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AN

INITIATORY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED

At Geneva, 27th November, 1828,

BEFORE AN ASSEMBLY, FROM WHICH, ON THAT DAY, WAS FORMED

THE DOMESTIC

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

OF THE

WESTERN PARTS OF THE STATE OF NEW-YORK.

BY MYRON HOLLEY, ESQ.

Geneva:

PRINTED BY JAMES BOGERT.

1828.

AT the first Meeting of "THE DOMESTIC HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY *of the Western parts of the State of New-York,*" held at GENEVA, 27th November, 1828—

RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Society be tendered to Mr. HOLLEY, for his eloquent and instructive INITIATORY ADDRESS; and that a copy of the same be requested for publication, under the direction of the Committee of Managers of the Society.

Extract from the Minutes.

ANDREW GLOVER,
Recording Secretary.

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ADDRESS, &c.

Friends and Fellow-Citizens:

THE impulse which has brought together, at this place, so intelligent and respectable an assembly, affords a happy omen for the Institution here intended to be formed. We are now making the first attempt, in this vicinity, to associate members in the work of informing, refining and extending a taste for Horticulture. And, while it is natural for all of us who delight in the beautiful and useful productions of the garden, and the orchard, to rejoice in this public manifestation of favour for the cultivation of them, it may be both agreeable and appropriate to introduce the more specific business of this Address, by some references to the past.

Forty years ago the country which we now occupy in such full and secure enjoyment, presented a widely different scene. Then, the wealth of nature, so profusely lavished upon this goodly region, lay all secluded and unvalued. In vain our plains teemed with fertility, our streams rippled over their declivities, and our lakes stretched their beautiful surfaces along the most safe and accessible shores. The rude and unbroken forest; the wild and lonely waters, covered and concealed every thing, and the whole land was shared by the deer, the bear, the wolf and the panther, with the

savage man, who hunted, and fished, and fought, and suffered in it, but who could not properly be deemed either to possess, or to enjoy it.

The Fathers of the Genesee Country are not yet mentioned with the same emphatic respect which accompanies every allusion to the venerable pilgrims of Plymouth; but, by their high practical virtues, by their brave enterprise, their undergoing fortitude, and their prevailing faith, they proved themselves to be truly derived from the same stock.

Since the date of their bold advance into the wilderness, we have become so familiar with new settlements, growing prosperously and secure, that we can hardly estimate the disregard of ease, and all the soft enjoyments of life, which they must necessarily have entertained. For, since that period, what transformations have we witnessed! How far beyond us the tide of cultivated population has flowed! How many new and powerful states have been founded, in place of the gloomy woods, and their fierce possessors! Then, the Indian title to our country was first extinguished, though it still remained in full and acknowledged force, to an extensive territory between us and the nearest limits of civilization. Then, a foreign nation, recently at war with ours, was in possession of all the military posts within our limits, as well as its own, upon our northern frontier; where it kept strong garrisons, and maintained an intercourse with the Indian tribes which inflamed their barbarous propensities towards our citizens. And the Indians themselves, having been arrayed on the side of our enemy, in the same war, and having seen their crops destroyed, their orchards cut down, and their dwellings given to the flames by our success-

ful soldiery, were unusually prone to vengeance. Then, too, our own government was not able to interpose the ample shield of its established power, for the protection of the dissevered settlements of its remote interior; for it was tottering with debility, and showed frightful symptoms of dissolution under the old confederation.

Such were some of the repulsive circumstances under which the small band of our adventurous predecessors, in the fall of 1788, and, *in this very spot*, first planted that broad and spreading tree of life, which, by so many and such vigorous branches, now adorns and gladdens the land. With what unshrinking resolution, with what bold hope, did they sustain themselves!—The character of their undertaking, in their own estimate, included much privation and personal hazard.—These they met with wary prudence and manly firmness. Continual and unmitigated labour they expected, and cheerfully encountered. They were often subjected to hunger without food; to sickness without the aid of nurse or physician, and to bloodshed from the savage. But they had great and beneficent objects, and they succeeded. The civil and social good which they intended, is made certain. And though they had to struggle much, and to endure much, they also enjoyed much.

No associations among men create stronger ties of friendly regard than those which necessarily exist between the first adventurers into new and dangerous settlements. And the sincerity and constancy of this regard, in respect to real enjoyment, often makes up, and more than makes up, for all the loss of ease, and luxury, and formal courtesy, which are usually found in long established, populous, and wealthy communities.

This was eminently the joy of our predecessors. But this was not all their joy. Their spirits were perpetually refreshed by glowing anticipations of the future.—They knew the importance of their exertions. They laboured, and suffered, in perfect assurance that they were laying the foundation of the great blessings which we enjoy, and of yet greater blessings to come. And like affectionate Fathers, they rejoiced in the foreseen joy of their descendants.

And now, if in the land of their hopes, their trials, and their toils, the most useful and creative arts have set up their dominion, and are already exhibiting their most desirable trophies: if Agriculture has placed her axes, her ploughs and her flails into the strongest hands for our advancement, and made the fertility of our plains to fill innumerable granaries: if Manufacture, with her wheels, her lathes and her spindles, has already peopled the banks of our streams, and is rapidly drawing all the weight of their waters into our service: if Internal Trade, with her hosts of active, clear-sighted and diligent agents, is filling our lakes with her various and ingenious craft: Then, while with devoted homage, and pious gratitude, we ascribe the praise and glory of these results to our Heavenly Father, let us also often recall, to the most respectful memory, the distinguished men who first opened the great theatre on which they are displayed.

Holding such views of the character and deserts of those who have gone before us, and desiring the continued advancement of the country which they left us, so exuberant in the bounties of physical nature, and so replete with all the substantial comforts, and many of the elegancies of life, some of us have supposed that a

Horticultural Society might be rendered one of the means of its further improvement. And, conscious that such an institution would increase our own enjoyment of one of the most appropriate and delightful of human occupations, we gave the notice, which has been the occasion of this assembly.

Horticulture is the most ancient of the useful arts.—It was the great employment assigned to man by his omniscient Creator, before guilt had invaded his heart, or sorrow had wrinkled his brow. In the first freshness of the world, as it was called into being, clothed with every ornament of which it was susceptible, when every herb and tree that grew upon it, every bird that flew in its air, every fish that swam in its waters, and every animal that walked upon its earth, was pronounced, by perfect Wisdom, to be "very good," then a Garden was the crown of its attractions, and "to dress it, and to keep it," was an employment worthy of its only rational inhabitants.

An employment suitable to the pure enjoyments of Paradise before the fall, has always been esteemed useful and desirable since. And it is probable that Adam, after he was sent forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground, and had sought to regain the favour of his Maker by repentance and submission, still cherished a fond attachment to it. It is certain that a taste for it has been nearly the uniform inheritance of his children. For, in every age, those nations which have been most conspicuous for knowledge, and power, and refinement, have been most remarkable for their love of Horticulture.

During their Egyptian bondage the Jews were accustomed to an abundance of garden vegetables: for, in the book of Numbers, we find them, in the wilderness,

complaining for the want of "the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlicks," which they were wont to eat in Egypt. If the Jews, in their servitude, were habituated to the enjoyment of these articles, which have always been among the most prized of garden esculents in warm climates, we may reasonably infer that the state of Egyptian Horticulture was far advanced. Moses himself, in setting forth the attractions of the land of Canaan, for the purpose of more effectually exciting his nation to obey God, represents it as producing vines, fig-trees, and pomegranates, plants of the garden; as well as wheat, barley, oil, and honey. And he directs, that, when they shall have planted all manner of trees, for food, they shall not partake of their fruits until the fifth year, the fruits of the fourth year being devoted to the Lord, and the earlier fruits not being permitted to ripen; doubtless for the benefit of the trees.

In later times the Jews are represented, in the scriptures, as having delighted themselves with eating in gardens, under bowers and shady places. And the most striking images by which they expressed a state of great national security and prosperity, are drawn from a garden, where every one ate and drank under his own vine and fig-tree, with none to molest him. In the Song of Solomon, the wisest of men is addressed as having a thousand vineyards, with two hundred persons to keep their fruits; and as dwelling in the gardens.—In the first book of Chronicles, those who wrought fine linen, and potters employed by the king, are mentioned as having lodged in his gardens.

The 7th book of Homer's Odyssey contains a beautiful description of the garden of the good and hospit-

able king Alcinous, of which the following is Pope's translation:

"CLOSE to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies.
Four acres was th' allotted space of ground,
Fenc'd with a green enclosure all around.
Tall thriving trees confessed the fruitful mould;
The redd'ning apple ripens here to gold.
Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows.
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear.
And verdant olives flourish round the year.
The balmy spirit of the western gale
Eternal breathes, on fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping pear, a following pear supplies;
On apples apples, figs on figs arise:
The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.
"Here order'd vines, in equal ranks appear,
With all th' united labors of the year:
Some to unload the fertile branches run;
Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun;
Others to tread the liquid harvest join;
The groaning presses foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early flower descried,
Here grapes discolour'd on the sunny side,
And there in autumn's richest purple dy'd.
Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous order terminate the scene.
Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect crowned:
This through the garden leads its streams around,
Visits each plant, and waters all the ground."

But the hanging gardens of Babylon, if they were not more fruitful than that of Alcinous, were vastly more expensive and more picturesque. And what makes them more interesting is the spirit of courtesy in which they were constructed. Nebuchadnezzar made them to

gratify the taste of his wife, who being by birth a Mede, and accustomed to the view of mountainous regions, did not perfectly enjoy the rural prospects of the level country around her husband's capital. These gardens were four hundred feet square, and consisted of terraces raised one above another to the height of three hundred and fifty feet. These terraces were ascended by steps ten feet wide, and supported by massy arches upon arches of solid masonry, the whole being surrounded and strengthened by a wall twenty-two feet thick. The floor of each terrace was made impervious to water, and covered with a sufficient depth of soil to support the largest trees, and the innumerable shrubs and plants with which it was embellished. And upon the upper terrace was a reservoir, which was filled with water from the river by an ingenious engine, of such dimensions as to supply the moisture required by all the terraces.

Among the Greeks, the city of Athens, more illustrious than any other city upon which the sun has ever shone, for the immortal models of art and genius which she has furnished the human race, was surrounded by gardens and groves. Without her walls, but near them, were those of the Lyceum, of the Cynosarges, of the the Academy, of Epicurus, and of Plato. In the tranquil and elegant retirement of these scenes, the most virtuous and venerable of the heathen sages successively received, and imparted, all the lights of ancient philosophy.

The Romans were peculiarly fond of gardens. In their cities the common people used to have representations of them in their windows. And several of their noble families derived their names from their cultiva-

tion of certain kinds of garden vegetables; as the Fabii, Lentuli, and Lactucini. So attached to gardens were the lowest populace of Rome, that in the inimitably artful speech of Antony over the body of Cæsar, as presented to us by Shakspeare, the last degree of indignation is excited in their minds against his murderers, by the generous disposition which they were told Cæsar had made of his gardens in his will. Antony assures them, "Moreover he hath left you all his walks, his private arbours, and new planted orchards, on this side Tiber:—he hath left them you, and to your heirs for ever, common pleasures, to walk abroad and recreate yourselves." Upon this they could no longer be restrained, but resolved, at once, to burn the traitors' houses.

The most ancient of the Roman gardens referred to in history, was that of Tarquin the Proud, in which that monster is said to have intimated his intention to destroy the people of Gabii, by striking off the heads of the flowers: from which I think it reasonable to infer, that he did not make the garden. But the most magnificent of the Roman gardens were those of Lucullus, which he made when the power of that empire was greatest, and her wealth and luxury the most conspicuous. In these gardens artificial elevations of earth were made to a surprising height; expensive buildings were projected into the sea, and large lakes were excavated upon land. The enormous cost of these works Lucullus was able to defray by the spoils of Asia, in which he had been a most successful commander. Plutarch represents him as having possessed eminent military and civil merits, and as having a profound veneration for Grecian philosophy, in which he was deeply pro-

ficient; though that distinguished biographer regarded, as frivolous amusements, his sumptuous villas, his walks, his paintings, his statues, and his other works of art. Lucullus was a literary, accomplished, and opulent epicure, and, at the same time, a sincere patriot. For while, on the one hand, he delighted in all the offerings of the muses, and enjoyed them, in the highest degree, with Cicero and many of their other favorites, whom he was accustomed to entertain at his Tusculan villa, with all the dainties of Roman life; on the other hand he was the most cordial and efficient friend of Cato, in the senate-house, in all his measures to preserve the commonwealth against the ambitious designs of Pompey and Cæsar.

In the later days of Rome, the elegant and polished Pliny was devoted to his gardens; and it is probable that his Tuscan villa exhibited the most tasteful and beautiful, if not the most costly garden of all antiquity. Situated in the midst of a vast natural amphitheatre, at the base of the Appenine mountains, and surrounded with hills covered with lofty and venerable woods, with the river Tiber and all its navigation running through the middle of the prospect, it had every external beauty of scenery which art and nature could bestow. And within its fences it was adorned with all the trees, and shrubs, and flowers, and herbs, and walks, and hedges, and porticos, and summer houses, and alcoves, and seats, and basins, and artificial fountains, that were then acceptable to the most cultivated love of rural refinement.

The taste for gardens, in modern times, has not been less universal, nor less operative. They are frequently mentioned in the history of the earliest monkish

establishments, and religious houses, during the dark ages. Italy and France have been long conspicuous for their general and ostentatious Horticulture. They are more celebrated for their cultivation of delicious fruits, for their ornamental and shady walks, and their various and refreshing artificial fountains of water, than for the excellence of their culinary vegetables.

Holland and Flanders were very early distinguished, as they still are, for their love of plants and flowers, in which they have probably excelled all the other people of Europe. Previous to the sixteenth century exotics were more cultivated there than any where else, and their gardens contained a great variety of rare plants. At that early day they carried on a considerable commerce in these articles. They imported plants from the Levant and both the Indies, and exported them to England, France and Germany. Before the time of Henry the eighth, the London market was supplied with culinary herbs and roots from Holland. And during many reigns afterwards the English kings obtained their gardeners from that country.

The soil of Great Britain was considered unfit for the finest productions of Horticulture till within the last century. It was always unrivalled for the freshness and beauty of its verdure. But, it has been known only within the three or four last generations to have paid great attention to the ornamental cultivation of its pleasure grounds, or the profitable produce of its kitchen and fruit gardens. Since the general introduction of forcing houses, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, her noblemen, and other men of taste and opulence, have been wonderfully successful in the finest arts of cultivation. Now there is said to be more cer-

tainty of finding pine apples, of domestic growth, in the London market, every day in the year, than there is either in Jamaica or Calcutta.

The total number of vegetable species, not indigenous, in England, introduced previous to the accession of George the 4th, is said to have been 11,970; of which the first 47 were brought in before and during the reign of Henry 8th; 533 during that of Elizabeth; 578 during the reign of the two Charles', and Cromwell; 44 in that of James 2nd; 298 in that of William and Mary; 230 in that of Anne; 182 in that of George 1st; 1770 in that of George 2nd; and 6756 in that of George the 3d.

The civilized nations of the earth are now vieing with each other in Horticultural establishments. And since the discoveries of Linneus, a new and most valuable object has been extensively connected with many of them, which has given them additional claims to intelligent favour: I allude to the promotion of Botanic science. Europe has numerous public amd private gardens, in which the splendours of Horticulture are most happily combined with this enchanting pursuit.

In our own country there have been several attempts, by individuals, and by associations, to effect the same agreeable combination. These attempts are exceedingly laudable, and, if duly encouraged, will ensure extensive and lasting benefits. They are like to be essentially aided by the United States' government.—For, during the last year, we were told by one of its public functionaries, that the President had much at heart the introduction into our country, from abroad, of plants of every description not already known among us, whether used as food, or for purposes connected

with the arts, through the agency of our ministers, consuls, and other public agents in foreign countries.

Ornamental gardening, in its broadest range, has at one time or another been made to include almost every class of objects, both in nature and art, from the association of which pleasure could naturally be derived. Milton describes the garden of Eden as containing, "in narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea more, a heaven on earth."

But the more restricted and essential idea of a garden, is that of a place where, by the aid of cultivation, vegetable productions may be reared more excellent in kind, and more pleasing in distribution, than the ordinary growth of nature. Beauty and use are both included, though they may both exist, in an almost infinite diversity of relative proportions, according to the diversities of taste, and skill, and means in cultivators.

The direct objects of gardening, in the more restricted definition, besides earth and water, are trees, and shrubs, and fruits, and flowers, and esculent vegetables, with the best modes of propagating, nourishing, arranging, improving, and preserving them. To these objects the manuring, mixing and working of soils, the construction of fences, walks, terraces, quarters, borders, trellises, arbours and implements, are every where subsidiary; while, in climates subject to frost, the wall, the hot-bed and the green-house are valuable and agreeable auxiliaries.

The successful conduct of the business of a garden requires labour, vigilance and knowledge. Ever since the sentence of the Most High subjected man to earn his bread in the sweat of his face, labour has been the appointed means of his advancement and happiness.—

Without it, it is impossible for us to have healthy bodies, or cheerful minds. And the worth of all the valuable possessions which we acquire, is measured by the amount of it which they respectively involve. It is not wonderful, therefore, that much of it is essential to the most desirable Horticulture. Though it is not merely gross corporeal labour that is required.

> "Strength may wield the ponderous spade,
> May turn the clod, and wheel the compost home;
> But elegance, chief grace the garden shows,
> And most attractive, is the fair result
> Of thought, the creature of a polish'd mind."

And labour is not more indispensable than vigilance —keen-sighted, unremitted vigilance. Many of the nurselings of the garden are so tender and so exposed to accidents, for months together, that an hour's neglect may lead to careless ruin, and disappoint hopes long and fondly cherished.

But, without knowledge, labour and vigilance are vain. The accomplished gardener must know the best manner and time of performing a great multiplicity of manual operations peculiar to each season of the year, all of which are essential to his success, and the knowledge of which cannot be obtained without much experience and observation. Every direct and every subsidiary object of his pursuit demands care, and reflection, and knowledge. He must not only know the modes and times of propagating trees, and shrubs, and flowers, of which there are several already understood, as applicable to many of them; the proper use of the pruning knife, so essential to some of his highest purposes; the various means of improving the flavour and size of fruits, which will be acknowledged to have been

most successfully introduced, when it is remembered that the largest and most delicious apples upon our tables have been derived from the austere English crab; the measures most effective towards meliorating the less esteemed culinary vegetables, which he will not consider unimportant when he learns that some of them, now the most savoury and nutritious, were, in their uncultivated state, of but little claim to notice, such as the asparagus, the celery, the cauliflower, the potato; the charming art of managing flowers, by which the single and almost scentless blossoms of nature have been swelled into much greater compass, and new varieties of beauty, and filled with an intenser fragrance: but the accomplished gardener should understand the best methods of acclimating plants not indigenous, which may contribute, prodigiously, to embellishment and use, and which involves the knowledge of botanical geography. And he should have all that science which may be conducive to the utmost possible perfection of every subject of his care. To this end chemistry, natural history, and botany are necessary.

The productions of the garden are affected, either for evil or for good, in the different stages of their growth, by the most minute and the most magnificent objects in nature, by the bugs, by the worms, by the flies, by the birds, by the clouds, by the air, by the sun. The knowledge of these objects, with all their means of favour or annoyance, and the superadded knowledge of all the other objects and means by which the effects of these, so far as they are good, may be promoted, and so far as they are evil, may be prevented, should be embraced within the scope of his acquirements. The science of Horticulture, therefore, does not merely ad-

mit—it demands, excites, and favours the most extensive and diversified intellectual attainments.

But, it has pleasures to bestow which amply repay all its demands, both upon the body and the mind.

It gratifies all the senses.

The feeling is gratified, by its smooth walks, its soft banks, the touch of many of its leaves, and fruits, and flowers, and by the refreshing coolness of its shades.

The smell is agreeably excited, from unnumbered sources. From the lowliest pot-herb to the stateliest tree; from the humble violet and mignionette to the splendid tulip and the queenly rose, a garden is the unrivalled repository of fragrance.

The gratification of the ear, in a garden, is adventitious, not of man's procurement, but nevertheless certain and real. The most tasteful of the animal creation, in their flight, from one end of the earth to the other, discover no spot so alluring to them as a well replenished garden. The birds are fond of its shade, its flowers and its fruit. Amidst these they love to build their nests, rear their young, and first win them to that element which seems created to be their peculiar field of joy. And if they sometimes commit unwelcome inroads upon the delicacies which we prize, they more than compensate us by their cheerful and continual songs, and by destroying innumerable and more dangerous intruders in the air, in the trees, upon the plants, and on the ground.

The taste finds its choicest regalement in the garden, in its sweet roots, its crisp and tender sallads, its nutritious and acceptable pulse, its pungent and salutary condiments, its fragrant and delicious fruits, with a countless list of other palatable productions, all exist-

ing in such inexhaustible variety, that the art of cookery takes more than half its subjects from that overflowing store-house.

But the eye delights in a garden, as if all its labours, its cares and its knowledge had been dedicated to that single sense. From every quarter, and border, and arbour; from every bank, and walk, and plant, and shrub, and tree; from every single object, every group of objects, and every combination of groups, spring forms of beauty, fresh, living, well proportioned, graceful beauty, natural though cultivated, innocent though gay.

Horticulture gratifies the higher faculties of our nature, the intellectual taste, the reason, the heart.

Doctor Aiken has justly remarked, that "no pleasure, derived from art, has been so universal as that taken in gardens." And from the remark we should infer, what the history of every enlightened people will demonstrate, that, on no subject have men exerted themselves more, for the display of taste, than on this.—That delicate power of gifted and cultivated minds, which almost intuitively discerns, and nicely enjoys, all the genuine beauties of nature and art, and turns, with sudden disgust, from every species of deformity, has always regarded a well stored, well arranged, and well dressed garden with peculiar satisfaction. And this is, undoubtedly, owing, not solely or chiefly to the numberless and exquisite gratifications of sense which such a garden affords, but also to the pleasing effect which it naturally produces on the imagination, and other faculties of the mind.

All desirable objects which excite the mind without fatiguing it, are the sources of agreeable emotion. And

the senses, which we have seen are all brought over to be the advocates of Horticulture by most of the wealth of nature, of which they can appreciate the value, are, in a garden, constantly soliciting the mental faculties. The eye particularly, by its delicate susceptibilities, its great range, and the number of objects which it can embrace at a single glance, is for ever exciting the imagination by the most agreeable appearances which it presents, of colour and form, each considered singly in all its varieties, and both blended into combinations more diversified and more beautiful than even those of the kaleidoscope. And the imagination yielding to the excitement, calls up the other intellectual powers to partake of her pleasures. Then, the higher joys of taste commence: then, the exalted beauties of order, design, intelligence, are disclosed: then, objects are viewed in reference to their congruity, their contrast, their regularity, their proportion, their simplicity, their variety, their novelty, their beauty, their sublimity, their adaptation to an end, and the value of that end. Each of these views introduces a broad theme of agreeable contemplation. Collectively they comprehend all the charms and glories of the external world; every thing but the moral sense, and the sympathies of the heart. And I shall endeavor to show, that they are of vast importance to the highest improvement and proper enjoyment of these. But, before entering upon that exhibition, which necessarily refers to the most comprehensive and permanent benefits of which man can be made the partaker, permit me to advert to several of the subordinate benefits of Horticulture.

The proper objects, and pleasures, and uses of Horticulture are all beneficial, and are acknowledged to be

so, universally. And it may well be thought extraordinary, with this acknowledgment, that societies for its promotion were not earlier established. It is not surprising that they did not exist among the nations of antiquity, because, among them, there was not, in general, indulged to private people sufficient freedom of communication and concerted action to permit such institutions. Besides, if the inclinations of the common people were ever so much in favour of the fruits and pleasures of gardening, it was impossible for any to cultivate or to enjoy them extensively, but the great ones of the earth. They were of too costly a relish for general participation. Kings and princes, generals and senators, applied to them their power, with emulous devotion. How would the interests of humanity have been promoted if their power had never been worse applied!

But considering the more enlarged diffusion of wealth and freedom, in modern times, it might have been expected that associations, in aid of their rational pleasures, and beneficial uses, would have been sooner commenced and more generally adopted. It is believed that no such association existed in the world before the latter end of the last century. Though if their rise was late, it was honourable. It is certainly creditable to human nature that the first of these institutions proceeded from the exalted and liberal motives originating in the love of science. Botanical societies paved the way for Horticultural societies, and for associations, in which the objects of both were happily united. Soon after the great northern light of the world of natural science shed its benignant beams, with peculiar brilliancy, upon botany, revealing all the recesses of that

science to the admiring observation of man, societies were instituted for its promotion. Several of these exist on the continent of Europe, under the patronage of men illustrious for science and philanthropy.

In 1805 a private association for Horticultural objects was commenced in London, which was incorporated by royal charter, in 1809. In 1803, in Edinburgh, a Florist society was instituted, which, in 1809, enlarged its views and took the title of the Caledonian Horticultural society. At Paisley, in Scotland, a Florist society was, some time ago, established, of which an eminent writer observes, that "the rearing of beautiful flowers is found to improve the taste for manufacturing elegant patterns of fancy muslin; while the florists of Paisley have been long remarked for the peacefulness of their dispositions, and the sobriety of their manners."

Several Botanical and Horticultural societies have been commenced in the United States, some of which are rapidly advancing in importance and respectability. The influence of them collectively, and of their several scientific and public spirited members, individually, has been very perceptible in awakening a general desire for the improved cultivation of gardens and pleasure grounds, and an increasing love of rural pursuits. One of the most useful of these is, the New-York Horticultural society, which was originally formed in 1818, though not incorporated till 1822. The effects of this society are most agreeably manifested in the superior quantity and quality of culinary vegetables, fruits and flowers to be found in the New-York market; in the emulation excited among actual cultivators; in the valuable practical publications, upon gardening and planting, which

it has encouraged, and in the public discourses of several of its most intelligent and accomplished members.—With these societies, I trust, the institution which we are now assembled to originate, will become an active and useful fellow laborer.

The benefits of such associations are numerous and of great importance.

They encourage profitable industry. In the vicinity of London there are occupied, as fruit and kitchen gardens, about 14,000 acres of land, of which the annual produce is sold for more than 4,000,000 dollars.—Within six miles of Edinburgh, there are computed to be 500 acres, occupied in the same way, of which the annual produce is worth near 100,000 dollars. For the supply of the New-York market with vegetables, fruits and flowers, there are cultivated several thousand acres of land, of which the aggregate annual produce, in the market, is supposed to be near $400,000. The portions of earth thus cultivated, are far more productive than any other equal portions of land in the countries where they are situated. And they give a healthy and virtuous employment to great multitudes of human beings.

They promote important practical knowledge, by the inquiries which they stimulate, and the competition which they inspire. They lead to the institution of an immense number of more skilful and careful processes of cultivation than are previously followed, from some of which advantageous results may be reasonably anticipated. And by conversation, by writing, by public addresses, and every other method of communicating knowledge, every advantageous result will immediately be shared by the whole community.

They create a new spirit of Horticultural and botanical enterprise. In our country, a necessary and most desirable consequence of this will be, that we shall obtain a complete acquaintance with all our indigenous vegetables. From the east and from the west, from the north and from the south, our native plants will all be gathered. Every swamp, and every valley, every plain and every mountain, which is surveyed by the American eagle, in his widest flight, will be made tributary, with all its vegetable wealth, to the great interests of science and humanity.

The science of Horticulture is capable of great improvement, even in those countries where it has been most sedulously fostered. Recently, by the application of scientific ingenuity, better apples and pears are said to have been originated in England and Flanders, than any before known. And those countries, now vastly in advance of us in Horticulture, are making new discoveries and acquisitions from year to year. The finest fruits and plants we now cultivate; those which are essential to comfort, as well as those which minister to luxury, are not natives of our country. Our potatoes, peaches, pears, and the better kinds of plums, cherries and apples, have been all brought to us from abroad.—And we are not yet in possession of a tithe of the nutritious and desirable fruits and plants with which the earth is stored. In relation to all these, inquiry and competition, suggested and aided by the combined intelligence, applause, and other rewards of public associations, will be beneficial. By these means an extensive acquaintance with the most esteemed Horticultural productions, of every country, will be obtained; and the most sagacious and persevering use of all the means

necessary for their acquisition, will be adopted. Calling in the aid of men of science, of amateurs, and cultivators, both at home and abroad, such societies may become the fortunate instruments of disseminating, universally, every valuable seed, and plant, and tree, which is borne upon the prolific bosom of the earth.

The tendencies of such associations are all liberal, and philanthropic, and social. By uniting gentlemen of all classes, professions and opinions in the prosecution of interesting and commendable objects, the amiable and elegant courtesies of life will be extended.—Their stated meetings will be embellished by taste, intelligence, and festive refinement; and all will go away from them with a keener relish of the beauties of nature, and a more cheerful devotion to rural employments.

By promoting the knowledge and the love of nature, they are calculated to improve the conduct of life, and the sympathies of the heart. The pleasures of gardening are retired, peaceful, calm. They are equally suitable to the gayety of advancing, and the gravity of declining, life. How much the pure attachment to home is strengthened, in the hearts of children, by uniting their exertions, their solicitudes, and their tastes in the various decorations of the garden! Impressions formed at home, decide the future character. And can it be that these sympathetic impressions, upon the domestic affections, are not beneficial to moral conduct? Ask the sons and daughters of those who have been able to indulge their taste for ornamental shrubbery and gardening, when they are withdrawn from the paternal roof, what objects are most vividly and tenderly associated, in their minds, with those whom they most love, and you will soon learn the value of the shady walk,

the bursting bud, and the fragrant arbour. One of the most pathetic passages of English poetry, is Eve's farewell to the garden of Eden.

"MUST I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye names!
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
Thee, lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorn'd,
With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world; to this obscure
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits?"

To old age the employments of Horticulture are delightful and appropriate. They afford a secure retreat from the noise, turbulence, ingratitude, and fierce contentions of a stormy world; and inspire serenity and cheerfulness. Cicero, in his letters to Atticus, speaks of them as the best remedy for grief and concern of mind. In a thousand ways a garden serves to keep fresh and elastic the springs and sympathies of life.—The heart finds interesting remembrances, and soothing society, in all its objects. That shade is most refreshing, which is afforded by trees of our own planting: that fruit is most delicious, which we have most frequently participated with our friends: those flowers have the brightest bloom, which have been the joy, and the ornament of our wives and children.

Horticulture is favourable to universal charity, to virtuous reflection, and to the highest attainments of which the soul of man is capable. Surrounded with fragrance, and harmony, and beauty, and order, all giving witness to the attributes of their Great Creator, that heart must be dreadfully perverse which is not spontaneously filled with gladness and gratitude for such accumulated blessings. And these sentiments naturally dispose us to regard, with the most cordial complacency, all the works of the same hand.

Of all organized beings, trees, and leaves, and flowers, appear to me to afford the most obvious traces of the intelligence and goodness of God. A very small portion of knowledge and curiosity is sufficient to discern the marks of design in their structure; and still less, to apprehend the tendency of that design. They minister to so many of our essential wants, our habitual comforts, and our innocent enjoyments, that their signature of goodness is legible to all. And whoever reads it must feel himself summoned, not violently and clamorously, but silently and most attractively, to those reflections which improve the heart.

The best precepts of earthly philosophy, and the hallowed instructions of heavenly wisdom, have found the most propitious seats for their inculcation in gardens. Socrates was accustomed to teach, in one, upon the banks of the Cephisus; and Jesus, in another, upon those of the Cedron. The most interesting events that ever have occurred, or that ever can occur, on this side of the grave, have taken place in Gardens. In one, the shadow of death first fell upon the human race: in another, the glorious light of immortal life, breaking through that shadow, first beamed upon the world!

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