

kill back considerably. The apple tree grew about five inches, and promises to do well.

Your correspondents in the March number give a somewhat flattering testimony regarding the Ben Davis apple, but any one who has once bought them for his own use will not be apt to do so again. They are too much like balls of sole leather, tough and tasteless. As long as buyers are guided by appearance instead of quality they will buy Ben Davis, but no longer; still it may pay the grower for a few years longer.

R. B. THORNTON.

Orono, Durham Co.

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAY.

STRAWBERRIES FOR THE FAMILY.

BY T. C. ROBINSON, OWEN SOUND.

The requirements of a family fruit are very different from those essential to a market variety. The firmness which implies safe transportation long distances is entirely unnecessary in a berry that is to be eaten directly from the vine, or that appears on the table within an hour after the little fingers have scared it from its leafy hiding-place. And although size and beauty are very desirable, they do not rank essential, as in the samples on the huckster's stands, which are successes or failures mainly according to the degree of anticipation excited in the great public by their appearance.

The qualities, then, to be sought in a fruit for the household are:

- 1st. Quantity.
- 2nd. Quality.
- 3rd. Size.
- 4th. Beauty.
- 5th. Earliness in one and lateness in another, so as to cover the entire season.

Some persons, where there are not many children, would put quality first and quantity fourth; but probably

most people would rate a family fruit according to the foregoing scale of values.

According to this estimate, after years of careful testing, I consider the following varieties of special value for family use:

Crescent.—I put this first because of its earliness. It is the hardiest in plant that I am acquainted with, and the crop is simply enormous. With me it usually gives two pickings in advance of Wilson, and two after Wilson is done, and it gives equal pickings with Wilson all through the Wilson's season. It will bear on any soil where the Wilson will, and many soils where Wilson will not, and the berries are as large, more handsome, not as rich, but sweeter, and the blossoms will stand frosts which kill the Wilson's blossoms. Finally, it seems quite as good as Wilson when cooked; hence for home use I consider it leaves no room whatever for the grand old Wilson in the family garden.

About a week after the *Crescent* comes in we begin to pick ripe berries from the

Bidwell.—With me this is the best family berry that I have well tested. Year after year it comes to the front with its immense loads of beautiful fruit. The berries are much sweeter and larger than Wilson or *Crescent*, and I find the crop larger also when runners are kept off. The plant is about the largest and healthiest that I know of. Set in moderately rich soil, 16 inches apart in the rows, and rows 30 inches apart, and runners kept off so that no young plant can take root, the rich, tall, luxuriant foliage will cover nearly the whole surface of the ground. Many of the berries thus grown will measure from two inches to two-and-a-half inches in length, the shape being long conical.

Seneca Queen ripens about the same