

tant prices may be charged. You may be talked into buying a new variety at a fancy price, when an old standard variety would be indisputably better. Buy directly from the nursery, if you can, and speak for first-class trees, medium in size, shapely, straight, budded near the ground, showing full promise of vigorous growth. Apples and pears with three years' growth from the bud or graft, dwarf pear, plum, and quinces with two, and peaches with one, are usually selected. Take plenty of time in selecting your nurseryman and your nursery stock, but, once having satisfied yourself on these scores, lose no time now in giving your order.

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In the winter the plum trees and the cherry trees should be examined carefully for traces of black knot. Every portion of wood in which the fungus occurs should be collected and burned. Black knot is a very destructive disease, but it is perfectly controllable. Eternal vigilance is the price of safety from its ravages. The fungus appears on the trees the year after the germs obtain a lodgment; and the most vulnerable parts of the tree are the croches and the junctures of the annual growths, the bark being there more tender. Excellent results have been obtained from the use of Bordeaux mixture in the spring, for this fungicide remains upon the branches a long time, and the summer spores of the fungus are killed. But, if the knots are all removed in early winter, there will be no occasion for using the Bordeaux mixture in the spring. Considerable apparently sound wood should be cut away with the knot in order that no portion of the disease may remain. It will be labor lost if the cuttings are left on the ground, for spores will mature on them, and will scatter themselves over the orchard just as though they had been left undisturbed on the trees. A great healthy public sentiment should be roused against black knot wherever it exists, for one infected orchard may contaminate a whole neighborhood. The law should be vigorously enforced against those who wilfully allow this disease to spread on their trees. All thickets, hedges, and useless trees, capable of breeding and distributing it, should be destroyed. Wild cherry trees should also be examined for traces of black knot.

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Before winter sets in and the ground becomes unworkable, the fruit-grower sees to it that his orchards are prepared to stand the rains and floods of the spring. Good drainage

is absolutely essential to success in growing fruit. No tree or shrub can thrive in low, damp soil, where water will remain till it disappears through evaporation. One season's neglect may ruin an orchard the situation of which is not all that could be desired in regard to draining. It would be well to have all land underdrained that is set out in fruit. But this ideal condition is not often present. In any case, no standing water should be allowed to remain in the orchard. Wherever there is danger of it, the land should be well hollowed between the rows, and made to slope gradually so as to allow the water to run off rapidly. The fall is the best time also for tile-draining and ditching generally. In the spring more urgent, though not any more useful, work requires attention.

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Before the ground hardens, it would be well to work into the soil some of the fertilizing materials that are intended to be used. Barnyard manure and other nitrogenous fertilizers are best applied in the spring, but ashes and bone dust, or other forms of potash and phosphoric acid, may be applied with much advantage in the fall. The action of the frost tends to decompose them, and thus to render them more available for plant food next season. No farmer should allow a bushel of ashes to leave his place. It is worth a great deal more to him than anything he can get in exchange for it. Canada ashes are sent all the way to Florida, and are eagerly sought after by enterprising fruit-growers in that distant state. Why should they not be prized as much at home?

The compost heap in the barnyard should be enlarged by all possible devices. Livery stables and other places where horses are kept, in cities and towns, collect accumulations of manure, which the owners will gladly have removed and exchanged for a reasonable equivalent of fodder. It is strongly recommended to keep at hand a quantity of ground gypsum or plaster of paris to sprinkle daily in the stable. It conserves the nitrogen of the manure, its most valuable constituent. While it is necessary, for the proper fermentation of the manure heap, that it should be freely watered, no liquid should be allowed to drain away from the barnyard. Lastly, do not allow any intermixture of ashes and barnyard manure, or apply them on the soil at the same time. There is in that case a waste of nitrogen.