

Reviews and Abstracts

The Strawberry. 1966. By George M. Darrow. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 447 pages. \$15.00.

This unique book is, in the reviewer's opinion, one of the classics of modern horticultural literature. The author, George Darrow, needs no introduction, for he is the dean of American strawberry breeders.

All who have a special interest in strawberries should be ever grateful to the late Henry Wallace (former Vice-President of the United States, Secretary of Agriculture, and plant breeder) for having conceived this book, and for having inspired and encouraged George Darrow to write it. It was most fitting and deserved that "The Strawberry" was dedicated to his memory.

"The Strawberry" was written primarily as a reference and guide for the strawberry breeders of the world. It first tells of the origin and history of the strawberry, giving considerable attention to Antoine Nicholas Du-

chesne, whose hybridization and classification of the *Fragaria* species near the middle of the nineteenth century, showed a scientific astuteness unusual for his time.

The historical material also includes much on the early strawberry improvement done in 19th century, and tells of the efforts of Thomas Andrew Knight and Thomas Laxton in England, and Gabriel Pelvain, F. Gloede and others in France.

One chapter deals with the genetic studies of the strawberry. Another describes the different *Fragaria* species. Considerable space is devoted to the description and origin of the strawberries of America from 1800 to the present time, with many excellent colored plates. It is of interest to note that although the original parents of the modern strawberry are two American species, *Fragaria chiloensis* and *F. virginiana*, the actual parents of the first American varieties, such as Hovey and Wilson, were developed in Europe.

One of the most valuable sections of this book consists of descriptions of the strawberry breeding programs of the world, with emphasis on those developed in the Americas.

Also included are brief biographies of most of the important strawberry breeders of the world, with photographic portraits of each breeder and a statement of their most important contributions to strawberry breeding.

For the reader with a more general interest in the strawberry, there are chapters on the morphology and physiology of the plant and the effects of climate on it.

"The Strawberry" is truly a scholarly, and beautiful book, well worth having and using.

—G. M. Kessler



Fig. 1. George McMillan Darrow, author of "The Strawberry," examining the fruit of strawberry seedlings. (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.)