

2nd Class Certificate—Richard Starr, Nonpareils.

3rd Class Certificate—Dr. Hamilton, Nonpareils.—*Colonist*.

Communications.

CULTIVATION OF STRAWBERRIES.

[We have much pleasure in publishing the following communication from Mr. John Johnston, the intelligent gardener to Fr. Ellershausen, Esq., of Ellershouse, and hope to receive a continuation of contributions to the Journal.—*Ed.*]

As the season for making fresh plantations of strawberries is rapidly approaching, a few words concerning their cultivation might not be out of place at this time. First of all the soil should be a deep rich mellow loam, heavily manured, and either dug or trenched to the depth of two or three feet, as strawberries will, under favourable circumstances, send their roots down as far as three feet the first season. Strong, well rooted young plants should be selected, the runners cut away, and then carefully lift them with a trowel, plant in rows two feet apart and eighteen inches between the plants in the rows, tread the soil firmly round each plant as you proceed. The third week in August I prefer for planting, as then the plants have full time to get thoroughly established, and have their crowns (or buds) well ripened before the severe weather sets in. All that they require after planting is to keep them clear of weeds, and cut away any runners which they may put out till frost sets in, when a good layer of short manure is to be put in between the rows and round the plants, with an additional covering of spruce branches over all. In the spring, towards the end of March or beginning of April, take off the covering gradually so as not to let them get checked with the hard frosts at night and strong sun during the day. When the weather gets fine, rake the litter off that was put on in the fall and give them a dressing of good fresh rotten manure, dig it carefully in between the rows with the points of a digging fork. All decayed leaves should be removed from them; and all that has to be done then till the colouring of the fruit begins is to keep them clear of runners and weeds. When the fruit begins to colour good clean straw or short grass is to be put in between the rows and round the plants to prevent the fruit getting soiled. Some people use tiles made for the purpose, but I prefer straw, as the strong heat of the sun on the tiles ripens the one side of the fruit before the other. The same routine should be followed after the fruit is gathered as when they were first planted. By following the above directions the fruit will be far superior the second year, and the third

they will be at their best, when they should be dug down and a fresh plantation made, as they always degenerate more or less after the third year. A good plan is to have three successions, to dig down three years old plants, and supply their place with young ones. Single rows of lettuce may be planted between the strawberries the first year, but after that they are better left to themselves.—I prefer rows to the bed system of planting, as the plants can be better attended to and at the same time produce larger and finer flavoured fruit.

I subjoin a list of the best for general use:—Black Prince, very early, great bearer, good flavour; Keen's Seedling, a well known first class variety; Agriculturist, a splendid new American variety; Oscar, a fine, large, good flavoured variety; British Queen, one of the oldest, excellent flavour; Grove End Scarlet, a good variety for preserving.

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Arts and Manufactures.

BLASTING OIL—NITRO-GLYCERINE.

We have in "Alta California," a dozen columns of ample details of the inquest in the lamentable nitro-glycerine case of San Francisco, and accounts of the funerals of some of the principal persons killed. The explosion took place on 16th April. A box of "merchandise," without any indication of its dangerous contents had been received at San Francisco from France by way of New York and Panama. On arrival it was found by the Express Co. to be leaking. Some of the express officers proceeded to examine it, and the concussion caused by the use of a hammer or other instrument in opening, gave rise to the explosion which killed and destroyed everybody and everything within reach, men, horses, trucks, buildings, &c.

At Aspinwall on 3rd April, a similar explosion took place on board the steamer *European*, causing the total destruction of the ship, and the loss of the lives of her captain and the majority of her officers and crew, as well as of several persons resident in Aspinwall, besides doing an immense amount of damage to property on shore.

An explosion occurred some months previously at New York.

"Nobel, the German chemist, when the idea first flashed on his mind of the combination of nitric acid and glycerine, for purposes of explosion, little dreamed that the infernal compound was so soon to cause such terrible destruction of life and property at points thousands of miles from his laboratory. Here, in San Francisco,

we have scarcely recovered from the effects of the awful calamity of Monday last before news is flashed over the wires of another explosion of the same mixture at Aspinwall, by which fifty-one lives were lost, a ship and wharf destroyed, and damage done to the amount of a million of dollars.

"This nitro-glycerine is the most fearful, and, according to sad experience so far, the most unmanageable explosive agent which has ever been discovered.—It is to gun cotton what gun cotton was to gunpowder. It is impossible to form even an approximate idea of its tremendous power. If a single box was sufficient to shake the whole centre of this city like an earthquake, how tremendous must have been the crash at Aspinwall? Its force seems altogether to be too great for human control.

"One fact, however, connected with it is established beyond question—that it ought not to be transported, by land or sea, on any public conveyance. If the ingredients cannot be shipped separately, and then mixed at the point where it is to be employed, its use will have to be abandoned altogether. To place nitro-glycerine in wooden boxes, on board steamer, rail car, or stage coach, with the fearful results of the past few weeks before us, is to commit the most atrocious crime of which man is capable. Under such circumstances, the only course which can be pursued is that suggested by the Chamber of Commerce of this city. Congress is the only body that can grapple with the subject. It has, under the Constitution, "the power to regulate commerce." It is beyond question that unless the most stringent penalties are prescribed, nitro-glycerine will continue to be shipped to this State, under one guise or another.—The resolutions of the Chamber, asking the immediate passage of a law making it felony to ship the compound, were telegraphed on Thursday to Washington, and it is to be hoped that speedy action will be taken upon them."

Miscellaneous.

ACADIAN BOTANY.

PART II.

IRIS VERSICOLOR, LINNÆUS.—COMMON BLUE AMERICAN FLAG (FLEUR DE LIS).

Natural Order: IRIDACEÆ.

A herbaceous perennial plant, with thick root-stock, stout angled stem, and sword-shaped leaves. Flower showy; perianth of three large outer divisions (sepals), and three much smaller inner ones (petals); stamens three; stigmas three, petal-like. Flowers chiefly blue, variegated and veined with white, purple, &c. Flowers in June.