

through his Alexander orchard on the 28th of June, we found the ground literally covered with young fruit. "People," said Mr. Brennan, "are calling me a fool to waste my fruit like this, but I have learned by experience that thinning pays."

What portion do you take off?

Well, from those overloaded Alexanders, fully one-half. Here is a tree from which I took 1700 peaches on the 20th of June. The tree could never carry that quantity to perfection. Why, 100 peaches, well grown, would fill a twelve quart basket, and that tree was carrying enough peaches to fill over 30 twelve quart baskets! while eight or ten baskets is all it could possibly mature, to any size.

OVERCROPPING

THIS principle applies equally to all fruits. If the tree overbears in one season, it cannot recover itself in time to produce a crop the year following, so that apples, pears and plums all need similar thinning of the fruit and similar shortening of the branches. "By this system of shortening," said he, "I get fruit every year from Spys, Kings and Baldwins, because I always encourage a certain amount of young wood growth, even in a season of heavy bearing, and this produces fruit the succeeding year."

The following from the Journal of Horticulture, England, goes to establish Mr. Brennan's method:

"In the whole gardening practice there is no greater mistake than that of overcropping. It is bad in every department, but worst of all with fruit, for not only are the trees incommoded during one season, and prevented from giving good fruit, but they are often seriously checked for another year, a more important point even than the other. The effects upon peaches and nectarines are very marked. The trees are called upon to produce about twice as many stones as are

necessary and this takes far more out of them than the production of the edible part or flesh.

But the strain upon the trees is so great that even the small amount of flesh upon the fruit is not worth anything. It is poor in flavor, and the fruits usually drop before they are properly ripe. Instead then, of having, say a hundred fine luscious peaches, or highly flavored nectarines, upon any given tree, we have, if the fruit is not properly thinned, perhaps double that number, and out of all, not a score of fruits that one could possibly send to a nobleman's table or a high class fruiterer's shop.

Apples on small trees are often badly treated in this way. With large orchard trees there is a great difficulty in thinning, and without a doubt, this combined with the let alone principle on which the trees are treated, is responsible for their often bearing once in two years. But with small trees there is no necessity for this. The fruits can mostly be thinned by hand from the ground or from a short pair of steps, and the increased value of the produce is out of all proportion greater than the trouble involved.

Even small and bush fruits may with advantage have attention in this way. Gooseberries, currants and even strawberries, unless there is a good demand for cooking fruit, should be well thinned. It is just now that the result of not thinning is most apparent, and I would ask any thinking producer to have a look round the nearest fruit plantation to him. In nine cases out of ten he will find this season's trees overburdened with small and comparatively useless fruit, that with judicious thinning might have been useful and profitable to the grower.

EARLY TOMATOES PROFITABLE

I FIND my early tomatoes about my most paying crop, said Mr. Wm. Armstrong of Queenston. I have made a business of