

CAUCASUS, MR. FRANK N. MEYER, AGRICULTURAL EXPLORER. Writes from Tiflis, April 1, that he has heard of three new varieties of grapes, two of them white table grapes that will keep for a year, and the third from the Erivan district, which stands more alkali than any other variety. Among the specimens sent with this letter were three varieties of hazelnuts, and a fine sample of dried fruits of *Prunus insititia*; also samples of a Caucasian sweetmeat made from condensed grape juice, flour and nuts. Writes from Piatigorsk, May 8, that he has found a plant collector who has been all through Central Asia, Russian and Chinese Turkestan, parts of Mongolia, of Persia and nearly the whole of the Caucasus. He is arranging to have him accompany him on his trip. On his journey from Tiflis to Piatigorsk he found wild pears, apples, plums and cherries in full bloom in the valleys, while the higher plateaus were still covered with snow. Has heard of several new things, among them a very hardy variety of black currant (*Ribes nigrum caucasicum*), growing in high mountain regions in Northwestern Caucasus, where the cold is extreme; also a wonderful variety of sweet table grape in a mountain valley near the northeast coast, having berries as large as Reine Claude plums. There are also quinces in that section, weighing as much as 2 lbs. apiece, which can be eaten like apples after they have lain a couple of months. There is a native species of Asparagus, *A. verticillatus*, the thin, green young shoots of which make an excellent vegetable with a much more piquant taste than our ordinary asparagus.