

ting that *humus* was needed also in the soil to help retain moisture. The easiest and cheapest way to furnish humus was by plowing under green crops in the spring, such as rye or clover. Cover crops served three purposes: (1) The supply of nitrogenous matter, (2) the winter protection of tree roots, and (3) the addition of fertility.

What cover crop would you advise? was asked.

Mr. Smith favored crimson clover for the Niagara District, sown in July. The hairy vetch seed takes easier and covers the ground well, but is rather expensive. Peas are good, only that they die in the fall, and consequently lack in the winter protection. Cow peas are excellent also for adding fertility, but they also die in the fall.

Cover crops should be plowed under as early in the spring as possible, else they rob the soil of its moisture.

Is it costly to adopt this practice?

On the other hand, it is economical. It really only leaves ten weeks for cultivation, say from the first of May until the middle of July, for at the latter date the ground is seeded down until the following spring.

PRUNING PEACHES AND PLUMS.

PRACTICALLY the same advice was given on this subject as we have so often advocated in these pages. Mr. Smith advocated close and careful pruning; he would treat a tree on the same principle as a grape vine, aiming at leaving only as much bearing wood as the tree should carry; in this way also, thinning of the fruit itself would be unnecessary.

He would not plant too closely. He thought 18 or 20 feet apart not too far, because in such case the tree would extend over more area and yield more fruit. As an illustration, he instanced a Quackenbos plum tree at Mr. W. M. Orr's place at Fruitland, which was given plenty of area and had

reached a fine size. More than once this one tree had yielded thirty baskets of fruit.

THINNING FRUIT.

MR. E. D. Smith fully endorsed the advice so often given in this journal about thinning fruit, especially in the case of over-loaded trees of peaches. For example, in an orchard of eighty Triumph trees, four years old, he had a very thrifty growth. The trees were over-loaded with fruit, but he left them hanging until after the "June drop," which thinned them considerably. Still there were about one thousand peaches on each tree. Now, 80-three-layer (or two-inch) peaches would fill a twelve-quart basket, and five baskets of fruit was a full crop for a four-year-old peach tree. He therefore, for the sake of experiment, selected two trees as nearly alike as possible, leaving one unthinned, and reducing the number of peaches on the other from 1,000 to about 400. Off this tree he sold four baskets No. 1 peaches at 60 cents each, and one basket of No. 2 at 40 cents, making the total proceeds from the thinned tree \$2.80.

From the unthinned tree he took seven baskets of fruit, but it was useless stuff that did not sell for enough to pay cost of handling and baskets. Besides, the limbs were broken down and split by the over crop, and the tree itself so stunted that it was at least three years in recovering itself.

What did the thinning cost you?

The expense was no more than it would be to pick them later when more mature. They must be picked anyway. I estimated that it would cost about one cent a basket, or five cents a tree to do the work; but, by judicious pruning a great deal of this work of thinning would be avoided.

When would you spray, if you could only spray once?

Just before the buds open, was the response, with Bordeaux, or possibly with the