SPRAYING FRUIT TREES.

The importance of spraying fruit trees, at this season of the year, to prevent blight and to destroy harmful insects, cannot be overestimated. It was tried successfully last year by Governor Furnas and was equally satisfactory at Arbor Lodge. The following reports from Iowa horticulturists indicate the splendid results they obtained from spraying:

Last year was not a favorable one to test the virtues of spraying in the pear orchard, as there were no leaf troubles to speak of. There was more than the usual amount of rot in the Flemish Beauty and the spraying did not seem to have any effect on this. A portion of the trees were sprayed five times at intervals of ten days. The trees of Green Gage, Spalding and Tatge plums were treated three times, growing fine crops of Green Gages and Spaulding, with but a partial crop of Tatge. The latter sort is about the worst of domestic varieties to rot. It has been bearing six years, and last season was the first time any specimens ever ripened. Trees of Green Gage and Spaulding not sprayed matured but little fruit.—[B. A. Mathews, Marion Co., Iowa.

Last year I sprayed apples, plums, currents and gooseberries. There were no apples, so I cannot report the effect of spraying on the fruit, but the trees were never so clean, healthy and free from blight, and they are thickly studded with fruit buds. Plum trees not sprayed had twice the amount of rotten fruit as trees that had been sprayed. As a rule the fruit on sprayed trees was finer in every way, The use of kerosene for the plum aphis was highly satisfactory. Two or three applications during the season will keep the trees entirely free of this pest.—[C. F. Gardner, Mitchell Co., Ia.

The trees which were sprayed in my orchard last summer were easily distinguishable by sight from the others by their appearance. The foliage was thicker and of a distinctively dark green and remained later on the trees. The trees also matured a larger amount and more perfect fruit than trees which were not sprayed.—[C. L. Watrons, Polk Co., Iowa.

RAILWAY POOLING AGREEMENTS.

The following statement was made by F. B. Thurber, chairman of the committee on railroad transportation of the New York Board of Trade and Transportatation, to the National Millers' Association.

For many years I have been a student of the relations of shippers and carriers, first from the point of view of a large shipper and more recently as chairman of the Committee on Railway Transportation of the New York Board of Trade and Transportation, member of the Committee on Internal Trade of the New York Chamber of Commerce, and chairman of the committee appointed by the National Board of Trade to advocate amendments to the Inter-State Commerce Act, which would make that law equitable and effective in adjusting the relations of shippers and carriers. I was one of the earliest advocates of the Inter-State Commerce law, and of the law creating a railroad commission in the state of New York. I believe in public supervision of these semi-public institutions in the interest alike of railroads and the public but such supervision must be reasonable in order to attain the best results. When the Inter-State Commerce law was pending in congress, I advocated the prohibition of pooling agreements, believing that such agreements might result in exorbitant rates of freight, but the logic of events since the enactment of the law has convinced me that there is no longer any danger of too high rates of freight; that the only danger is in unjust discriminations and that the prohibition of pooling tends to increase these.

The competition of our waterways with railroads, and railroads with each other, and the rivalries of interests and localities, has resulted in a progressive reduction of rates until the people of the United States obtain their transportation at about one-half those of other principal nations, but the unjust discriminations which the Inter-State Commerce law was primarily established to prevent have continued in full force and indeed have been enhanced by the prohibition of pooling agreements contained in that law, which prohibits transportation companies from making and enforcing contracts with each other which all other corporations and individuals are permitted to make and enforce.

Uniformity of Rates Desired.

The great majority of carriers and the great majority of shippers desire uniform, reasonable and stable rates, but a selfish minority of each, seeking to overreach their competitors, prefer chaos, because they find their profit in that state of things.

Hon. Martin A. Knapp, the present chairman of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, in an article which he wrote for the North American Review, says:

'The ultimate effect of preferential rates is to concentrate the commerce of the country in a few hands. The favored shipper, who is usually the larger shipper, is furnished with a weapon against which skill, energy and experience are alike unavailing. When the natural advantages of capital are augmented by exemption from charges commonly imposed, it becomes powerful enough to force all rivals from the field * * * It is entirely plain to me therefore that co-operative methods, the general discontinuance of competition in rates between rival railroads, would tend strongly to remove the inequalities which now exist, and prove a positive and substantial advantage to the great majority of producers and consumers. And I firmly believe that while there is a popular objection to railroad pooling, founded largely upon ignorance of its purpose and misconception of its effects, the principal opposition to legalized co-öperation, the opposition which has thus far prevailed, comes from the favored few who are reaping unearned profits by the discriminating which they virtually compel and of which they are the sole beneficiaries.'

I believe, therefore, that the Inter-State Commerce law should be amended so as to permit pooling agreements between railroads, subject to the supervision of the Inter-State Commerce Commission, and that some minor amendments should also be made. When we have approached the question of just how the law should be amended, however, there has been a divergence of opinion between the Inter-State Commerce Commission, the railroads and the public. The chief point in controversy has been whether the Inter-State Commerce Commission should have the power to virtually make rates by saying to what extent a rate was unreasonable, or whether they should simply have the power to say that it was unreasonable, leaving it to the courts to decide as to what extent it was unreasonable.

There was the further question involved in the Cullom bill (senate 3354 of 1898) as to whether the rates fixed by the Inter-State Commerce Commission as reasonable, should take effect at once or wait the final decision of the courts as to their reasonableness before they took effect. The railroads have claimed that this was virtually giving the Inter-State Commerce Commission the power to make rates, and that this was contrary to the intent of the act, as shown by the debates in congress at the time the law was enacted.

Views of Congress.

This contention seems to be sustained by the following extracts from the debates:

On December 8, 1884, Mr. Findlay said: 'It is perfectly legitimate to prescribe that a rate shall be reasonable and then leave it to the courts to determine what is and what is not reasonable, but to declare in advance, not merely the principle by which the fixing of the rate shall be governed, but to prescribe the rate itself by referring it to a fixed standard and apply the rule to the complicated system of Inter-State transportation, with all of its vast ramifications and subtle competitions, is the exercise of a power, which, if it be held legislative in its nature, certainly ought to be sparingly and cautiously used. The bill of the committee keeps this distinction full in view in all of its provisions, and is consistent and symmetrical throughout; but