

of soil. As the plants grow during the season the furrows are gradually filled up by cultivation. When winter sets in the asparagus is cut off and given a good covering of manure, which can be worked into the ground the following season.

Plans for Successful Fruit Growing

CEASE GROWING SECOND CLASS FRUIT.

NOT only should our Ontario fruit growers cease shipping poor grades of fruit, but they should cease to grow it. It is a constant loss, because the trees occupy valuable space in the orchard, takes valuable time to gather and pack; uses costly packages; costs as much as the best fruit for transportation and sale; brings down the reputation of the grower in the market, and lessens the net returns for his fruit crop.

It is good advice, and often given, to make some disposal of the poor fruit at home; but a better plan is to *cease growing it altogether*. How shall this be done? Well, in some degree the following hints will help bring it about:

I. Change your varieties. There are a few kinds of apples that grow uniform in size and color, and are not much subject to scab. Select these for your district and top-graft all poor varieties accordingly; four or five kinds of pears succeed and will bear distant shipment, substitute them for the small kinds or the natural fruit; a few varieties of cherries and plums are not subject to rot, and some grapes are scarcely ever affected with mildew. Choose by all means such varieties.

II. Spray, Cultivate and Manure in the best manner. Details of these are so often written up that we pass them with the simple mention.

III. Prune with an eye to reduce the amount of weak and crowded wood over the entire tree, beginning from the exterior and working inwards. This work must be done with more judgment and deliberation than

has been customary. The amount of fruit bearing surface will be thus decreased, leaving, of course, the best and most vigorous fruit buds. This will leave less wood to be sprayed, less fruit to gather, and better fruit for market. No saw should be necessary in an orchard that is pruned annually with pruning shears, but unfortunately this work is frightfully neglected even in some of our finest orchards.

IV. Gather only the best fruit. With labor so high priced, and fruit so low priced, it does not pay to waste time. We have been in the habit of gathering all our apples, pears, cherries, plums, peaches, etc., in baskets and boxes; of bringing them all to the packing house and turning them out on packing tables for sorting. In many cases we believe this could be done economically in the orchard, leaving the scrubs on the trees. In case of apples, these could afterwards be shaken down for cider.

V. Make successive pickings. In peaches, successive pickings are customary already because of the successive ripening of the various samples; but there are good arguments for extending the practice to many other fruits if a reputation for a uniform high grade is desired. Red Astrachan apples, for example, do not color up all at once, but beginning with the first week in August, they continue during the whole month. At Maplehurst we have an orchard of over one hundred trees in full bearing, and get the best results by going over the trees four or five times, the pickers selecting each time those in the pink of perfection for fancy shipment. Were these all gathered at any one time, either a large portion would be very immature in case of early gathering, or an equally large portion would be over ripe and fallen, in case of late gathering. This same method we have adopted with our Bartlett pears, making our first pickings about the first of September and the last about the 20th of the month.