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ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

THIRTEENTH SESSION

OF THE

AMERICAN POMOLOGICAL SOCIETY,

HELD IN RICHMOND, VA.,

SEPT. 6, 7 AND 8, 1871.

BY MARSHALL P. WILDER,

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

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ADDRESS.

Gentlemen and Friends of the American Pomological Society:

Twenty-three years have nearly elapsed since the organization of this Society, in the city of New York. Held as our meetings have been, in different and widely distant parts of our country, I deem it proper very briefly to allude to its history, objects and progress. Especially is this desirable as a means of information to such southern portions of our Union as may not have been conversant with the proceedings of the Society. Its object is to advance that most interesting and delightful pursuit, the cultivation of fruits; to promote and perpetuate a cordial spirit of intercourse between pomologists; to compare fruits, and opinions concerning them; to settle doubtful points in pomology, and to establish a standard for every section of this great Western Continent. How well this has been done, the Society need no better testimonial than is furnished by its published Transactions, the wide-spread influence it has exerted, not only in our own, but other portions of the world, and especially by this grand assemblage of American fruits and American men. Many of the noble men who aided in the establishment of this Society, have ceased from their labors,—Downing, Prince, Saul, Hodge, Bergen, Underhill, of New York; Brincklé, of Pennsylvania; Walker, French, Crapo and Lovett of Massachusetts; Monson, of Connecticut; Ernst, of Ohio; Hancock and Reid, of New Jersey; Kennicott, of Illinois; Eaton, of Rhode Island; White, of Georgia; Pierce, of the District of Columbia. These, and other associates of fair fame, have gone to their reward, but we rejoice that some still live who, from the earlier years of our history, have distinguished themselves as the untiring friends of our institution; who, by their efficient

services and wise counsels, have contributed to its prosperity, some of whom are here to-day to rejoice with us in the progress of our science and the perpetuity of our institution.

Nor would we forget the eminent services and devotion of others of later days, to whom we are under equal obligations for the extension and influence of our Society, whose efforts have brought together the cultivators of fruits from the most distant portions of our country, thus making our institution what it was designed by its founders to be,—a truly national association, where the knowledge of one becomes the property of all; an association that should constitute a compendium of experience, and where, without regard to religious creed or sectional prejudice, a community of interest, enterprise and action might be established for the promotion of a great source of national wealth and human happiness.

In order to promote the convenience of all, to distribute its favors and increase its influence, the Society has wisely held its sessions in different and distant States of the Union. New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Massachusetts and Missouri have extended hospitalities to the Society, and some of these States have been repeatedly favored with the presence of its members, and the privilege of listening to their discussions. And now I congratulate you most sincerely upon the auspicious circumstances which enable us to meet in this city, among our Southern brethren, who have honored us with so cordial a welcome, and so large a representation of her men and her resources, here, in the capital of Virginia,—a State so renowned as the mother of presidents, and the home of some of the most distinguished patrons of American agriculture, among whom may be named Washington, Jefferson, and others, who will ever be remembered as benefactors of their race.

I have so often addressed you on topics connected with the practical labors of our calling, that it can scarcely be anticipated that I should have anything new to offer for your consideration, especially in the presence of so many whose research and experience is fully equal to my own. I know, too, how precious our time is, and I should not attempt it were it not a duty enjoined by the constitution of our Society. This duty will be performed in as brief a manner as its importance will permit.

I would therefore suggest that it is desirable for us to gather up for future use the lessons which have been acquired by the experience of the past. We have been so busy in accumulating knowledge in the various branches of our culture, that we have had no time to look back and to systematize the inferences and deductions to be drawn from our operations. But we believe the time has now come when we should pause, and survey the field, and make a review of the lessons which science has taught; for science is but a statement of these lessons,—experience systematized and trained for progress. It is the grains of sand that roll up the mountain, the drops of water that make the ocean, and it is lesson upon lesson, fact upon fact, which must build up the science we wish to create. Nothing in the present age astonishes us more than the wonderful power of association,—the centralization of thought and action for the promotion of particular objects, thus collecting the experience of individuals, and diffusing this knowledge for the benefit of the world. How clearly is this seen in the operations of our own Society, how great the changes, and how rapid the progress since its formation! Then its list of members was 107; now its roll contains the names of 311 persons. Then its sphere of operations was limited by the boundaries of a few States; now its field extends from ocean to ocean, from the Provinces to the Gulf, and wherever the foot of civilization rests in our broad domain. Nor is it too much to say, that in this space of time more progress has been made in the science of pomology than in the whole period since the settlement of our country. Never before was the interest so engrossing, or so widely extended. By publications, correspondence, and the remarkable facilities for interchange and intercourse, the enterprise of cultivators is kept constantly on the alert; and instead of useless discussions of other subjects, the pomologist finds all his time occupied in efforts for improvement.

How surprising the changes which have taken place during the existence of this Society! States and sections of the Union which were scarcely known by name, now contribute noble fruits to grace our exhibitions, and noble men to join us in efforts for the promotion of the public good; and by the

wonderful achievements of science and the golden chain of commerce, a reciprocal exchange is made of our fruits, distances are almost annihilated, and where fruits were only to be seen in our markets at their peculiar season, they are now found throughout the entire circle of the year. And by the arts of preservation, the seasons of our fruits are further prolonged, until those of winter even linger in the lap of summer. Thus our choicest varieties are successively matured; thus distant markets are brought near together, so that the apple, the pear and the grape from the South and West meet in the Northern clime of New England in midsummer; and California, Kansas, Nebraska and Illinois compete at the same time with Virginia, the Carolinas and Georgia, in our Northern markets.

Lessons of Experience.

1. The influence of warm, dry seasons.

Among the lessons which we have learned we may mention as settled and acknowledged principles, the following:—

The observations of the last few years, under the influence of warm, dry seasons, would appear to have established the principle that such weather (without excessive drought), especially in the earlier part of the summer, is more favorable to the perfection and ripening of fruits, particularly grapes, than cold wet seasons. The fact is prominently shown in California, as we have witnessed by personal observation; and is especially to be seen in the cultivation of the grape there, and also in Europe, and in our Northern States, where, under the influence of such seasons, neither the vine nor its fruit is affected by disease of any kind. These conditions we have noticed are also peculiarly advantageous for the formation of fruit-buds, and the storing up of the necessary perfected food for a future crop, and for the ripening of the wood, so necessary that it may endure the winter with safety.

2. Draining of fruit lands.

In conformity with the foregoing remarks, we see the importance of thorough *draining* of our fruit lands, which produces in soils not naturally possessing them, the conditions of warmth and dryness which we have named, thus rendering

the condition of the earth, in respect to warmth and dryness, analogous to that of the air, of the importance of which we have before spoken. Besides these advantages is the thorough aeration of the soil, whereby it is enabled to absorb fertilizing matter from the atmosphere, rain, and snow, and the moisture evaporated from the springs below. Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, the same means which guard against excessive wet, also serve to supply moisture in excessive droughts. How aptly does the poet describe this condition :

> "In grounds by art made dry, the watery bane
> Which mars the wholesome fruit is turned to use,
> And drains, while drawing noxious vapors off,
> Serve also to diffuse a full supply."

3. PREPARATION AND CULTIVATION OF THE SOIL.

It seems scarcely necessary in this presence to say that thorough preparation and enrichment of such soils as are not already rich is essential. Ordinary farm culture will not produce the highest class of fruits; they must have garden culture, and with this they never fail. After this thorough preparation, the cleaner the culture the better, at least in our older States, where the soils have been depleted by cropping. But one of the lessons which experience has taught us most impressively is that, contrary to our former views, this after-cultivation should be shallow so as not to injure the roots, but to preserve them near the surface.

4. MANURES AND THEIR APPLICATION.

The subject of manures is a most important one, and every year becoming more so. The supply of manure in the older part of our country is unequal to the demand, and every year increases the disparity. What would be our feelings if the supply of wheat, on which we depend for our daily bread, were inadequate to the demand? Yet men are not more dependent for life upon their daily bread than are our fruit crops upon the food which is supplied to them in the form of manure of one kind or another. To supply this want we shall be compelled to rely in great measure upon artificial fertilizers, and chemistry has not yet taught us, as it will doubtless in the future, how to supply

the wants of our fruit crops with certainty and abundance. But we cannot too often or too forcibly impress upon the minds of all cultivators the sacred duty of saving every particle of fertilizing material, and applying it in such manner as will produce the utmost effect. And on this last point the lesson which experience has taught us is, that manure applied to fruit-trees should be either in the form of a top-dressing or as near the surface as is consistent with the composition of the soil, and the preservation of its fertilizing elements.

5. MULCHING.

While on this subject we will add as another of the lessons of experience, which may be said to be fixed, the advantage of mulching for dry seasons and soils, whereby the temperature and moisture of the soils are kept uniform, and the fertilizing elements in a soluble state, an essential condition for the production of perfect fruit.

6. THINNING OF FRUIT.

This is another lesson which we have learned, and the necessity of which we have often endeavored to impress upon cultivators, and which every successive season teaches with stronger emphasis. It is absolutely necessary for all who send fruit to market to send large fruit, and the markets are constantly and progressively requiring large, and fine fruit. Even the Seckel pear which once commanded in Boston market the highest price, will not now, unless of extra size, sell for any more than, if as much as, common varieties of larger size. A medium-sized fruit, or even one of smaller size, may be more economical for use, but until some decided change in the preferences of the majority of purchasers shall take place, large fruit will sell better than small. To produce this, the fruit must not only have good cultivation but must be thinned, and we agree with Mr. Meehan that "one-half the trees which bear fruit every year would be benefited by having one-half the fruit taken off as soon as it is well set, and that the overbearing of a tree will in a few years destroy it." We may lay it down as a certain rule, that excessive production is always at the expense of both quantity and quality, if not in the same season then in

succeeding ones, for when branch is contending with branch, leaf with leaf, and fruit with fruit, for its supply of light and food, it would be indeed an anomaly in nature if this should not result in permanent injury to the trees as well as to the annual crop.

7. INSECTS AND DISEASES.

The subject of insects and diseases is daily attracting more attention, for their depredations are daily becoming a greater evil, and the importance of entomological investigations is every day more plainly seen. It is less than fifty years since Dr. Harris first published his work on "Insects Injurious to Vegetation," and great is the debt of gratitude which we owe to him and to the succeeding investigators who have given their lives to studying the habits of these little "creeping things which be upon the earth," that they may teach us how to destroy those which prey upon our trees, and to distinguish our friends from our foes. Every plant imported from abroad brings with it a new insect or disease, and the dissemination of new plants and varieties, without which there can be no progress in horticulture, inevitably disseminates their insect enemies. On this subject the words of Edmund Burke are appropriate: "The most vigilant superintendence, the most prompt activity, which has no such day as to-morrow in its calendar, are necessary to the farmer;" and we may add still more to the fruit-grower, and tenfold more necessary in combating our insect enemies. The neglect of battling with these vile creatures is the great bane to successful cultivation; but as long as moral evil exists in the world, so long may we expect there will be evil in the natural world, and he who is not willing to contend against both is not worthy of the name either of cultivator or of Christian.

We belong to that class who have faith in the ultimate triumph of good over evil in the moral world, and our faith is not less strong that the insect plagues shall, if not exterminated, at least be subdued, so that the labor of keeping them so far in check that no material harm shall be caused by them will be comparatively easy. We have discovered means for preventing the ravages of the currant-worm, curculio, canker-worm, caterpillar, melon-bug and aphis, and the mildew and other diseases

of our vines. If we can do this, is it not reasonable to suppose that we can discover remedies for, or the means of preventing, all the diseases and depredations that vegetation is liable to? Is it consistent with that Divine economy, so benevolent in all its ways and works, to believe that this fair creation has been spread out only to be destroyed; that seed-time should be promised and the harvest withheld; and from year to year our hopes deferred and our hearts made sick? Is it in harmony with that Divine Providence which created all things and pronounced them very good?

If any one say it is of no use to contend with these hordes of vile creatures, or the disappointments upon which all culture is incident, let him remember that it is the mission of life to struggle against and overcome them. Instead of fretting and groaning over these evils, let us battle with them and conquer them. Thus shall we gather the rich fruits of our industry, and,

> "Where some would find thorns but to torture the flesh,
> We'll pluck the ripe clusters our souls to refresh."

But some one replies, let nature do all this, let nature perform her perfect work; true, but nature brings us weeds, thistles and thorns, insects injurious to vegetation as well as those that are useful; and we were placed in this world, not merely to assist nature, but to meet with and overcome the obstacles which she sometimes places in our path,—to elevate her to the highest and noblest purposes of her creation.

Many of the difficulties and privations we endure, if met and conquered, will prove blessings in disguise. It is labor of mind as well as body, it is work, work, work, that makes men strong. Work is the great engine that moulds and moves the intellect, enterprise and destiny of the world—work is the greatest temporal boon bestowed on man—work is the heaven-appointed means of advancement to a higher state of perfection; and in no profession is this more apparent than in the calling of the pomologist. This idea is well expressed in the following lines, illustrative of the blessings of labor:

> "The first man and the first of men,
> Were tillers of the soil;
> And that was mercy's mandate then
> Which destined man to toil."

If man can seize the lightning in his hand and make it work for him in earth, air or water; if he can descend into the secret laboratory of Nature, and learn the constituents of soils and manures, and their adaptation to each other; if he can learn how she prepares the appropriate food for all vegetable life, from the humblest plant clinging close to the bosom of earth, only blooming to die, to the lofty Sequoia rearing its head to heaven and braving the tempests for thousands of years; if the physician can discover the agents which generate disease in the animal kingdom, and prescribe antidotes and remedies for each, may not the cultivator acquire a knowledge of the diseases which affect his trees and plants, and how to cure them?

Is there any element in nature which man cannot make subservient to his use? Is there any disease for which nature has not provided a remedy? Is there any enemy to vegetation that cannot be overcome? True, there are many things of which we know but little, and which require long and careful study, but there are others which are well established, and which one fact may demonstrate as well as a thousand.

8. SHELTER.

The necessity of shelter was not as soon perceived as some of the other lessons which I have named; yet, with perhaps the exception of a few favored spots, its importance is year by year becoming more generally appreciated, especially on our open prairies and in the northern and north-western portions of our country. The fact is established, that the removal of forests diminishes the quantity of rain, increases the evaporation of moisture, reduces the temperature, and subjects our fruits to greater vicissitudes, so that the peach and many of our finest pears can be no longer cultivated at the North except in gardens or sheltered places. The importance of shelter was well understood as long ago as the time of Quintinye, who, in his work on gardening, gives full directions for planting trees for shelter. This was in a country long settled and denuded of its forests; and though our ancestors, planting fruit-trees in a virgin soil, thickly covered with wood, failed to perceive its necessity, we, in our older states, who have come to much the same conditions as existed in the time of Quintinye, experience the same want.

There may be exceptions to this rule, as in the South, where the fruit season is warm and dry, producing similar conditions to those afforded by shelter under glass. We may find varieties, and probably shall, adapted to exposed situations; but at present the larger majority of our finer fruits will be benefited by the shelter of belts of forest trees. We are glad, therefore, to see the recognition of the advantages of forest trees on the part of the managers of our Pacific railways, not only as affording shelter, but as collecting moisture from the atmosphere, and so rendering available vast regions previously uninhabitable from drought. This good work has already been commenced on the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad.

9. METEOROLOGY.

Besides the lessons which experience has already taught us, permit me to mention one which pomologists ought to learn, and which, from present indications, I have no doubt they will learn. The pomologist should have a better knowledge of the science of meteorology than we now possess. The action of light and heat; the influence of the winds, of frost, fog, water, and the electrical condition of the air and earth, have a most important bearing, and we believe that when our science shall have attained to its greatest perfection, there will be a discreet classification of our fruits, assigning to each its proper soil, location and aspect. We must not expect to alter the laws of nature, but to conform to them. We do not expect to restore the lost Pleiad, nor do we expect to find any supernatural means whereby improvement and progress can be attained, without mental or physical exertion, but we should endeavor to understand some of the workings of that mysterious machine which generates and perpetuates all vegetable life. True, the "wind bloweth where it listeth," as of old, but it seems probable, if not certain, from the investigations made at Washington, that man can not only tell from whence it will come and where it will blow, but where the sun will shed its rays and the clouds diffuse their showers, and the time may come when the laws which govern the weather may be settled with nearly as much certainty as those which now govern the calculations of the astronomer.

What wonders has science wrought in modern times, but these are only the rudiments of that great plan which Providence has established for the happiness of mankind. "These are but parts of His ways" which we now see, glimmerings of that boundless exhibition of power, wisdom and goodness which shall culminate in the perfection of all created things.

10. ORIGINATING NEW VARIETIES.

I commend to you again, as I have done in my former addresses, and shall continue to do while I live, the important and benevolent work of originating new varieties of fruit, both as a means of improvement, and as a substitute for those which have exprienced the decline incident to all things of human origin. Our country, and in fact the whole world, has been so thoroughly explored, that we can scarcely expect to discover any very important addition to accidental varieties. Our main source of improvement, therefore, is to be found in the production of new kinds from seed, and I again urge upon you the great importance of continuing your efforts in this most interesting and hopeful department of labor. The acquisitions already made give promise of still richer rewards to him who will work with Nature in compelling her to yield to his solicitations for still greater improvement. Much has already been done, but this branch of science is still in its infancy, and opens to the pomologist a broad field for enterprise. It may require time, and patience, and care to produce a superior variety, but we have the most cheering assurance of the time when every section of our country shall possess fruits adapted to its own locality. There is no better illustration of what can be accomplished, than what has been done, in the production of the various and excellent American fruits, which have been raised since the establishment of our Society. If each member should originate one good variety, adapted to a wide extent of territory, or even to his own section, he would become a public benefactor. Think of the number of persons in the United States who are now engaged in the growth of fruits. Should each one produce one good variety, a not impossible thing, we should have varieties enough to endure for centuries, adapted to every soil and location in our vast territory.

Let any one visit the nurseries established by Mr. Clapp, in Massachusetts, the originator of the Clapp's Favorite pear, and see the many seedling trees now just coming into bearing, and he cannot but be delighted, as we have been, with witnessing these trees in their youthful vigor, and studying the various forms into which the Bartlett, the Flemish Beauty, the Beurré d'Anjou, the Urbaniste, the Beurré Clairgeau, the Beurré Bosc, and other standard varieties have been changed, and he cannot but admit that the daily opportunity for such study would be an ample recompense for all the trouble and expense of raising such trees. But besides this gratification, is the probability of raising a new variety, which, in one point or another, shall be superior to any before acquired, and which shall be a blessing to the nation. Does any one object, that fruits adapted to cultivation through the country are few and far between? Let him raise a variety which shall be better adapted to his own locality than any before known. Let us have Favorites for Virginia and Georgia, and for all and every State in our nation. If I could feel that I had been the means of inducing our members, or other cultivators, to raise new fruits worthy to bear their names, I should feel that I had lived for a useful purpose.

The importance of producing new varieties from seed is no longer questioned. The fact, that the seed of good varieties will generally produce good offspring, is now well established. These are, however, the natural results which have been derived from fruits already improved; and we can offer no better proofs of the advantages of artificial impregnation than the multitude of improved varieties which have been produced in the vegetable kingdom by this process.

We have learned many of the laws which govern hybridization, and the more we become acquainted with this most interesting art, the more we work with Nature in these efforts for her improvement, the more we shall admire this most perfect and beautiful illustration of the great fundamental law, which has been established from the beginning of time, for the improvement of men, animals and plants. Well did Linnæus exclaim, when overwhelmed with the discovery of an unknown principle in this most interesting study, "I have seen God pass-

ing by;" and well may the contemplation of this law inspire us with the same reverence and delight, and,

> "like conductors, raise
> Our spirits upward on their flight sublime
> Up to the dread Invisible, to pour
> Our grateful homage out in silent praise."

Let us go on then developing the wonderful resources of this art. Go on, persevere, and you will leave a rich inheritance to your heirs. Go on, and the time will come when every man shall sit under his vine and fruit-tree, when all our hillsides shall rejoice in the burden of the vintage, our valleys teem with the golden fruits of the orchard, and the passing breeze become vocal with songs of gratitude and praise for these benefactions to posterity.

The increasing interest in the cultivation of fruit at the South induces me to offer a few suggestions in regard to the best means of obtaining varieties suited to that region. Of apples and peaches a large number of superior varieties have already been produced at the South perfectly adapted to that climate; but the supply of fine varieties of the pear is yet inadequate, especially of late-keeping varieties, as the latest kinds grown at the North cannot, when grown in the Gulf States, be preserved beyond autumn. To supply this deficiency, we would recommend the trial of such varieties as refuse to ripen at the North,—Chaumontelle, the Colmar and its sub-varieties, Beurré Rance Bergamot Fortunée—which appear to need a longer season than ours to arrive at maturity. These and seedlings from these offer, we think, the best prospect for a supply of late pears in the warmer parts of our country. We would also recommend a trial of the sorts used at the North for cooking, as some of these have proved fine dessert pears in the South. And probably some of the fine old varieties which have decayed at the East, and show signs of the same fate at the West, may, in more genial climates, have their existence so far prolonged as to be among the most desirable.

The Society's Catalogue.

Allow me again to commend to your consideration the value and importance of our Catalogue of Fruits. The completion

of this work, by embodying the fruits of the Southern and Pacific States, is yet to be accomplished. This has been delayed from unavoidable circumstances, but we hope is now to be done, so that the basis of American Pomology can be established for the generations which are to succeed us. The work is indeed great, but it is a duty that devolves on us, as the representatives of that science which the Society has in charge. In proceeding with it however, we find ourselves met by a difficulty not anticipated at the beginning of our work, arising from the unparalled expansion of our country. In the few years since our catalogue was commenced, several new States and territories have been organized, and if such expansion continues, as it undoubtedly will, it will be difficult to bring the catalogue, on its present plan, into any reasonable limits. On this point I hope to hear from the chairman of General Fruit Committee, to whom, more than to any one else, we are indebted for the progress already made, and I commend the subject to the thoughtful consideration of all the members of the Society, and especially invite the coöperation of every State in collecting and transmitting to him the information necessary to the completion of our work.

The increasing Importance of Fruit Culture.

The importance and value of our calling in developing the resources of our country, in the occupation of unimproved lands, adorning our homesteads, enhancing the value of real estate, multiplying the blessings and comforts of life, and promoting a great source of national wealth, cannot be too highly appreciated. The more I reflect upon the progress we have made, the more am I confirmed in the belief that this branch of culture will ere long become second only to the growth of the bread and meat of our country. The enormous production of strawberries and other small fruits, the millions upon millions of baskets of peaches,—not to speak of the apples and pears and other fruits that are now annually produced,—give promise that the time is fast approaching when all classes of society may enjoy this health-preserving condiment as a portion of their daily food. Nor can I refrain from referring once more to the benign in-

fluence which our employment has upon the moral and religious instincts of the heart, the refinement of taste and the welfare of society. Whatever pleasure may be derived from other pursuits, there is surely none that has afforded stronger evidence of a high and progressive state of civilization or a more ennobling influence, than the culture of fruits. "This," says General Dearborn, "must have been the first step in the march of civilization, while the method of ameliorating their character and multiplying the varieties may be considered as taking precedence of all human efforts in the industrial arts."

From the day when God gave our father in Eden trees, "pleasant to the sight and good for food," down to Solomon, who said, "I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted in them trees of all kind of fruits," and through the successive generations of men, the cultivation of trees and plants has been the criterion of taste and refinement. No object of attachment is more naturally allied to the instincts of the soul, and truly did Emerson remark, "he who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man." And what greater benefactions can you leave for posterity than these memorials which shall live and grow, which shall tell of your love of the most beautiful works of nature, kindred and home, when you are slumbering in the grave? Far better these for the perpetuation of your memory, and the benefit of the advancing millions of coming time, than all the monumental shafts and pillars of polished marble that ever graced the hero's tomb.

Deceased Members.

Since my last report on the decease of members, three of the founders of this Society have been removed by death, "like fruits fully ripened in their season." I allude to Dr. Alfred S. Monson of New Haven, Connecticut, Dr. R. T. Underhill of Croton Point, New York, and Dr. Eben Wright of Dedham, Massachusetts, all three of whom were present and took part in the proceedings of the first meeting, twenty-three years ago.

Dr. Alfred S. Monson died, May 22, 1870, at New Haven, Connecticut, at the advanced age of seventy-four, universally respected and beloved. He was one of the signers of the cir-

cular calling the convention which resulted in the organization of our association; was the first vice-president from Connecticut; and on that occasion read a most able and instructive paper "on the deterioration of certain fruits, and of parasitic agents injurious to vegetation." This paper may be found in the published Transactions of the Society, and gives evidence of the careful investigation and research of its author. Dr. Monson possessed a highly appreciative mind, a refined taste and a great capacity for enjoyment. Hence his love for fruits and flowers, which was a ruling passion with him through life. He was the first president of the New Haven Horticultural Society, established in 1831,—one of the earliest in this country,—and was a frequent writer on subjects connected with horticulture and rural arts. His address before that society in 1843 is full of wisdom and beautiful illustrations. His memory will ever be revered and honored by all who knew him.

Dr. R. T. Underhill was also one of the founders of our Society, and his name is borne on the call for its first meeting. He commenced his pomological pursuits at Croton Point about forty-five years ago, the grape, of which he planted a large vineyard, being a specialty. His experiments commenced with foreign varieties, but these proving a failure he turned his attention to the cultivation of the Isabella and Catawba, then but little known, and so great was his success that for many years he and his brother, with whom he was associated, sent more of these varieties to the New York market than were received from all other sources. He also commenced the manufacture of wine, and at the time of his death had about fifty acres of vineyard, and was also very successful in the cultivation of the plum, of which he gave an account at our last meeting. He was a leading member of the American Institute, and was one of the founders of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society of Westchester County, of which he was the first president. Dr. Underhill was a gentleman of the old school, courteous in deportment and refined in his tastes, and although his age prevented his frequent attendance at our meetings, his interest in our pursuits never declined. As a proof of his fidelity, he came to our last meeting in Philadelphia, and although at the age of about eighty years, took part in our discussions as he had done in the beginning.

Dr. Eben Wright, of Dedham, Massachusetts, another of the signers of the call for the first meeting of this Society, died at his home, where he had carried on his pomological researches during his life. He had long been interested in horticultural pursuits, being an early member of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and for a long course of years corresponding secretary and vice-president. For many years he was chairman of the Fruit Committee of this Society for Massachusetts, in which capacity he made many interesting reports, which may be found among our published Transactions. He paid special attention to the apple, of which he had a large and choice collection of varieties; and through his critical observation he became remarkably well versed in the knowledge of this fruit, and introduced several fine varieties to notice. He was a modest and unassuming man, of the strictest integrity, and died as he had lived, universally respected and beloved.

Nor can I close this sad record without adding the name of M. S. Frierson, Columbia, Tenn., who died March 28, 1870. Mr. Frierson was the vice-president of this Society from Tennessee. He attended our last meeting, and his noble bearing and gentlemanly deportment will long be remembered by all who were present with him. He was by profession a lawyer, and at the time of his death was in practice as an old counsellor at Columbia. But what most concerns us is his interest in pomological pursuits, which was strikingly evinced by the part which he took in the discussions of the Society; his remarks being always valuable, interesting and to the point. He was much interested in fruit culture, and had given particular attention to the hybridization of the nectarine and the pear, with the special view of producing late-keeping varieties of the latter. His experiments were evidently based upon truly scientific knowledge, and at the time of his death had already been the means of producing some valuable new fruits. In a letter written but a few months before his death he says, in speaking of his experiments, "they may turn out nothing, still the taste it gives my girls" (who had aided him in conducting them) "for such amusement is worth more than the trouble. The seeds will be carefully planted, and we will wait and see." Noble sentiment! but the fruition of his hopes was transferred to another world,

leaving us to wait and see the further results which they may produce here.

These associates have gone to their reward. Their seats in this Society are forever vacant, but their efforts for the advancement of our cause in the early history of our Society will be appreciated more and more as time moves on.

Conclusion.

With the deepest sense of gratitude do I rejoice in the presence of a few of the founders of this Society, whose lives have been prolonged to this day. Ere long all those who were present at its first meeting, and he who by your indulgence has occupied this chair so long, will vacate their seats. Others will fill the places which we now occupy, but our Society, and the cause it seeks to promote, will live on to bless the generations which shall succeed us.

Long may the members of this Society meet together as friends and mutual helpers, dispensing and receiving good, and may your efforts for promoting this most beautiful of all arts, this health-preserving and life-prolonging industry, be crowned with continued success. May the Society go on conferring blessings on our country until every hearth-stone and fireside shall be gladdened with the golden fruits of summer and autumn, until thanksgiving and the perfume of the orchard shall ascend together like incense from the altar of every family in our broad land, and the whole world realize, as in the beginning, the blissful fruition of dwelling in the "Garden of the Lord." And when at last the chain of friendship which has bound so many of us together in labor and in love shall be broken; when the last link shall be sundered and the fruits of this world shall delight us no more; when the culture, training and sorrows of earth shall culminate in the purity, perfection and bliss of heaven, may we all sit down together at that feast of immortal fruits,

> "Where life fills the wine-cup and love makes it clear,
> Where Gilead's balm in its freshness shall flow,
> O'er the wounds which the pruning-knife gave us below."