## Fruits

## THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACHES, PEARS, CHERRIES AND STRAWBERRIES.

UDGING from the show of fruit blossoms up to the date of writing, the 23rd of May, this will be one of the most abundant fruit seasons ever known in Ontario. Every variety is as full of bloom as it can possibly be. Fruit growers in the Niagara district are hopefully expecting a heavy crop of peaches, the bloom having shown itself very freely about the first of May; but the peach is a most tender fruit and there are many chances for disappointment between now and harvest time. Already they have met with a set-back on account of a sharp frost which occured about the beginning of the second week in May, and as a result a large number of the fruit blossoms have dropped, especially from the old trees, leaving a very small proportion to develop into fruit. On the young and vigorous growing trees, however, there will be an abundance of fruit unless some other mishap occurs. The pear trees are perfectly white with bloom, but of course it is too soon to say what proportion of these will set. Some growers predict that an over abundant bloom is often followed by a small crop, and this season will certainly test the truth of that statement. Cherry trees have shed their petals and are setting a heavy crop. The only fruit crop that seems likely to be short is the strawberry. This is owing to the unusually mild winter and the lack of snow as protection from the evil effects of freezing and thawing. Those who were careful enough to mulch their strawberry plantations with straw in the Autumn, are now rejoicing in the prospect of an abundant crop, but only a few have done this, and where it has been neglected, the plants have been badly heaved out by the winter, and the plantations almost wholly ruined. This is true not only of the Niagara district but of a large part of southern Ontario. We have received a few reports of the present prospects from various sections, some of which we will quote here, hoping in another month to be able to give still more reliable estimates.

Mr. A. McD. Allan, of Goderich, in the County of Huron, writes: "We never had a finer promise of a large fruit harvest in all kinds than there is at present. The trees are in a splendid condition to produce a large crop, and if Jack Frost keeps away, this district will easily have 150,000 barrels of apples alone, for export. The pear, plum and cherry crop promises just as well in proportion, and the peach trees are ready to burst forth in a perfect cover of bloom. In some few instances where growers were ignorant enough to plant on low or undrained land, I hear of damage to strawberry vines, but generally speaking, the crop is safe."