

MR. S. D. WILLARD'S ORCHARD.

MRS. W. W. STEVENS, before the Indiana Horticultural Convention, described her visit to the home of Mr. S. D. Willard, of Geneva, N. Y., and spoke of his Kieffer pear orchard. The trees are kept very small and are headed in at about three feet. Each year's growth is cut back to two inches. The entire crop can thus be gathered from the ground. Only the best fruit is raised. After the pears have set the crop is thinned so as to produce specimens of large size and fine quality. These small trees have several advantages. They are not affected by winds, the fruit is easily gathered, and more trees can be grown on a certain amount of space.

The trees live long and are very profitable. In one orchard they are 16 x 16 feet, while in another they are 8 x 16 feet, and the results are entirely satisfactory. The ground is cultivated shallow and highly fed. No barnyard manure is allowed, as Mr. Willard thinks it is conducive to fungous diseases. Of Japan plums, Mr. Willard thinks Burbank can hardly be improved upon. The trees headed low and are kept narrow from side to side. Black Diamond plum is a good bearer and considered a desirable variety.

In addition to pears and plums, Mr. Willard grows large quantities of apples, cherries, gooseberries, currants, grapes, etc. His orchard is kept in the finest possible condition. Every bit of space is utilized. The ground is highly fertilized. Contrary to the belief of many, this kind of management pays. Along one side of the orchard was a row of

sunflowers which Mr. Willard explained was to furnish food for the fowls, which were raised in connection with fruit, for he stated, insect pests are likely to be less troublesome where there are chickens. The poultry also pays a profit in the production of eggs.

Mr. Willard sells direct to the consumer in original packages. He puts up two grades of fruit. No. 1 and No. 2. Poor grades are sold to canners or are put upon the market upon merit and without brand. Nothing but the best is packed.

Orchards and small fruits are cultivated perfectly clean. The ground is kept level and well stirred. Of commercial fertilizers, hardwood ashes are considered best, but are usually so scarce that other kinds have to be substituted. Mr. Willard's practice briefly stated is: Plant carefully, prune severely, and feed liberally. In the discussion following this paper the merits of the Kieffer pear were pretty thoroughly discussed. Unless properly handled it is not at all satisfactory, being hard, gritty, and almost tasteless. About the first of October gather from the trees, place in a cool, dark room, and allow to ripen three or four weeks, covering with old carpet or some similar material. With such treatment this pear sells readily and is very satisfactory. It was the sense of the convention that Kieffer pears could profitably be planted in Indiana. At least they are very remunerative at present. So many have been set during recent years that there is a possible danger of over-production — *Alleghen Gazette*.