

ORCHARD AND GARDEN

Pruning—A Reply to W. Smith*

John Buchanan, Kings Co., N.S.

I note an article on pruning apples trees in Farm and Dairy. Before going any farther, I'll see whether the writer is Scottish or English. It is no use to argue with an Englishman. You either increase his salary or sack him. The Scots—but everyone knows them. My own fancy is that Harry Lauder, of his country, Harry Lauder to Alexander the Great were Scottish; and judging from his perseverance and presence in so many places at one time, the devil belongs to very old established Scottish family. However, as all Scots (me anyway) were Irish originally, and long for a fight with a moral in it, let me proceed to flatten out W. Smith's compact on pruning.

He says, "Many young orchards are overpruned, say some experts." Now, first and foremost, what are the brands of an expert? I expect about 10 years in the wilderness with a competent trumpeter would qualify a man for the position. It isn't brains and it isn't truth—it's noise plus advertising capacity. Then Mr. Smith proceeds to demolish the "expert" opinion by knocking down branches, may I ask? "Why these dead branches, may I ask?" Well, ain't the branches he takes off yearly dead, and doesn't he always (doubly and trebly, always) take off more branches and head in more than he happened to when he started to prune?

Then he goes on to ask, "Why not improve on nature?" Well, he can't. You can control nature by stopping or lessening one function and allowing the other to keep on, not unchecked—but not intentionally injured except by that kind of starvation which comes to a gasoline engine when you diminish either the lubricating oil, the gasoline, or the air. The engine runs, but not so efficiently.

"But if you don't prune you get a thicket." Suppose you do. You get apples, and as W. Smith says, lots of the little we twigs succumb to the competition and the tree is a shapely thing, though stubbly. Why can't folk use their eyes? Every farmer knows trees which grow in the fields stop and grow nicely rounded in the orchards. 'Tis like a man seeking 99 sheep in the wilderness and his neighbor asking him if he is sure they aren't in the pasture. "Sure," says he, "I never looked."

Last of all, you get apples quickly. I. S. Nargenson next me never pruned—laziness and genius. His trees were set:

1902	1½ ac.	about 100 trees
1903	9 ac.	about 900 trees
1904	8 ac.	about 800 trees
1906	7 ac.	about 700 trees
1906	6 ac.	about 600 trees
Crop 1908		11 barrels
Crop 1909		17 barrels
Crop 1910 (frost)		135 barrels
Crop 1911		600 barrels
Crop 1912		1750 barrels
Crop 1913 (frost)		750 barrels

I have three acres of trees set in 1907, with 190 Stark, 33 Blenheim, and 25 Wagner. They were never pruned until the spring of 1913, except to take out a few suckers which start on the trunk below the main branches about 18 inches from the

In a recent issue of Farm and Dairy Mr. Smith emphasized the value of quite heavy pruning in the young orchard. Mr. Buchanan, evidently, has a different idea.

ground. The crops since 1910 have run as follows: 1910, frost and one apple to speak of; 1911, six and one-half barrels of Wagner and one and one-half barrels Stark; 1912, 46 barrels of Wagner, 41.75 barrels of Stark, and a few Blenheim, which is a worthless variety; 1913, frost, 16½ barrels Wagner, five and one-quarter barrels Stark; 1914, frost, about 30 barrels mostly Wagner, as all young Nova Scotian Stark are hit this year.

The people who advocate pruning in young trees have two or three ideas which are like the air in a half-inflated air cushion. You cover one end of the cushion—no one at home. You jump for the other end. He retires to the middle. What you have to do is to puncture him. The biggest bubble in the pruning of young trees is the ultimate loss of branches which might have gone into the frame of the tree. Let Mr. Smith, especially if he is English, read the painstaking results at Woburn, Eng., on the comparative effects of light and heavy pruning compared with no pruning at all, both on fruit yield and on quality of fruit and on size of tree.

You see W. Smith, being a Canadian or an Englishman, rarely experiments. Your policies don't make for enthusiasm, except enthusiastic brick bats, and an Englishman has so long been the grandest thing on earth that he is quite content in these days of aeroplanes to stay there.

P.S.—Now for any sake don't believe every word I write. When you start to remove a mountain, you have to use dynamite at first; and secondly, you don't tell my son, he is half English and one and one-half years old, and already just about the amount of three average "hot" Scots natives.



The Middleman's Profits

"Let's get after the middlemen." This is a favorite cry with those who are anxious about the high cost of living, and the conclusions reached by R. W. Joyce, a cold storage investigator, in the employ of the New York State Government, are correct, this cry is a shallow one as according to Mr. Joyce the spread between the 10 cents that the farmer receives and the 33 cents that the consumer pays is all made up of legitimate and normal expenses and profits. Here is the way in which Mr. Joyce figures the increase:

Hucksters or freight cost, ½ cent; cases and fillers, ½ cent; repacking, loss in breakage and overhead charges, ½ cent; freight and cartage, 2 cents; carrying charges, cold storage (including interest and insurance, six to eight months), 2 cents; jobbers, labor, loss in repacking and overhead charges, 2½ cents, making the eggs cost, without profit to the Western packer and to the Eastern receiver or jobber, 24½ cents a dozen. To this amount Mr. Joyce added 1 cent for profit to the packer, 1 cent for the receiver and 3 cents for the jobber. These figures make the price, with normal profits to the wholesaler, 29½ cents a dozen. After giving these figures Mr. Joyce said:

"The retailer must average 15 per cent profit to exist. In the flush season of March, April, May and June he scarcely averages five per cent. In the winter months he must get from 25 to 30 per cent to strike his average. He makes that on his high priced sales. On the low priced, even in winter, he makes a very meagre profit. The well-to-do pay him well—if they do pay at all. The poor or the sensible buyers can get good values at moderate prices if they are not too proud to be satisfied with something that is not called 'the best.' Really new laid eggs are always short and bring high prices except when all eggs are new laid, as in the flush of April and May.

"We have now the country cost, 10 cents to the farmer, and the city retail price, 33 cents, with normal profits to the handlers. If the retail price is less than the normal profits have to be cut to that extent. If the demand and supply do not sustain these values prices go down and dealers' profits disappear or become losses and the consumer benefits. If the demand outruns the supply the dealers' profits increase and the consumer pays the increase. The farmer's net result remains fixed from the start, as does the profit of the case manufacturer, the huckster, the railroads and all the labor engaged in the transaction."

Loose Pen Fattening

C. E. Brown

The loosened method of fattening market chickens might be properly described as the practice of feeding the birds in small yards or pens, in lots of from 25 to 50. We prefer this method for broilers or cockerels of the lighter breeds, such as Leghorns, as they are very active and are likely to be restless in the crate. Our plan is to have a small coop or shelter for roosting, with a small yard attached; the whole structure being portable.

Each morning at feeding time the coop is moved a distance equal to its length, to give a clean floor for the chicks. Where the coop is placed in an orchard or grove, it serves a double purpose, for, besides accommodating the chickens, it enriches the soil. A coop large enough for thirty broilers should be three feet wide, six feet long, two feet high at the back, and three feet high at the front; with three roosts running the length of the yard should be made of three hurdles; two 12 feet long and 18 inches high, one six feet wide, and a large hurdle to cover the top to keep the chicks from flying over.

Cholera in Poultry

Bert Smith, Lambton Co., Ont.
Cholera in poultry is due to many causes and when a flock once becomes affected it is difficult to check the disease. Owing to this fact when a fowl is observed to be suffering from cholera it should be immediately killed and the carcass burned.

When cholera attacks several of the flock it is well to remove all birds affected to a comfortable room, well lighted and warm. The floor should be covered to a depth of three or four inches with straw or dry leaves. Give the birds very little to drink and feed three times a day with the following in the form of a pill a little larger than a pea: Two ounces capsicum, two ounces pulverized asafoetida, four ounces carbonate of iron, one ounce pulverized rhubarb, six ounces spanish brown and two ounces sulphur.

To prevent this disease from spreading in the flock, after having removed the affected birds, disinfect the house and run, and drench the droppings with sulphuric acid water to destroy germs. Cook corn or wheat in coal oil and feed three times a week to the birds as a preventative.

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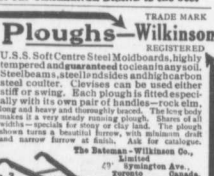
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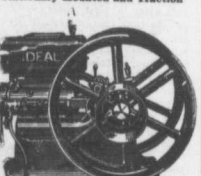
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