

HORTICULTURE.

more tender varieties of fruit. People will learn with general regret that the peach buds have not stood the winter well. It is not so much a severe frost that damages them as a sudden change from mild to very cold weather; and several such phenomena have occurred this winter. There will, no doubt, be favored places on the lake shore and along the river, but it may be confidently said, even now, that the peach crop of the Niagara district for 1896 will be a very light one.

An Experiment with Mildew and a Caution as to Spraying.

The representative of FARMING, travelling in Elma township, sends the following: "Mrs. Charles Prost, of the 16th concession, who is well known for her lovely garden of flowers and small fruits, gave me an item which may be of value to some of your readers. Some years ago she obtained from a neighbor a number of bushes of a fine large English gooseberry that had always promised a good crop, but the mildew had spoiled the fruit year after year. Mrs. Prost experimented with them by covering the ground underneath the bushes with small limestones; and to prove the experiment she left one bush free. The result was that she had a crop of nice clean berries, but the berries on the bush that had not been treated were, as usual, spoiled with mildew. Since then for several seasons she has had fine crops of large clean berries, free from mildew."

"Mr. Wm. Clarke, of the 8th concession, has always had good crops of currants and gooseberries, and his bushes are never damaged by worms. He sprays with a weak solution of Paris green. The point he wishes to make is that the proper time to spray is just as the leaves are opening out, and once again about a week or ten days after. If we wait till the worms appear, they can hardly be killed, and they generally have the bush stripped before they are noticed."

[English gooseberries are particularly subject to mildew, and everyone would be glad of a simple remedy such as Mrs. Prost found effective. I must confess, however, that I find it difficult to understand how the presence of the limestones should prevent the appearance of mildew. Before we can establish a case of cause and effect, we must be sure that we have taken note of all the phenomena. Prior to the use of the Bordeaux mixtures, the remedy found most effective as against mildew and rot was sulphur, and sulphur had to be applied directly to the plants. The Bordeaux mixture contains lime, but this element is intended to counteract the caustic properties of the bluestone from affecting the foliage, and is

not known to have any special fungicide properties itself.

[Mr. Clarke is quite correct in his method of using Paris green to prevent the ravages of worms on currant and gooseberry bushes. Hellebore is considered better and handier to use in the case of this pest. I have never found it to fail whenever sprinkled over a colony of worms. One must be very watchful, however, for these worms spread with amazing rapidity.—ED.]

FOR FARMING.

A Plea for a Closer Study of Insect Life.

By M. BURRILL, St. Catharines.

[Continued.]

Last month a few reasons were urged why the farmer generally should make a systematic study of their chief insect foes, and an indication or two given as to the number of these and the extent of their ravages. It is unnecessary to say that the man who has even partially acquainted himself with the peculiar habits and structural differences of his enemies is better equipped for the fight than he who has never given the subject any consideration. But, as we all must bear arms in this war, it is proposed here to point out a few ways in which the farmer can help himself. In the first place, he can secure the powerful services of two untiring allies. We allude to birds and the beneficial insects. In the second place, he can adopt positive methods which we will consider further on.

With respect to birds, it is hardly beside the mark to say that the English sparrow, that ubiquitous scoundrel, is our only adversary. Almost without exception birds are more or less insectivorous, and generally to an extent unsuspected by the agriculturist. The sparrow itself is, occasionally, an insect eater, but not to any great degree, and the chief count against him is that he drives away our native birds, like the blue-bird, oriole, and so on, which are very insectivorous. The crow is the recipient of a good deal of profane abuse—more especially in the corn-planting season—but he consumes large numbers of wire-worms and the white grubs (larvæ of the May beetle). The United States Government instituted an exhaustive enquiry into the habits of the bird, and after much research, and the examination of the crops of a thousand crows, our genial black friend was pronounced, on the whole, beneficial to man. The robin, too, is roundly denounced sometimes; but, although he is a fruit eater, and goes at it with an unblushing audacity worthy of a better cause, he is a grub eater all the time, and a great devourer of