

FRUIT-PRESERVING IN THE HOME.

T. E. RODDA, Orchard Instructor, Timaru.

DURING the season when fruit is plentiful every housewife should endeavour to preserve as much as possible for use during the winter and spring months. The modern method of fruit-preserving does not appear to be as widely understood as one would imagine. Many people seem to think that the process requires considerable skill and previous experience, but such is not the case. Any person with average intelligence, provided he or she exercises ordinary care and thorough cleanliness, can quickly become proficient in the work. In this article it is not my intention to explain the factory method. My aim is to describe a process made as simple as possible by utilizing appliances to be found in the average home.

Any class of fruit can be preserved successfully provided it is fresh, not overripe, and free from bruises. All badly bruised fruit should be rejected and can be made into jam. The major portion of fruit preserved is processed in sugar syrup, but I wish to stress the point that it is not essential that the fruit should be so treated to ensure the product keeping for an indefinite period. Pure water will do equally well. The whole secret of preserving is thorough pasteurization, or the killing by heat of the ferment germs contained in the fruit, and hermetically sealing the jars or containers while the whole is still hot. Sugar syrup certainly makes the fruit more palatable, especially if it is intended for consumption as a cold dessert. In such case the use of syrup is advised, but in the case of pie-fruits, or fruits intended for cooking or to be eaten hot, water alone is sufficient. Sugar can then be added according to taste.

For general home preserving the fruit should be put up in bottles or jars, which are obtainable at reasonable rates. Possibly the best makes or brands of jars are the "Lightning," "Atlas," and "Golden State Mason." The latter is an exceptionally good jar, having a very wide mouth, an advantage that needs no comment.

MAKING THE SYRUP.

The syrup should be made before the fruit is prepared for processing. The strength of syrup most generally used is 1 lb. sugar to 1 gallon of water. This can be increased to 3 lb. and even 4 lb. per gallon, according to the variety of fruit under treatment. To