

If no green cropping is being done, orchards should be rough-ploughed and allowed to remain for the winter months. This will expose the soil to the effects of frost and rain, sweeten the land, and make cultural operations much easier in the spring. Where new orchards are being planted the land should be got into good trim. Growers who have not yet decided upon the varieties to plant should lose no time in doing so.

All information can be obtained from the Orchard Instructor for the district.

—G. Stratford, Orchard Instructor, Christchurch.

OTAGO.

The fruit-harvest will now be nearly all gathered and autumn leaves falling, and growers will be making their plans for the winter operations. First and foremost among these should be the destruction of all disease-infected leaves and fruit that is lying around, and which if allowed to remain will carry on the disease for the reinfection of next season's crop. This applies to fungus diseases mainly, and embraces such troubles as black-spot, brown-rot, powdery mildew, leaf-curl, shothole fungus, and peach-rust. If it were possible to gather and destroy by burning all refuse such as mentioned much would be accomplished in this direction. Ploughing the land well and deep will cover most of the leaves, and it is advisable to throw the furrows towards the trees, thus ensuring good drainage, especially on the lower parts of the orchard. Then the spray-pump needs looking over and putting into order; leaking valves, connections, and hoses make spraying a nightmare. See that everything is right for a good start on the new season's spraying. Where die-back is troublesome on peach and nectarine trees a good autumn dressing of bordeaux, 8-6-40, is advisable in the autumn; when rust or brown-rot have been prevalent it is also worth while. Where woolly aphid is troublesome a spraying of red-oil emulsion is of great advantage, a strength of about 1-40 thoroughly applied doing good work at this time of the year. Pruning will be the next consideration. This is a most important operation, and on it largely depends the success or otherwise of the crop. Make a study of each variety and every individual tree of each variety. Help the weaker ones by lightening their burden, but give the strong a chance to yield a return, by leaving them some fruiting-wood to bear on. How often do we see trees putting out fruiting-wood during the growing season only to have it all removed again in the winter by the seccateurs. But these are points one cannot discuss on paper; the orchard is the best place to do this, and the writer hopes to meet growers there in due course.

A word to growers about to plant new areas. Spare no trouble to get the land in good order for planting. Subsoiling pays, especially if the soil is not of good depth above the subsoil. Avoid too shallow planting, and, above all, see that you receive well-grown healthy trees, even if you pay a little more for them. Yearling trees are preferable, but if the land is good and well worked good well-shaped two-year-olds will save a year and give a return more quickly.

—J. H. Thorp, Orchard Instructor, Dunedin.

POULTRY-KEEPING.

By F. C. BROWN, Chief Poultry Instructor.

BREEDING QUESTIONS.

WITH the approach of the breeding season various aspects of mating will naturally be under consideration by poultry-keepers. A correspondent writes that he mated some Black Orpington hens of a noted laying-strain with a male the son of a hen that won an egg-laying test, but the pullets produced proved to be very susceptible to broodiness and disappointing from an egg-laying viewpoint. He asks why this should be, seeing that the mothers did not go broody during the whole season, and laid continuously. The obvious answer to this is that one strain did not "nick" well with the other, and the laying-power of the pullets has been affected as a consequence. This is a