

Pruning Pears, Plums and Peaches

Joseph Tweddle, Fruitland, Ontario

PRUNE pears according to the previous season's growth, to the amount of fruit buds in sight, and to the prevalence or prospect of fire blight. In our own practice we first cut

ditions and find a tree with strong, thrifty, new wood with probably few fruit buds. In such cases we pursue the opposite course, thinning only for light and air and as much fruit as we can get

we would get an overgrowth of wood and but little fruit. Every fruit spur would grow a shoot one to two feet in length and the tree would set no more fruit buds for two years or more. Such a condition of growth invites fire blight.

All intermediate conditions of growth and fruit buds occur between the two extremes aforementioned. They should be pruned with the same purpose in view; that is, to balance the tree for a fair crop of good fruit.

Peach and plum trees are pruned by the same rules except that heavy pruning does not hinder fruit bud setting and that we prune much more severely, heading back nearly all the twigs so as to get large fruit by leaving only fifty per cent. of the fruit buds. Even a small branch overlooked in pruning will produce small fruit.

We find that the use of wagons is a great advantage over ladders. All our tools are carried on the wagons, which can be moved quickly from tree to tree. We use small fruit decks with one board out in the centre to vary our height as needed. Quiet horses are used with blankets under the harness. We gain twenty-five per cent in time by the use of wagons.

The culture of grapes for market is an industry that is assuming large proportions in some sections of Canada, particularly in the Niagara district. For the benefit of beginners, experienced grape growers are requested to contribute letters and articles for publication in *THE CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST* on their methods of growing.



Pruning Plums in the Niagara Peninsula

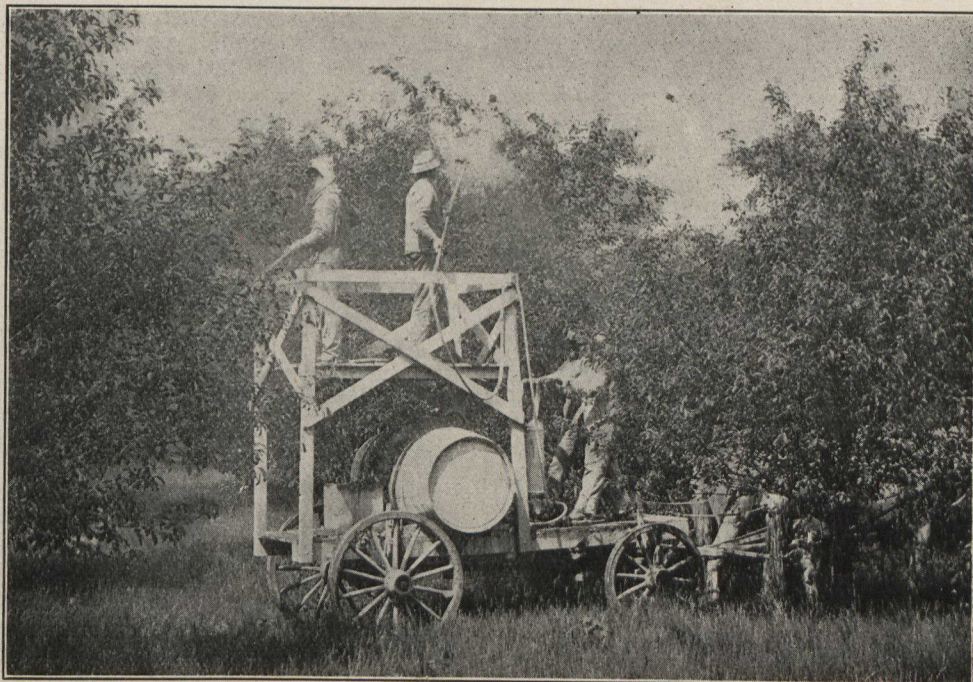
Orchard of Joseph Tweddle, Fruitland, Ontario. Note that wagons are used instead of ladders.

out any existing blight well below the affected parts, using continuously, a five per cent. solution of carbolic acid for disinfecting the tools and also the cuts to avoid carrying the infection from diseased to healthy parts. Then we start a gang, consisting of a competent foreman and three men mounted on two single fruit wagons, as shown in the illustration, one rig on each side of the row, the foreman overseeing and directing the work and at the same time pruning his share of the tree. He corrects mistakes and quickly teaches the men with him the "why and how" to prune into proper shape the varying forms and conditions of each tree.

We may approach a tree with very little new growth and set too full of fruit buds. Such a tree probably would set so much fruit (if left unpruned) that the whole crop would be so far below normal or good size that all would be unsaleable. We thin this crop by pruning back to reduce the fruit buds fully thirty to forty per cent. Then we thin freely to give light and air, and to shape the tree generally.

We may come to the opposite con-

by leaving all the buds possible. If we pruned this tree as we did the former,



A Hand Power Goulds Sprayer at Work Spraying Large Trees.