

STRAWBERRIES AT MAPLEHURST.



HE first fruit of the season, how eagerly sought after, and how much enjoyed by all. Many think only of it as a luxury, after all, and on that ground refuse to furnish their tables with fruit more than for an occasional feast. This is all a mistake, for the strawberry is a nutritious article of diet. About ten per cent. of its substance is dry matter; one-half of which is nitrogenous, or flesh-producing. True, about ninety per cent of the strawberry is water, but eighty-five per cent. of milk is water, and who denies that milk is nourishing food?

Unfortunately, this season is not favorable for a good crop of this most delicious fruit. The extreme drouth throughout Southern Ontario has almost ruined the crop, and even the advanced prices do not pay the grower. A grower near Grimsby Park has been irrigating his patch, elevating the water with wind-mill power. His crop, as a result, is almost phenomenal.

Two varieties among the late comers we have tested for two seasons, and are quite prepared to discard, viz., Michel and Bubach 24. These varieties are both very early, ripening about the 1st of June, but both are too unproductive to be profitable. The foliage, also, is very weak, and the whole plant is very sensitive to drouth. These varieties much resemble each other, and are good dessert varieties, but not worth planting in the commercial plantation.

Mr. T. T. Lyon, of the South Haven (Mich.) fruit-testing station, agrees with us in this estimate of those varieties. Under date 12th June, he writes: "The drouth and extreme heat are sadly pinching our strawberries. Michel is now almost past season with us (it ripens the crop almost at once), but yours are, no doubt, genuine. It is not profitable here. Bubach 24 is not quite productive enough here. The fine specimens of this are also gone with us. I doubt if it is at all disseminated. The same of Bubach 132 and 137. I have dropped all except 5 in my recent planting."

Saunders is a fine variety, of large size, and quite productive. It is about the same season as Williams, beginning to ripen the 10th of June this year; quite as productive, as vigorous, about equal in size, and a better berry.

It has also something of that agreeably brisk flavor, so characteristic of the old Wilson. This season, however, it is much inferior to last year, owing to the drouth.

Laxton's Noble was so highly commended in the Garden (London) that we expected great things of it; but, like other foreigners, it is ill adapted to Canadian soil and dry seasons. The foliage is somewhat subject to rust; the berries, instead of being immense in size as they are in England, are quite ordinary in size, and the

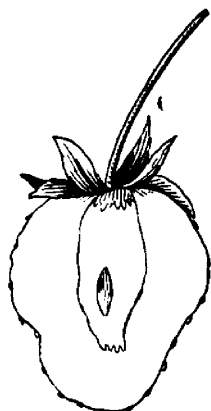


FIG. 791.
SAUNDERS IN '95.

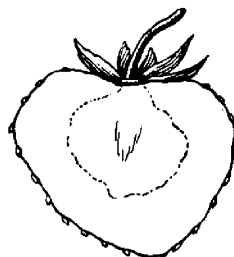


FIG. 792.
LAXTON'S NOBLE IN '95.