

When trees are pruned in early spring, the sap is then in a thin watery state; it oozes out of the cut, causing premature decay and permanent injury to the tree.

When trees are pruned in early summer, after the rush of thin watery sap is past and the tree has fairly commenced to make a new growth, the wounds will commence at once to heal over. The exposed wood will remain sound for a longer period than if cut in early spring.

Another very important point in early summer pruning is, it does not check the growth of the tree, as when it is done later in the season.

Some advocate pruning in July and August, but I would only prune then in cases where the tree was making too much wood growth, which I wanted to check and throw the tree into a bearing state.

Another very important point in pruning, and yet one which is very much neglected, is to cover the cuts with some substance to protect them from the influence of the weather. Common grafting wax, or a mixture of clay and cow manure, is beneficial; but perhaps the best thing, when it can be got pure and good, is gum shellac dissolved in alcohol to the consistence of paint. A protection of this kind is always beneficial to newly-pruned trees; it neutralizes to a great extent the injurious effects arising from pruning trees at an improper season.

WASH FOR FRUIT TREES.—Keep the trunks and larger limbs of all fruit trees clean and healthy by a wash composed of one part sulphur fine as a powder, two parts soft soap, one part salt, all reduced by water to the consistency of whitewash, and to every bucket or three gallons, add a half pint of coal oil. The latter is considered to be an effectual remedy against the borer, curculio, and a preventive for all insects. Apply with a whitewash brush or mop of rags or sheepskins.

PRUNING.

ITS NATURE AND ITS EFFECT.

The practice of pruning is defined by Webster to be, "To lop or cut off the superfluous branches of trees, to make them bear better fruit or grow higher or to give them a more handsome and regular appearance." The implements used in this work may be of several kinds, to suit the convenience of the operator, as knife or axe or saw or chisel, but all with a view to the same ultimate results. "This," as Shakespeare said of horticulture generally, "is an art that does mend nature." In practice it requires skill and much observation, but the results are usually marked and very positive, sometimes so much as to change the entire future life of the plants. By means of this we have the power not only to mould and form the plant and direct it how it shall grow to serve our purposes, but to regulate the amount and quality of the fruit. By the judicious exercise of this art the tree is made to be our servant, to please and to bless us. Pruning is mainly of two kinds, viz., root pruning and branch pruning, with respect to parts; or winter and summer pruning, with respect to time. It is, however, quite evident that the great burden of pruning, both as to root and branch, must be done in a time quite free from frost. To prune in the winter for wood, and in the summer for fruit, is an old saying that has gained currency, and generally there is much practical truth in it. According to the division of our subject we have first,

ROOT PRUNING.

This mode of pruning consists theoretically in contracting or circumscribing the area of root growth in the soil. The philosophy of the operation is, that whatever threatens to endanger the life of the plant will promote fruitfulness. Practically, this is done in