

## ABOUT THINNING PEACHES.

1861. In 1878 the *CANADIAN HORTICULTURIST* was first issued as a magazine of 16 pages, under the editorial charge of Mr. Beadle; and was by him most ably conducted until the year 1887, when, upon his resignation, the present secretary-editor was elected to the position.

Thus for twenty-six years Mr. Beadle was Secretary of our Association, and his literary ability, coupled with his practical knowledge of nursery work in the raising of trees and plants, made him well fitted to be a leading spirit in horticultural circles.

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**F**ORTY cents per dozen was the price of some large, well-colored peaches we saw in a Toronto fruiterer's window, whilst a whole basket of small ones was offered for thirty cents, a striking object lesson on the advantage of securing size and quality in fruit. In years of abundant crops what a surplus of small peaches we see, and how few are the fancy specimens which alone those who have the money to pay fancy prices desire. Last year the crop of the Niagara Peninsula was enormous, yet a very small proportion of the baskets marketed were of such dessert fruit as the well-to-do citizen of Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton or Toronto would consider an addition to that beauty and attractiveness of the table, which he is quite willing to pay for, and which in the case of floral decorations he actually gives very substantial proof of his readiness to pay for. The peach being the rightful monarch of all dessert fruits, and being by its native right, as it were, such a lovely, attractive-looking object, it would seem that size and perfection were more essential in its case than with any other fruit. Its possibilities being greater the buyer expects more of it. The canning factories moreover desire an article that will be able to compete with the Californian product, and dislike being obliged to put up a plethora of "pie fruit," which brings only poor prices and is as much trouble to put up as the best

fruit. The practice of thinning has become part of the regular routine work of the Californian fruit farms, as the canning establishments will not accept peaches under a certain size in some cases  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches being the required diameter.

If the trees form a large number of fruits the grower has it all his own way, and by bold yet judicious thinning, may have his matured specimens any size within reason he pleases. Boldness is usually required to lead him to sacrifice enough of the growing crop to make an appreciable difference, and it often seems reckless to throw away one-half or two thirds, or more, of what is on the tree. Judgment must also be used in the choice of the specimens to be retained or removed, and in performing the operation to obtain the best results for the future welfare of the tree. Among the principles that underlie the practice of thinning, and the conclusions readily deducible therefrom, the following may be briefly noted:

The forming of the pit is the chief drain on the vitality of the tree in fruit-bearing. It is therefore most essential that thinning be done early if the strength of the tree is to be reserved for maturing the fruit. Could we win the same triumphs with the peach as have been gained in the case of the California seedless Navel orange, or Sultana raisin, and have a crop without stones at all, the principle would have full play. But