

PARKER EARLE ON THE STRAWBERRY.



E grow our berries in matted rows and cultivate them well. We have always had strong, thrifty plants, and get a good yield of berries except when they are destroyed by insects. Our berry farm is in Southern Illinois. We pick our berries every day in the berry season; there is no other way to do it. You can't pick a strawberry that is two days old and send it to market. It must be picked when it is exactly at the right stage for picking, and if you take care to do that you can ship them 1,000 miles, if you want to. The condition to which I refer is that which the berry has reached when it just begins to color. It is largely a question of variety, as some varieties will continue to change color and ripen after they are picked, while others will not. Of course, the ones for shipping purposes are the ones that will thus continue to change. We ship entirely in quart packages, using the Illinois form, and not the Michigan form of box, and these are packed in 24-quart crates. We ship in refrigerator cars, and try to maintain a temperature of about 50 degrees. We pack the crates very carefully in the car in such a manner that there will be perfect circulation of air. Each crate is by itself and does not touch the next crate beside it. If the berries have been well handled, you can pack them in a car as you want to. I have shipped more Crescents than of all other varieties together, though they are hard berries to ship. I market many of my berries in Detroit. That is 600 miles from the place where they are grown. Some of them are sent beyond that city, and even get as far as Montreal and Cleveland. They arrive in those cities in good condition. They are sent by express for 24 hours after leaving the cars at Detroit, and when arriving at their destination they are yet in good condition. Strawberries are something that you can transport for three or four days if you carry them right.

Q.—Does it make any difference whether or not the berry is on its stem when it is packed for shipping? A.—Those that are shipped are always on the stem. A berry that is off its stem is ruined for marketing purposes, and is ready to be eaten.

Q.—How many crops do you pick from one bed? A.—Usually two. Sometimes we have picked more, but on the whole it does not pay. I have sometimes thought that it did not pay to pick the second crop, but I guess it does.—*The Farmer's Review*.

"TOMMY, who was Joan of Arc?" asked the teacher. "Noah's wife," said Tommy, who is great at guessing.—*Harper's Bazar*.

FRIEND: "Well, Tommy, now that you've started to school, what do you like best?" Tommy: "Recess."—*Chicago Inter-Ocean*.