

There were a number of very valuable papers read, which will be published in their report.

Marshal P. Wilder was elected President; Patrick Barry, 1st Vice-President, and Charles W. Garfield, of Grand Rapids, Mich., Secretary. The next meeting will be held at Boston, Mass., in 1887.

Suggestions for Amateur Fruit Growers.

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No. 1.

I purpose writing a series of concise papers for the benefit of the farmer and the amateur fruit grower.

It is very confusing for an inexperienced person, when about to purchase trees and plants, to have placed before him a long catalogue of varieties, each one landed for some excellent quality, and from such a list to select those best suited to his requirements.

The object of these papers will be in part to place before the novice in fruit culture such varieties only as are thoroughly tested, and proved to be each the best of its season for the table or market. A small fruit garden, of properly selected varieties, will furnish the table with a daily supply of fresh fruit for the space of nearly three months, and how much more delicious such fruit is when freshly gathered from one's own bushes day by day, than when jammed about during a long journey and furnished second hand! An orchard of well chosen kinds of fruit trees will yield an ample supply of the larger fruits for the remaining nine months of the year, and thus at no season need the home lack for an abundant supply of one of the most important and healthful articles of diet.

A further object, then, will be to encourage the planting of fruit gardens, at least for home use, in all parts of our Dominion, by pointing out, as far as possible, varieties of fruits that may be successfully grown, even in the colder sections.

STRAWBERRIES.

There is no fruit which may be so successfully grown in almost every part of Canada as the strawberry. It will flourish luxuriantly in the north, because it may be so easily protected, either artificially with sawdust, straw or leaves, or naturally by the deep snows. Mr. Hickling, of Barrie, says the strawberry succeeds well in the Muskoka District, and Mr. A. A. Wright, of Renfrew, assures us that he has no trouble there in growing any variety he has yet tried, although the thermometer often registers more than 40° below zero. Mr. Charles E. Brown, of Yarmouth, N. S., says: "The strawberry, though late, attains a large size here, and under good cultivation yields large crops, giving more profit to the area planted than any other fruit;" while Mr. Whitcombe, of Moosejaw, Manitoba, tells us that in his garden strawberries have done remarkably well.

Among the many excellent varieties of the strawberry we would recommend the following as the most desirable, naming them in the order of ripening:

The *Early Canada* is valuable for its earliness. It is smaller than the well known *Wilson*, softer and not as good a bearer, but in southern Ontario, where it is desirable to have

an early berry to ship north, it is very important to have a small proportion of this variety.

The *Crescent* is not much behind the *Early Canada* in earliness, while it rivals, if not surpasses the *Wilson* in productiveness. On sandy soil it is preferable to the latter, being better able to endure the drouth, which so often ruins the crop. It is also more attractive in market than the *Wilson*, though slightly inferior in quality. Being pistillate, that is, having flowers without stamens, it needs here and there a row of *Wilson* or other kind with perfect blossoms, planted in the same patch, or near it.

The *Wilson's Albany* is still the most popular strawberry in Canada, in the north, south, east or west. On clay loam it is also the most desirable of all tried varieties for main crop for market. No variety excels it for productiveness upon such soil, and with many people its tartness only sharpens the appetite for its consumption. South of Lake Ontario it ripens about the middle of June, but north of that lake not till about the first of July or later.

The *Manchester* is the most promising of all the new varieties. So far I prefer it to any strawberry I know of for all purposes, and especially for the table. It is later than the *Wilson*, and consequently should be a most desirable market berry to grow in northern sections for shipping south. It is in many respects a typical strawberry. It is of a bright straw color, and like the wild strawberry in flavor, only sweeter. All the berries are large and perfect in shape, and the whole berry ripens and colors in a remarkably uniform manner.

The *Sharpless*, *Triomphe* and *Jucunda* are more or less grown as fancy varieties for table use. The first is the largest, and succeeds occasionally very well on sand, if kept well thinned out, but if the berry is the least over-ripe it has a disagreeable taste. The other two are best suited to clay loam, and need the highest cultivation.

The *James Vick* is an enormous bearer, but the fruit is often small and very imperfect in form.

The best strawberry markets for all ordinary kinds are the towns and villages nearest home. The great centres are of late so overstocked that the shipper to them is often a loser. During nearly a whole week this summer strawberries were wholesaled in Toronto at four cents per quart, and one shipper found himself in debt to the express company on the heaviest day's shipment of the season. Hamilton market was worse, the price sinking so low that one day seven quarts were sold for 25c.!

The net proceeds of the writer's strawberry crop during the last three years has been as follows: In 1883, an average of 12c. per qt.; in 1884, 8c., and in 1885, 5c. What may be expected from 1886?

CURRENTS.

This fruit succeeds the strawberry in the order of ripening, and cannot be left out of the farmer's garden, if only for home use. It also is very hardy, and can be grown throughout the vast extent of country from Nova Scotia to Manitoba; indeed, Mr. Whitcombe, writing from Moosejaw, says: "Currants can be grown here equal to any in Ontario."

The *Red Cherry* is the finest currant grown. If left till fully mature, the berries more resemble red cherries than currants, they are so

large, and on this account are very little trouble to stem. This variety succeeds best on clay loam. On sand it is apt to make too much wood, while on heavier soil well cultivated and enriched, it bears enormous crops.

Fay's Prolific is perhaps the most profitable currant to grow for market. It is a greater bearer than the *Cherry*, and the stems are longer, so that it is more easily gathered, but the berry is not quite as large.

The *White Grape* is the best white currant, and it is very desirable in the home garden. Nothing presents a more attractive appearance on the tea table than a glass dish with several compartments, each filled with a different colored fruit. But it is useless to grow the white currant for market, because they are less profitable than the red.

The *Black Naples* is the most reliable variety of black currants that has yet been thoroughly tried. With proper cultivation and pruning, and on good, rich clay loam, or on sand if not too light, good paying crops may be secured; but the expense of picking is double that for the red, and as the yield per acre is much less than that of the red, it must necessarily bring at least one-third more per lb. in the market to make it profitable.

Lee's Prolific has been introduced with a great flourish of trumpets, just as all new fruits are now-a-days heralded, and then sold at an extravagant price, but the difference between it and the *Black Naples* is barely observable.

The best markets for the currant are usually the large cities, where so many are used by confectioners and fruit preserving companies; but such quantities have been grown of late that there is a very small profit in growing them for shipping. During the past season the prevailing price has been 6c. per qt. for red, and from 8c. to 10c. per qt. for black currants in the Toronto fruit market.

According to an Indian authority who writes an interesting letter on the subject to the *St. Paul Press*, wheat growing in India is annually becoming a more important business; and if the rate of increased production and export be maintained, it will not be many years before the demand of England will be principally supplied from her Indian empire, while other European countries will find their deficit replenished from the same source. The Indian producer, however, in his competition with America will be handicapped first by the quality of his wheat, and second by the cost of production. Indian wheat is soft wheat, and can never hope to take the place now being assumed by the Manitoba hard wheat, the flour from which has been tested and has been proven to be superior for baking purposes to any other. Even should the Indian wheat be largely used it would have to be mixed with some hard American variety. The cost of producing wheat in India and shipping it to England is computed at 97 cents per bushel, that is to say, it can be laid down in London at that price. To the disgust of Canadian farmers that price is being beaten now from this side of the water. It is difficult to say how, in view of the growth in the competition, wheat-growers are going to fare in the near future; but farmers cannot do better than resolve not to carry all their eggs in one basket.