

1913 aff

# The Farm

## ONTARIO'S GARDEN SPOT, THE NIAGARA DISTRICT

### Peach-growing an Old and Yet a New Industry.

**Peaches Were Grown Along Niagara River Over 100  
Years Ago—The Fruit Once Sold in St. Catharines at  
25c Per Bushel—Present Prospects Along the River  
—Losses in Tomatoes.**

Someone, desiring to pay a delicate compliment to the French capital, once said, before war had cast its dark shadow over Europe, that "Paris is the place to which good Americans go when they die." To those Canadians who live in the Niagara peach belt, and more particularly to those living along the shore of Niagara river, even Paris at its best offers nothing better than is possessed now.

As one stands on the river bank a little south of Queenston, with "the Heights" touching the horizon on the right, the river road half hidden by the overhanging branches of peach and cherry orchards to the left, and with homes embowered amid the most luxuriant foliage of summer dotting the shore of the American side of the silver stream, there is presented on all sides a scene in which Man and Nature have joined in the production of finished beauties that may be duplicated elsewhere, but can hardly be surpassed anywhere.

This year, too, despite the difficulties and perplexities created by three years of war, all appears to be well with Niagara fruit-growers. Peach and cherry trees never appeared in better health; never have I seen evidence of more perfect cultivation than is to be found to-day, in some of the orchards at least. The Niagara fruit crop, too, taken on the whole, is not doing badly.

#### **Peaches Promise Fair Crop Here.**

"In this immediate neighborhood," said Mr. Wm. Armstrong, whose thirty acres of peach orchard front on the Niagara River, "pears and plums are a little shy, but sour cherries have done very well, and peaches promise at least a fair crop. In peaches the fruit is well grown and is well distributed over the trees. We should have 20,000 baskets on our own place. One of my sons has eighty acres in peaches at St. David's, and he has a magnificent crop. The Sneed is just coming in, the Greensboro' will be in next week, and the Yellow St. John will follow."

season have been employed not only in picking fruit, but in hoeing as well.

Mr. Armstrong's son is partially solving his labor problem by using a tractor in cultivating his peach orchard. He has three-quarters of a mile run one way, between his trees, and can thus use a tractor to advantage. His trees are twenty feet apart each way, his tractor pulls a double-disc, and he gives two strokes of the disc between each row of trees, the cultivator going within a foot of the trunks, thus leaving very little hand work to be done. On Mr. Armstrong's own place an extension disc, operated by horsepower, is being used. With this he can run up to within six inches of the trunks, and that leaves almost no handwork to do.

#### **Cost of Fertilizing.**

"We keep up cultivation until about the 1st of August, and then nature provides us with a cover crop in the form of chick weed," said Mr. Armstrong. "For fertility we depend upon manure hauled from Toronto. This costs \$1.65 per ton laid down at siding, and the haul to my place is only about half a mile after that. We buy three hundred tons a year, and that gives a light annual dressing for our farm."

"Peach trees begin to bear at about three years, and I have some that are still fruiting fairly well at twenty years of age, but this is rare. Trees can be kept in production for so long a period only by heading back and prevention of overloading."

#### **Had to Pull Up One Whole Orchard.**

"One of the unpleasant experiences in this line as in other fruit-growing lines is in getting nursery stock that is not true to name. I had one unpleasant experience in that line myself. I planted two acres with what I bought for Yellow St. John's, but when the trees reached four years of age they proved to be useless seedlings, and I had to pull out the whole lot."