

Fruit.

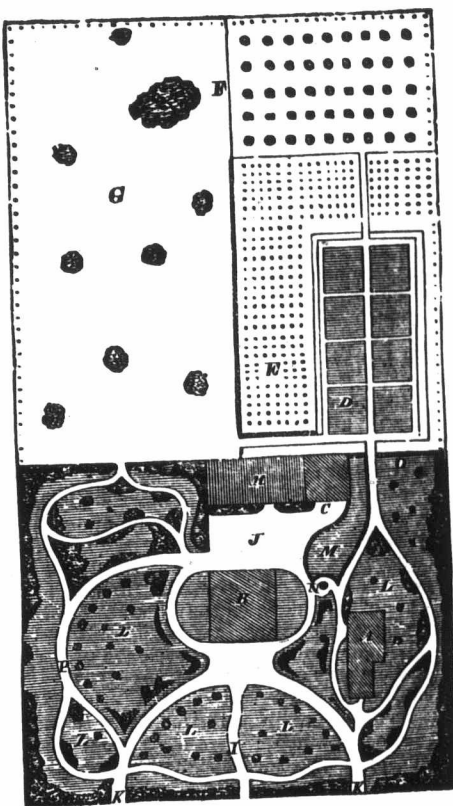
Fruit at the Provincial Exhibition.

Fruit is certainly becoming a popular article of culture and diet in Canada. We have not to go back many years in the history of this country to find a comparative blank in this department of our Provincial Exhibition; and though the year 1883 will long be remembered as affording one of the worst fruit crops that has been experienced since this industry has been established, yet it was quite surprising to see the number of entries made at the Guelph show. The scarcity of fruit probably had the effect of bringing more exhibitors than usual to the front; as every one would argue that he would be almost unopposed, and so carry off the chief prizes. If such was the case there were no doubt many disappointments. The good people of Guelph were evidently unable to estimate the amount of fruits and flowers that would be placed upon the tables. The building, which was a fine new substantial one, was entirely inadequate to the requirements of the occasion. The fruit and flower exhibits were in some instances, from want of space, crowded into one; whilst a second shelf at the last hour had to be improvised under the main one, on which a large number of pears had to be placed, and these were entirely out of sight of the public; this arrangement also gave the judges a great deal of trouble, as all the plates had to be brought out and set on the top of other fruit, so that it might be critically examined, and then replaced in its former darkened and out-of-the-way position. It was noticed the Apples, especially the American varieties, such as Snows, Spies, Greenings, Baldwins, &c., were greatly cracked and spotted, no doubt owing to the wet, cold season, whilst those which originated in England, such as the Blenheim, Orange and Ribstone Pippins, were clean, bright and of fine quality, evidently reveling in a native atmosphere. All the Russet varieties were good, and appeared to withstand the climatic changes better than those with smooth skins. We make these remarks for the reason that it may be well for those who propose setting orchards in exposed positions, or near large bodies of water, to consider whether it would not be well for them to plant such as would withstand damp and storms. Although the apple display was large, the quality as a whole was quite inferior, and it is probable that for this year high prices will have to be paid for an indifferent article of fruit. We also noticed many of the samples were wormy, and such as in a good apple year would not have been tolerated on an exhibition table; it was evident that the number of anything like average samples was very limited. The Grapes, though better than we expected to see, were not up to former years; the fact is, all subtropical vegetable (we speak in the broad sense) forms have suffered from the past cold, backward season, which we hesitate to call summer. Tomatoes, Corn, Melons, Eggplants and Grapes have all suffered more or less from want of sun-heat. The Peach crop was fairly represented, and the Plums only partially. Of these latter great complaints were made of rot, and in some parts, especially the great plum district of Owen Sound, a blight prevailed, which made the plums shrivel and drop, just as they were beginning to ripen—from this cause many growers lost nearly their entire crop. Experience shows that the curculio can be greatly subdued if not entirely overcome by the syringing of the plum trees with a weak solution of Paris green in water, one teaspoonful to a pail, whilst the trees are in blossom; the mixture must be kept well agitated, as the mineral is heavy, and readily sinks to the bottom. This has also been tried in the same way with considerable success as a preventative against the apple worm. The Pear exhibit was certainly very fine, and it was a great pity so many of them had

to be placed out of sight. The holding of the Ontario Exhibition at various points is no doubt doing a great good as a public educator, but if one or more permanent places were selected for it, a good deal of inconvenience would be overcome with regard to buildings and grounds. We had hoped to have seen some samples of the Amber Queen and August Giant, two samples of grapes which Stone & Wellington of the Ponthill Nurseries are putting prominently before the public, but they were conspicuous by their absence. D. W. Bead's new white grape, the Jeseca, was there in good form, ripe and sweet, and though small in size and rather muddy in color, is destined to be a great acquisition as an early white grape. The Niagara and Pocklington were both in good force, but neither of them in first-class condition, owing to the lateness of the season.

Plan for Garden and Fruit Grounds.

In this plan, A, present dwelling; B, proposed dwelling; C, stables; D, kitchen garden; E, dwarf pear orchard; F, orchard for standard fruits; G, pasture for cows; K, K, carriage entrance; I,



main walk to dwelling; J, house yard; H, yard; L, lawn; M, laundry ground; N, pump; O, hedges; P, road to stables and offices.

Horticulture at the Central Fair, Hamilton, Ont.

At the Great Central Fair, held at the exhibition grounds in the City of Hamilton, on the second, third, fourth and fifth of October last, the display of fruit was up to the standard of former years. Much praise is due the exhibitors for the excellent samples which they showed this year. The shortage in the fruit crop has been almost universal this season, and that section of Niagara district which surrounds Hamilton has suffered to as great a degree, in proportion to the productive wealth, as any other district or portions of districts. The great drawback to the production of a large fruit crop this season has been the continued damp weather and cold, windy nights. The absence of the usual amount of sunny weather militated much against the proper development of the fruit as its growth progressed.

The horticultural hall was devoted to the display of fruits, along with flowers. Together they presented an appearance of plenty amidst the most pleasing surroundings. A raised stand running the entire length of the hall, and placed in

its centre, was crowned with plants of luxuriant, almost tropical foliage. Beneath the shadow of these beauties of the floral kingdom rested the choicest productions of the orchard, garden and greenhouse. The exhibit of fruit was not alone confined to the centre tables, but was arrayed on long side tables. In the evenings the building was illuminated with innumerable gas jets, making a scene of splendor, more interesting to the florist, the fruit grower or fancier. The groups of red, yellow, green and brown skinned apples, formed a striking contrast to the small families of pink-cheeked peaches nestling lovingly together, or the luscious bunches of grapes almost appearing conscious of their splendor of color. Amidst the many varieties of pears the Bartlett was plainly perceptible by its magnificent size. Taking the exhibit of fruit at the Central Fair as an authority, the quality of fruit in this section this year is not any poorer than that of former years, but the quantity is sadly wanting. The owner of a vineyard near Hamilton, sold \$2,000 worth of produce last year and this year his receipts will scarcely amount to \$200, a very great difference. The Niagara district is acknowledged to be the finest fruit growing section in the Province of Ontario, and in all probability is as good in its class as can be found on the continent; but a backward season has its disadvantages that no country can surmount.

The exhibit of Apples at the Fair was equally as fine in quality as that of preceding years. It was noticed that a few crabs and fall varieties were somewhat affected with the scab, but the flaw must be attributed to the cold, damp season. Among the largest displays were the Cayuga, Red Streak, Alexander, Baldwin, King of Tompkins, Ribstone, Pippin, Northern Spy, Russets, etc. Crab apples were shown in great variety and in various degrees of excellence. Most of the Apples shown were picked from young trees, and consequently were as fine as could be grown.

Pears exhibited a slight indication of improvement in quality over those shown in former years. It has become a recognized fact that seldom, if ever, have either Pears or Apples deteriorated in excellence in this section; on the other hand the standard is invariably retained. The majority of the Pears shown were gathered from dwarf trees. The prize list always announces a prize or diploma offered for a new variety of Pears; but this year the judges were forced to scratch the number. The race for producing new varieties has been continued with so much application heretofore, that growers have found a difficulty this year in securing any departure from the varieties already attained.

Plums were below the standard this year. A few of the young trees bore a fair crop, but the only exception was in favor of the Damsons, which yielded heavily and good. As a matter of course, the exhibit of Plums was generally inferior.

The most noticeable varieties among the show of Peaches was a Chance Seedling, shown by W. P. Strickland, of Hamilton, and it was awarded a diploma. Its high degree of excellence lies in its being larger, better colored, earlier and with a stronger peach flavor than the Early Crawford, although somewhat resembling the latter. It is a Freestone. An interested judge visited Mr. Strickland's orchard to see the Chance Seedling and Early Crawford, as they grew on the trees near each other. He found that the new variety was from eight to ten days earlier than the Early Crawford. The display of Peaches was very fine, although the crop is a failure.

The Grapes shown which were cultivated under glass, were excellent, but the outdoor varieties contained but a few good bunches. The Niagara White Grape was exhibited, but it has not been thoroughly tested, and has not yet become familiar to Grape growers.

A fair display of Quinces was made, but the entries were limited, owing to this fruit yielding better when planted in a clay soil, and very little clay soil being found in the city, there is not much interest taken in its culture.

Two specimens of *Monstrosa* (*Philodendron*) *Deliciosissima* were exhibited, and were regarded as being very interesting in their out-of-place appearance among the standard fruits.