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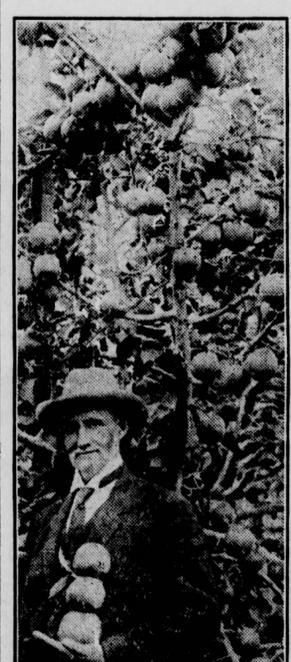
**III.—DRAINING AND FER-
TILIZING APPLE
ORCHARD.**

By G. B. BRACKETT, Pomologist,
Bureau of Plant Industry, United
States Department of Agriculture.

ALL apple orchard lands should be thoroughly surface drained and underdrained. No orchard can endure for a great length of time with stagnant water either on the surface or within the soil. All surplus water from excessive rainfall or from other causes should be promptly removed by either surface or subdrainage.

If the natural formation of the land does not afford such prompt drainage it must be provided artificially. Surface ditches or furrows between the rows of trees may afford temporary drainage, but they are objectionable on other accounts that will be apparent for an orchard thus drained will be difficult to get over in its necessary care and in gathering and handling the fruit. Underdrainage is far better on these accounts. Besides, it is much more thorough, especially if accomplished by means of well laid tile.

Temporary Drainage.
A thorough breaking up of the subsoil will afford temporary drainage in a stiff clay soil, but in a few years the soil will again become compacted, when it will require restirring. But in



WELL LOADED WINESAP APPLE TREE.

all cases the planter must be the judge of the special drainage requirements of his soil and location.

The soil constituting the proposed orchard site should be carefully studied, and if found to be lacking in the essential elements of fertility necessary to maintain a fairly vigorous wood growth fertilizers should be added before plowing that they may become thoroughly incorporated with the soil in preparing the land for planting.

Well Rotted Manure.
Scientists and practical orchardists are generally agreed on the great value of well rotted barnyard manure for an apple orchard. It supplies not only humus, but it contains a large per cent of other necessary nutritive elements for maintaining health, vigor and fruitfulness of tree and for the development of the proper qualities for a fine fruit product. But as the stock of this sort of manure is not always sufficient for the general demand other agents have to be resorted to, and next in value and in a concentrated form are unleached wood ashes, which will supply to a great extent the elements necessary to plant growth. It is maintained by some authorities that one ton of unleached wood ashes contains as much plant nutrient as five tons of ordinary barnyard manure; therefore, whenever obtainable, ashes should be used in preference to any other fertilizer.

Manufactured Fertilizers.
There are many kinds of manufactured fertilizers, some of which are valuable only for special soils or special crops. It is difficult to determine what fertilizer it is best to use without knowing what elements are lacking in the soil. The three elements most commonly needed by soils are nitrogen, potash and phosphoric acid, and chemical fertilizers that contain the largest percentages of these substances in available form will be the most valuable.

A fertilizer containing 1 1/2 to 2 per cent of nitrogen, 7 to 9 per cent of available phosphoric acid and 10 to 12 per cent of potash will give excellent results when applied to orchard land

in quantity ranging from 400 to 600 pounds per acre.

Western prairie lands are generally sufficiently fertile for an orchard growth and need no enriching until the trees begin to show signs of weakness in vigor from crop bearing, and even then they may be invigorated by the use of crops of red or crimson clover grown among the trees, allowing the crop to fall and decay upon the ground each year. By this treatment a large amount of decaying vegetable matter rich in plant food will accumulate upon the land, forming a moist protection from the hot summer sun and preventing deep freezing during the winter, a condition conducive to the health and vigor of the trees. All lands lacking in humus can have this element restored to a great extent by such treatment, and orchards which have been sown with red clover maintain greater longevity, fruitfulness and excellence in fruit product, besides dispensing with the costly necessity of using special fertilizers.

As to the indications when a bearing orchard needs stimulating the eminent pomologist, Dr. Warder, once said, "When the growth of the terminal branches fails to make an annual extension of at least one foot in length the tree should be stimulated by manuring the land and giving it thorough cultivation."

The principal requirement in preparing land for planting an orchard is deep tillage, and the more thoroughly this work is done the more certain is success. The preparation had best be done late in the fall, so that the land will be ready for early spring planting or for fall planting if preferred. Many successful orchardists, especially in the western states, plow the ground in "lands" so as to make an open land furrow where each row of trees is to be set and then, after the trees are planted, backfurrow the ground so as to make lands with tree rows in the center.

This method affords a deeper tillth under the trees and at the same time surface drainage into the open land furrows midway between the rows, which will receive and, if properly graded, carry off any surplus water which may accumulate from heavy rainfalls.

Distances For Planting.
A decision as to the proper distance apart to set trees varies with different planters. Some plant 16 by 32 feet—that is, the trees sixteen feet apart in rows thirty-two feet apart. The object of this method is to obtain a crop from the trees until they begin to interfere with each other, when every alternate tree in the row is cut out, leaving the trees in the entire orchard at a distance of thirty-two feet each way. The trees to be cut out should be early bearing, short lived varieties. This system has the advantage of more fully utilizing the land for fruit production until the thinning out becomes necessary.

Other planters adopt a distance between trees of twenty, twenty-four or thirty feet apart each way, claiming that by the time the trees interfere with each other they will have finished their growth and the orchard will begin to decline. But it is generally conceded that thirty-two to forty feet is the preferred standard distance. If the distance of forty feet each way is adopted it will afford ample space between the rows for growing any crop which requires cultivation, such as corn, beans, potatoes, etc. Such cultivation is highly important and necessary for the maintenance of moisture in the soil and for the health and vigor of the trees. This distance will afford free circulation of air and abundance of sunlight, both of which are essential to the growing of well developed and highly colored fruit. Small grain should never be grown among fruit trees, especially when the orchard is young.

Best Time to Plant.
The question as to the best time to plant is governed somewhat by latitudes. In southern latitudes late fall or the early part of the winter may be safe for planting. But in most of the states early spring is considered the better time. Fall planting has the objection against it that the roots of a tree do not take hold of the ground sufficiently to supply enough moisture to maintain a healthy active circulation of the sap, which is required to prevent shriveling of the branches during winter's extreme cold and exhaustive evaporation from drying winds.

The selection of trees is a very important part of orcharding, for upon care and judgment in this matter depend largely the future profits of the investment. Strong, stocky and vigorous one or two year old trees, called "whips" by nurserymen, having well developed root systems, are preferable. Trees of this type and age are more satisfactory and profitable in time and suffer less in transplanting, cost less and are much more easily handled than older ones.

In this connection we would suggest the advisability of purchasing trees for planting from the nearest responsible nurseryman. The local nurseryman, if perfectly familiar with his business, will understand the needs and demands of his home customers and should grow the varieties best suited to his section of country. If honest he should feel himself morally if not legally responsible for the correctness of his nomenclature. By securing trees at the nearby nursery land danger from damage by long transit and the injurious effects of sunshine and frost are avoided. Besides, if the farmer makes his purchase direct from the nurseryman he will save the expense of the middleman or agent and is less liable to the mistakes and injury that may occur through repeated handling.

Press Comment

President's Duty in Legislation.
(Springfield Republican.)
The charge by the Michigan senator that the president of the United States comes nearer being a lobbyist than any one he knows is likely to be quickly forgotten. It is a charge that cannot be sustained without indicting the American people for electing presidents, the party system for making the president the leader of his party in Congress and even the constitution of the United States for giving the president the power to write messages, address Congress in person and veto legislation. For all these things combine to force the president to be "a person whose business it is to promote or prevent legislation"—which is Senator Townsend's very broad and vague definition of a lobbyist. A president of the United States who didn't promote or prevent legislation would be a fit subject for a glass case.

Worse Than the Lobby.
(New York World.)
The investigation of the lobby at Washington has revealed something worse than a lobby. It has shown that there are members of the United States senate who are financially interested in the pending tariff bill. It has shown that they intend to speak and vote upon the subject.

Whatever else may be said against a lobbyist, he cannot be accused of betraying a public trust. He does not promote the greed of individuals who profess to serve the people. He is precisely what he appears to be, an agent of self-seekers, and those whom he addresses secretly or openly may accept his arguments or reject them, as they please.

A senator who has a pecuniary stake in the legislation that he is forwarding is like a judge who should try a case involving his own fame or fortune. He is like a juror who should assume to pass upon the guilt or innocence of a relative or partner. He is like an arbiter or a referee who should undertake the adjustment of a controversy to which he was a party.

Lister and Good Roads.
(Spokesman-Review.)
One need not be an enthusiast over good roads, though every good citizen should be an enthusiast, to appreciate the governor's work. It speaks for itself as an evidence of Mr. Lister's practical interest in the betterment of all the conditions and factors on which depends the sound progress of Washington.

The governor's course gives official expression to the state-wide interest in good roads that has come to prevail among all classes of citizens. The great majority of them now realize that improved highways between farms and markets form an indispensable requisite in the economic development of the state. The few who do not will have the truth impressed on them emphatically through the governor making a personal survey of the situation in the state as to roads.

All of us recognize the wisdom in his preference for being the governor of a commonwealth with well developed farms and roads to being the chief executive of a state that had two or three of the largest cities in the nation. His trips and his talks have educational and economic value.

Maybe This Is So.
(Chehalis Bee-Nugget.)
It will be recalled that some months ago Governor Lister almost caused a bunch of Seattle Democrats to have heart failure by telling them that his would not a spoils administration—that there would be no spoils. Judging from the fact that about eight out of nine of his appointments thus far have been given to Tacoma men and the jobs have been going fast and furious, the governor apparently meant that his declaration applied to the state of Washington outside Tacoma and Pierce county.

Giving the Devil His Due.
(Snohomish Country Tribune.)
Here are two opinions, chosen from many, reflecting the general sentiment of the press with regard to the claim of the railroads that advance in rates in certain lines is necessary to keep them financially above board. One of the roads, the St. Louis & San Francisco, has already gone into the hands of a receiver. At the last hearing, when the interstate commerce commission refused to grant an increase in rates on the theory that business with the roads would steadily increase, the court said that should conditions not

justify their prediction a re-hearing would be in order. This re-hearing is what the railroads say is coming to them.

Here is one opinion from the Baltimore Sun:
By reason of their general good behavior in the last few years the roads have created a public sentiment that will insure them a fair hearing and an unbiased consideration of their plea. No one nowadays is disposed to deny their right to a fair share in the prosperity of the country.

And here is another from the Buffalo Times:
The railroad managers are speaking plainly and apparently honestly on this subject. They present the proposition that, if expenses are to be advanced, they must be permitted to advance rates. The facts behind the agreement are impressing the public mind and causing the sentiment to bear with good humor whatever compensatory advance of rates may be necessary.

The New Telephone Rates.
(Skagit County Times.)
The Pacific Telegraph & Telephone company has again filed its proposed "air line" telephone tariff rates with the public service commission. It is the same proposition filed twice before and prevented from operation by public protest. If allowed to become effective it will increase long distance phone rates to nearly double what they have been. It is called "air line" and the impression created is that service rendered is to be on a horizontal plane, but the increased cost indicates that it is straight up.

This same proposal has been before the public service commission twice before this and withdrawn both times from protest. This has taken time, and during the time taken the Sunset Telephone company has worked its gouge to the limit. It is up again; this will take time again, and means continued gouge again.

People are beginning to wonder whether the public service commission was created to play hoss with corporations which use time to skin the people or whether its function is to fix reasonable and permanent rates for services rendered by corporations.

Doesn't Want to Lose Elliott.
(Ellensburg Capital.)
It is persistently reported that Howard Elliott is going to leave the Northern Pacific. This will not be welcome news, at least along the west end of that line, where Mr. Elliott has become well known and highly esteemed. He has been a most approachable president and has had an ear for any plea that was for the benefit of the country. In other words, he is a broad-gauge man and if he goes it will be generally regretted.

Lodge and the Franking Privilege.
(Chehalis County Call.)
If the testimony given the sugar lobby inquiry is true, Senator Lodge, of Massachusetts, ought to be in the penitentiary instead of being a United States senator. Truman G. Palmer, the sugar lobbyist, testified that he used Senator Lodge's franking privilege and sent 320,000 charts through the mails, beating the government out of \$16,000 in postage. Lodge ought to be prosecuted, and further, the franking privilege ought to be taken away from every member of Congress. If some poor devil should use a cancelled postage stamp the second time, he would be sent to the pen for a long term. But here is a United States senator beating the government out of \$16,000 and he goes unpunished. How long will the people permit such favoritism?

The Agricultural Commissioner.
(Tacoma Progressive Democrat.)
There is one man in the governor's cabinet that will be untold strength or untold weakness and that is the commissioner of agriculture. This position has to do with most every interest in the state. Experts from this department will examine your milk, meat, bread, and for that matter, everything one consumes. They will inspect your oil, examine your fruit trees and try to tell you what you need on your soil. In fact, the agricultural department will have a finger into most everyone's pocket. If they can show the people that they are getting the worth of their money, then that department will be a source of strength, but, if on the other hand, the experts do not satisfy the people, then there will be much criticism.

Would Abolish Franking Privilege.
(Reardan Gazette.)
Whatever comes of the bill or bills for tariff revision the fact has been developed that too liberal a use of the franking privilege has been taken advantage of by the national lawmakers. In the dispatches it is stated that \$28,000 were saved from postage expenses by generous minded senators and representatives who sent large amounts of printed matter to go through the mails in their name. Along with other reforms, the abuse ought to be corrected.

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