstaking workman, who raked into heaps every bit of bark, bone, pruning, old shoes, rags, &c., which offered a certain kind of mulch, and thereby left the ground bare and clean. The result, come from what cause it may, has satisfied me that trees like a little roughness. Forests mulch themselves. Mr. Saunders, of London, can tell a somewhat similar tale, or rather his grounds do if he won't. Having recently visited his fruit farm, I can testify that even a grass mulch is unmistakably beneficial, and highly subserves the interest of the horticulturist. Among trees on cultivated land, there is at London a very high percentage of deaths; in the same varieties grown under grass in the same, nay almost the immediate position, the percentage of deaths is not a tithe. This speaks volumes for mulching. Indeed, mulching is a great necessity. At Ottawa, in June last, I noticed in Mr. Bucke's garden that the canes of his raspberries were scarcely touched; in attempting to account for this I found that he had been attending to first principles, and that his vines were and had been growing under a course of very heavy manuring.

It matters little what the kind of mulch is, so that it prevents rapid evaporation; grass prevents evaporation, and seems beneficial to the roots of plants—it acts, in fact, as a cooler.

Much of the destruction of fruit trees during the past season has been, I am fully persuaded, from the effects of the SECOND winter which we had in the spring. A very severe second winter occurred in the month of April, and a trying frost on the 15th and 16th of June. The black winter in April did a wonderful amount of mischief. We believe it to be incalculable. The sap had made a start after the first thawing of the snow—when the thaw had bared the earth, then a black frost succeeded, which tried every plant that had already started. The roots suffered much, and in some instances the frost killed the vitality outright.

The great havoc made among fruit and other trees, however, during the spring, arose from another cause. The dry frost was succeeded by a track of dry weather, which completed what the cold had left undone. This season I notice that the boughs are more limber than I ever saw them—more bending under the weight of fruit, which I attribute in great measure to the same cause. The drought was so severe and continued, that farmers and others were afraid of their crops, and even feared the failure of their harvest, forgetful of the promise made in the olden time, that “while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

We believe that this cold and drought has brought about a new variety of blight. The blight of former times has almost disappeared, and has been succeeded by what may be called a DRY BLIGHT. This new disease, if new, has none or few of the characteristics of the old sort. The smell of the fermentation is not so strong; the bark is dry, without the former acrid liquid and scent. A diagnosis of the disease brings one to conclude that the two are different. One particularly ought to be mentioned: the death of the trees could not be traced till after the drought, though we are perfectly persuaded that death was the result of the frost.

At our meeting in Drummondville, various theories were broached, all, however, being less or more uncertain on account of the want of well-ascertained facts to back them. It is evident that a remedy for this state of things is only to be found in hybrid improvement.

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