

THE ORCHARD.

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ONE of the most important periods of the orchardist's year is now at hand. The majority of orchardists realize this and act accordingly, but there are still a large number, both commercial and private growers, who wholly fail to appreciate, or at least to take anything like full advantage of, the opportunities afforded them by the dormant season of putting their orchards into the order in which they should be.

Such growers no doubt recognize that they have a certain amount of routine work to do at this season, such as spraying, pruning, and cultivation, but at the same time ignore or fail to appreciate the connection which exists between the manner in which they do this work and its effect upon both their trees and crop the following season.

It is not sufficient to prune a tree simply because this is the pruning season, or because it is the custom of every fruitgrower—or, I should say, *nearly* every fruitgrower, as some do not prune at all—to cut more or less wood out of his trees during the winter-time. Pruning is a necessary and scientific work, but its benefits apply mainly according to the amount of intelligence exercised when the work is being performed.

Before commencing to prune a tree the whole scheme of things in regard to the tree should be clearly conceived—whether it be growth or shape that is required; inducing the tree to bear fruit; promoting growth in a tree stunted through overbearing or otherwise; improving the quality of the fruit, if necessary, by lessening the quantity it is likely to bear; and by considering the number of other matters which intelligent pruning is calculated to correct. After this has been satisfactorily determined every cut should be made with a definite object, and that object should be to correct all objectionable features and to bring about those which are desirable for the future benefit of both the tree and the crop in the shortest possible time.

The same applies to the control of orchard diseases. It is not sufficient to spray simply because there are diseases in the orchard, even though a popular spray is used, without first making sure that it is the right one for the particular disease in question. There are many sprays recommended for winter use at different strengths for the different pests and diseases, and unless some intelligence is exercised mistakes such as have been frequently made in the past will occur, resulting in the waste of time and material and subse-