

portance to the fruiting habit of the tree. In a young and fast-growing tree the spurs may become well developed on two-year-old wood, and as the tree increases in age continue to develop. They do not die out after one, two and three seasons of fruiting as in the case of plums.

Pruning, therefore, develops itself into a method of keeping these spurs in a healthy and vigorous state with an ample supply of sunlight and air, to prevention of overbearing and the encouragement of growth. On young trees, the long, one-year-old growth may be shortened back and thinned out and so give the spurs



Fig. 19. Keiffer.



Fig. 20. Keiffer.

full opportunity to develop. Too severe cutting, however, tends to produce wood growth at the expense of spur development. On an older and more mature tree, the annual growth becomes less rapid. The branches which are from twelve to fourteen years of age will bear a mass of fruit spurs. Each fruit bud will bear from four to five flowers and as many leaves and the spur as long as it is maintained healthy and vigorous will continue to produce fruit and leaves annually or biennially.

Fig. 18 shows a two-year-old branch of a young, fast growing tree with short fruit spurs up the stem. The twigs at the top are one year old. The illustration