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DELIVERED AT THE

NINTH SESSION

OF THE

American Pomological Society,

HELD IN

BOSTON, MASS., SEPT. 17, 18 & 19, 1862.

BY

MARSHALL P. WILDER,

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

Published by the Society.

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ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the American Pomological Society:

Once more a kind Providence permits us to assemble for consultation, and the friendly interchange of experience in the ennobling and delightful art to which our Society is devoted. Once more I rejoice in the privilege of taking by the hand so many of the distinguished cultivators of our land, with whom I have enjoyed sweet intercourse for a long period of time, and from whom I have received so many tokens of confidence and regard, during the twelve years of official service in this chair.

In behalf of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, at whose invitation we are here assembled, I extend to each of you a cordial welcome to this place, to our hearts and our homes. You come from different, and in some instances from distant, sections of our country, and some from lands better adapted for the cultivation of many kinds of fruit than ours. But true to our own instinct, and to the spirit of our venerable fathers, the founders of New England Pomology, we have brought up specimens of the progress which has been attained by us in this region. The first seeds of our fruits were planted by the colonists of Massachusetts Bay, in the year 1629. Soon after, the Colonial Legislature granted to John Winthrop, then Governor of the Colony, a section of land, on condition that he

should plant thereon a vineyard and orchard, which grant received its name from his official position, and has ever since been known as Governor's Island, in the harbor of Boston. About the same time, Governor Endicott, of Salem, planted the first pear trees in that place, one of which is still living and bears his name. Precisely what the intermediate progress may have been we are unable to state. But, after a space of a century and a half, we find, in the Boston Gazette of March, 1770, the following advertisement of the gardener of the immortal John Hancock, the first signer of that memorable instrument, the Declaration of Independence: —

"To be sold by GEORGE SPRIGGS, Gardener to JOHN HANCOCK, Esq., a Large Assortment of English Fruit Trees grafted and innoculated of the best and richest Kind of Cherry Trees, Pear Trees, Plumb Trees, Peach Trees, Apricots, Nectarines, Quinces, Lime Trees, Apple Trees grafted and ungrafted, and sundry Mulberry Trees which will be fit to transplant the next Year, and Medleys."

To these worthy men, and others of more recent date, whose labors inspired our fellow citizens, may be traced the interest which, in the year 1829, originated the Massachusetts Horticultural Society; and, through the agency of this first Association, introduced into this section the results attained by Van Mons, Knight, and other European pomologists. Thus was here laid the foundation, upon which, the science we seek to promote has advanced to a rank not inferior to that attained in any other country in the world.

DECEASED AND ABSENT MEMBERS.

Since our last biennial session, one of the founders of the Society, who held official positions from the organization of the

Association, has been removed by death to another and, we trust, a happier world. I allude to the decease of the Hon. SAMUEL WALKER, of Roxbury, Massachusetts, who died at his residence in that city, on the 11th of December, 1860. His death has made a large breach in our pomological circle, and deserves special notice. Mr. Walker was one of the earliest and most valuable members of the Society, — for many years a Vice President, — and at the time of his death Chairman of the General Fruit Committee. For nearly thirty years Mr. Walker had been deeply interested in the advancement of horticultural and kindred pursuits, and had held the offices of President and Treasurer of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Few men have taken a deeper interest in the welfare of our institution, or in the objects it seeks to promote. He was ardently devoted to its progress, and until our last session, when declining health prevented his attendance, he was present at all previous meetings, and took a leading part in all our deliberations and transactions. It was upon his suggestion that a special Committee was appointed for the revision and classification of the Society's Catalogue of Fruits, with special reference to their adaptation to the different sections of our land.

As a man, Mr. Walker was quick in perception, ready in debate, refined in taste, courteous in deportment, conscientious in duty, exemplary in life, peaceful and happy in death. But his record is on high, yet in our memories his name shall stand enrolled with DOWNING, ERNST, FRENCH, and other kindred spirits, who have ceased from their labors on earth.

While we drop a tear of grateful remembrance over our departed associates, we would not forget one who still lives.* His infirmity detains him from this meeting, and calls for our sincere sympathies. He also was among the originators of this

* W. D. Brinckle, M. D., of New Jersey.

institution, and for a term he was its presiding officer. Would that we could hope to enjoy his presence with us once again. His cordial salutations, and his constant interest in our Association and its pursuits, have long endeared him to its members. With him the outward man perishes, but we have reason to know that his love of our favorite art, refined and sanctified by his afflictions, ministers to his daily relief and consolation, and makes his declining life tranquil as the twilight of a summer eve.

PROGRESS.

This is the fourteenth year of our Association. Eight years have elapsed since the Society held its session in this city. Most sincerely do I congratulate you upon the attendance at this meeting. But while I gratefully acknowledge this favor, I should be delinquent in duty did I not also allude to the absence of many others dear to us as co-laborers, and eminently useful as members of our institution. Some of the States, heretofore represented in this Association, are now engaged in a sanguinary struggle against the General Government; and as one among the many painful casualties of this most unnatural and fratricidal war, we are now deprived of the presence and co-operation of our Southern members. But we will still hope for their return to us in allegiance and fraternal love, and for their reunion with us, leaving no sting in the heart of memory, no stain on the wing of time. Yes, even in this dreadful conflict, we will still cling to the hope that, like ourselves, they will stand firm by the principles of Constitutional Authority, and the American Union.

But we are not here to discuss the present state or future political prospects of our country, dear to us as life is dear,

except as they are connected with the great objects of our Association, — objects powerfully contributing to individual happiness and national welfare. Our past success is a matter of sincere congratulation to all who live upon our soil. The errors and ignorance of former days are fast yielding to the progress of truth and the march of intelligence. We have the most gratifying evidence of the extension of pomological enterprise and knowledge.

Our Society has already accomplished a great good in correcting the nomenclature and classification of fruits, in rejecting numerous worthless varieties from its Catalogue, and now, by a revision of the same, presenting a list of those adapted to the various local districts of our widely extended country. The advantages which will arise from this in the future, improved as it will be from year to year, can scarcely be too highly estimated. The Committee who have charge of this responsible and arduous duty, especially the Chairman, have labored with great diligence, and I have no doubt that their efforts will be highly appreciated by an enlightened and grateful community. In connection with this progress, I respectfully recommend that the Committee on Rejected Fruits be authorized to present, at the next biennial session, a list of such other varieties as, in their opinion, may be dispensed with. I would also suggest the propriety of establishing some permanent Rules of Pomology, especially in reference to the naming of seedling or other new varieties, which may from time to time come to notice.

REVULSION OF 1860, '61.

The consumption of fruits has become so common as to constitute one of the most important articles of daily food. The loss of a crop is now deemed as a great public calamity;

its abundance as one of the greatest blessings, adding immeasurably to social health and comfort, and to the wealth and commerce of the country.

It becomes, therefore, my duty to record in the Volumes of our Transactions a remarkable fact, which has occurred since our last session, namely, the general failure of the fruit crop for the year 1861. In history, this, as a great national calamity, will be associated with the civil commotion that at the same time convulsed the whole land. What causes, if any, may have produced this remarkable coincidence between the vegetable and the civil kingdoms, we may not be able to discover. Manifestly "time was out of joint;" both heaven and earth seemed to frown upon our happy land. In regard to our fruits, a kind Providence has brought about a renovation and restoration, which makes the present year as remarkable for excellence and abundance, as the former year was for the injury and loss of the crop. Oh! that this golden harvest in the natural kingdom, may prove the harbinger of a more glorious one of peace and prosperity to our bleeding country.

The causes of the singular phenomena, and the loss of the fruit crop of 1861, have been variously described. Disasters of similar character, though not generally so severe, have occurred in the vegetable world in past time, and in different locations and latitudes. Cycles, of favorable and unfavorable seasons, have checkered the history of Pomology, and made occasional mutation almost as certain as success. It is well, therefore, to note carefully the facts connected with these great revulsions, and to report them for future guidance and instruction. Especially, in a National Association like our own, should these be recorded, for the benefit of generations which are to follow us. Thus shall we treasure up lessons of the past, and gain wisdom for the future.

Vicissitudes attend the cultivation of trees as well as other vegetable products. In regard to the one under consideration, we may mention the fact, that so general was the injury throughout a large part of our country, there was but little fruit in the year 1861. The previous Autumn had been marked with an early and very severe frost. On the morning of Oct. 1, 1860, the mercury fell, in the vicinity of Boston, to 24° Farenheit, causing the apples and other fruits to freeze on the trees, and, in some instances, to burst open. This was the most severe of any on record, so early in the Autumn. Again, on the morning of Feb. 8, 1861, the mercury fell, in several places around Boston, to 25° below zero, a degree never before recorded at this season. The previous day had been mild and pleasant. Again, early in the month of March, the fluctuations of the mercury were equally astonishing. The 3d day was warm and delightful; the thermometer at Dorchester, four miles from this city, stood at 75° at 2 o'clock, P. M., and at 8 o'clock, at 65°; and although no very severe cold succeeded immediately, yet, on the morning of the 18th inst., the glass stood at zero. These extremes of temperature were most unusual and unnatural, and not only destroyed the crop of fruit, but injured many trees past recovery, especially Peaches, Plums, and Cherries. These vicissitudes serve to illustrate the comparative vigor, hardiness, and power of endurance, in some varieties of the same species, and develop different degrees of susceptibility in others, and thus furnish most useful information to the cultivator.

From this experience we deduce the fact, that some varieties of the pear are even more hardy than the apple, a fact which a little reflection will confirm. Thus among the few pear trees which here bore abundantly in 1861, were the Vicar of Winkfield, Louise Bonne de Jersey, Urbaniste, and Belle Lucrative, while the apple, and most other varieties of the pear, failed

of a crop. With me, during the last thirty years, the apple has many times failed, while these varieties of the pear have produced fruit annually.

Whether the cause of the revulsion just noted was the frost of October, 1860, destroying, as it did, the germ of some of the flower buds of trees and shrubs, or whether the sudden alternations of heat and cold in the Winter and Spring of 1861 produced this result, or whether, as seems more probable, it is to be ascribed to these two causes combined, we cannot with certainty decide. If there were some localities in which this injury was less, it is not unlikely that circumstances which affected one region might not be so active in another. The effect of a bright sun, or of keen, dry, piercing winds, immediately succeeding the frost, would intensify the damage; and, on the contrary, a cloudy sky and humid atmosphere would modify and ameliorate it. But my object is not to discuss at length this subject, but only to record the facts in our National Annals, for the information of physiologists in our own and other lands, whose professional business is to observe these freaks of nature, and to give us their philosophy in the case.

Upon the observation and study of these, and similar facts, the progress of Pomology eminently depends. The different ability of varieties to resist heat and cold, and other meteorological agents, reveals a most wonderful analogy between the vegetable and animal kingdoms; for while certain animals find their natural home in the frigid zones, others in the temperate, and still others in the torrid, there are some that are cosmopolites. So with our fruits; some are suited to one location, some to another, and a very few flourish in a great variety of latitudes.

But as to the means of protecting our fruits from these injuries, we need more knowledge. Experience teaches us, however, that shelter and aspect have a powerful influence, especially on certain varieties.

As to aspect, I am more and more convinced of its importance. The Belgians, in their descriptive Catalogues, are accustomed to designate the aspect most favorable to each sort; and when we shall be able to do the same, we shall have attained a result most eminently desirable.

In regard to shelter, here in the North, so as to protect our trees from currents of fierce drying winds, which are as equally injurious to vegetation as a parching heat, no one can doubt its beneficial effect. The influence of shelter and aspect is more perceptible in some varieties than others. This is seen in the fact that certain kinds are healthly and beautiful on fences or in sheltered places, while they are worthless elsewhere.

DEMANDS FOR VIGILANCE AND PERSEVERANCE.

These considerations all teach us the vast range of our science, the great number of secondary causes that modify results, and consequently the imperative demand for extensive research, for the accumulation of ripe experience, and for great patience and vigilance in the pomologist. How many sad mistakes are developed every year, by leaping from partial observations to general conclusions! Witness the frequent errors of cultivators. How often do they condemn the qualities of certain varieties before they have tested them at mature age. They cut off and graft their trees with other sorts, instead of waiting for nature to do her work in her own proper time.

Witness again the complaints against the hardiness of particular kinds, which have arisen from the fact that they had not passed the vascillations incident to youth, and attained a sufficient degree of age and solidification of tissue, in bark and wood. This may be seen in the numerous injuries sustained by young

trees of luxuriant growth. They are subjected to the vicissitudes of climate, some years only recovering what they have lost in the preceding in health and vigor. But having overcome the trials of this early period, they rise above these enfeebling causes, and shoot up into a mature manhood, and thereafter are less liable to the fluctuations of temperature.

But the demand for thorough and patient investigation, is still further exhibited by the wonderful phenomena and mysteries of the vegetable kingdom. For instance, why does the peach, which first puts forth its leaf, delay its florescence until after that of the apricot, which blossoms first and then puts forth its foliage? Why does the Easter Beurré clothe itself in white robe of bloom before the early varieties of pear, and yet be the very latest to mature its fruit? Why has the fruit of the St. Germain pear, which fifty years ago in this locality was fair and fine, become an outcast, while the wood and foliage appear fair and healthy? Why does the Van Mons Leon le Clerc tree, whose bark is commonly so cracked and cankerous as to eat into the very heart of the wood, frequently produce large and beautiful fruit? Why, in this favored year, should some of the Doyenné Blanc trees produce fair and fine fruit, while on others by their side it is blasted and worthless? Why should the same tree, bearing two sorts, produce on the one branch these large, fair, and ruddy specimens,* and on the other those which are spotted, cracked and blasted, like that in my hand,† and yet the tree, in all its parts, be equally vigorous and healthy? Why should the Beurré d'Aremberg pear, formerly so good in this region, but for many years inferior in fruit, and even diseased in its wood, the present year, resume its pristine excellence? These are indeed mysteries which we do not at present comprehend; yet far from abating, they should actually increase our ardor in the pursuit of knowledge.

* Oswego Incomparable. † Summer Bon Chretien.

How obvious, then, is it, that he who would become an eminent pomologist, must be a diligent student of nature, and carefully observe the facts which she brings to his observation. With pencil and book at hand, he should note the thousand little things which arrest his attention in his daily labors, and make them subjects of future reflection and study. At first they may appear of trifling consequence, yet in this way they may lead to the most important discoveries, in respect to the hitherto concealed processes of vegetation. If all would unite in this work, and steadily pursue it for a course of years, recording such meteorological and other facts as they are able to make, together with personal observations as to their influence upon vegetation, we might soon learn therefrom the most salutary and practical lessons.

THINNING OF FRUITS.

One lesson which experience has taught us, is the importance of thinning the fruit, especially of apples and pears. This branch of Pomology has received comparatively but little attention. There is a limit to the capabilities of all created things. If you tax the energies of an animal too severely for a long time, the result will be premature age and decay. Subject any vegetable or mineral substance to too great pressure, and you destroy its power of cohesion. So if you permit a tree to bear beyond its strength, you injure its fruit, retard its growth, and shorten its life. All have observed that superfecundity one year produces barrenness the next. Hence we hear among our farmers and gardeners of what they term the bearing year. They invariably designate the Baldwin apple as a tree that bears on alternate years. But is not the cause of this alternation found in the fact, that the abundant crop of the bearing

year exhausts the energies of the tree, and absorbs the pabulum so as not to leave sufficient aliment for the formation of fruit spurs for the succeeding year? Many varieties have a tendency to overbearing, especially those which produce their fruit in clusters. Nature herself teaches us the remedy for this evil, and a superabundance of blossom is generally followed by a profuse falling of the embryo fruit. When and where this dropping is not sufficient to prevent overbearing, we should resort to the process of relieving the tree of a portion of its fruit.

The organism which carries on healthful development, in order to repeat its cycle of functions from year to year, cannot be overworked without time for recuperation. Whatever of nutrition goes to the support of useless branches, or a redundancy of fruit, abstracts that strength from the tree which would otherwise be appropriated to the perfection of the crop, and the development of the spurs which would bear fruit the next year. One of the best cultivators in the vicinity of Boston has reduced this theory to practice, with the happiest effect, in the cultivation of the pear. His system allows no useless wood, nor more fruit spurs, and no more fruit, than the tree can properly sustain. As a consequence, he produces every year superior fruit, which commands the highest price. Some have doubted whether this practice can be made remunerative, except in its application to the finer fruits. But another cultivator, who raises an annual crop of the best apples, assures us that the secret of his success is the thinning of the fruit, and he has no doubt of the economy of the practice. No good farmer doubts the necessity of thinning his root crops, no *vigneron* the propriety of thinning his grapes. Analogy of cultivation, therefore, justifies the practice, and I entertain no question of its great importance.

Light, air, and moisture, are essential to the production of vegetable products, and especially of fine fruits. Who has not observed that the best specimens of fruits on a tree are ordinarily those which are most exposed to these elements? Who does not select the full sized ruddy fruit, which has had free communion with light, heat, and air, in preference to the half fed specimen which has shared its own proper nourishment with five or six crowded rivals on the same spur?

An experienced English cultivator says: "The bending of branches of trees by an overcrop of fruit is most injurious, for the pores of the woody stalk are strained on the one side of the bend, and compressed on the other; hence the vessels through which the requisite nourishment flows being partially shut up, the growth of the fruit is retarded in proportion to the straining and compression of the stalk." This is illustrated in the overbearing of some varieties, which, from a redundancy of fruit, without the process of early and thorough thinning, seldom produce good specimens, and in a few years become stinted and unhealthy trees. The overbearing of a tree is as much a tax upon its energies and constitution, as is the exhaustion of a field by excessive crops of the same kind, year after year, without a return of nutritive materials. Inexhaustible fertility is a chimera of the imagination. Sooner or later, the richest soils will require a restoration of what has been abstracted by vegetation. However fertile at first, the constant overcropping of the soil is a reduction of the elements on which health and fruitfulness depend. This great principle of sustenance and reciprocal relation runs through the whole mass of life, of mind, and of matter.

> "One cry with never ceasing sound,
> Circles Creation's ample round."

Intimately connected with this process of thinning, is the time when the work should be executed. It should not be done before we can distinguish the choicest specimens in a cluster of fruit, nor delayed so long as to waste the energies of the tree. This practice, judiciously followed, will supersede the necessity of staying up the branches, will prevent injury to the tree by their breaking, and will prove decidedly economical.

Associated with the thinning of fruits is the expediency of gathering a part of the crop as soon as it approaches maturity. The remaining specimens will thereby be much increased in size and excellence. The fruit of a tree does not all come to maturity at the same time, hence this successional gathering will turn the crop to the highest practical account, and will keep the productive energies of the tree in a healthful and profitable condition.

Does some one say, leave all this to nature, and not attempt to mend the ways of Providence? But was not man ordained to help nature, and placed in the garden to dress and keep it? True, God has enacted general laws, but requires us to turn them to the highest practical account. Thus he has given us in fruits and flowers forms of beauty and loveliness, and has assigned to us the duty of bringing them to the greatest possible perfection. It is, too, by a co-operation with nature, in what we may esteem little things, that the highest achievements in science are reached, and the most valuable results attained. The ocean is but the accumulation of drops, and the mountain is but the rolling up of pebbles. From the slender spire that trembles beneath the weight of the dew drop, to the lofty monarch of the forest, whose hoary branches waved in the breeze a thousand years before the birth of the Christian era, we have signal proof of the law of mutual dependence and support.

Fruit trees will not take care of themselves. Constant vigilance is the price of superior trees or superior fruit. The poet may sing of the

> "redundant growth
> Of vines and maize, and bower and brake,
> Which nature, kind to sloth,
> And scarce solicited by human toil,
> Pours from the riches of the teeming soil;"

but the cultivator of fruits must realize the fact, that without care and skill he cannot depend on uniform and continued success.

NEW NATIVE VARIETIES.

I have before spoken of the production of new varieties of fruits adapted to our country. But as it is "line upon line, and precept upon precept," that makes a durable impression, let me remind you again that the future success and progress of American Pomology must rest mainly upon the introduction of new kinds raised from seed upon our own soil. Let me, then, encourage you in this laudable enterprise.

Is there any reason why we cannot produce Winter varieties of pears of the finest quality, as beautiful and smooth as the favorite Bartlett, or Louise Bonne de Jersey? The Buerré Langlier, and Glout Moreau, in regard to beauty, are of this class. Why cannot we have, instead of the rough exterior of some of our late sorts, those of fair skins and ruddy colors? And then in regard to flavor, why not be able to produce those of a rich character, like the Seckel, Belle Lucrative, and Passe Colmar? From the seed of the latter many varieties were raised by the late Mons. Esperin, of Malines. Some of these are even superior in saccharine matter and richness to the parent, but

unfortunately not well adapted to our climate. Why should not our popular Bartlett be the mother of a race equal in quality and hardier in character? Of the seedlings raised in this vicinity, those on exhibition from Mr. Richardson, of Dorchester, Mass., are striking illustrations of the value of this variety as a parent from which to originate good native sorts. The experiment of the late Mr. Clapp, of Dorchester, in the union of the Bartlett and the Flemish Beauty, as is believed, produced the Clapp's Favorite, a pear of equal size and beauty, entirely hardy, and pronounced by the best judges to be superior to the variety first named. The seedlings raised by Mr. Dana, of Roxbury, Mass., are all good. Some of them are superior, and evince a constitution and vigor which adds much to the value of their excellence. When we reflect upon the little effort which has been made to produce native varieties, it is wonderful what progress has been made.

In the production of new sorts we should aim first, at a strong, hardy, robust, vigorous habit, and thus overcome a difficulty which now exists with many of the best fruits, namely, a weak, straggling growth. Others are constitutionally wayward and unhappy in their growth, like Beurré Bosc, so as to render them scarcely obtainable from our nurseries. For instance, instead of trees with the feeble wood of the Winter Nelis, we could have the same fruit from a tree like the Doyenné Boussock, or Buffum, the former of which, in Europe, attains the height of fifty to sixty feet, and here both are scarcely less vigorous or hardy. This is only to be obtained by the choice of parent varieties to breed from, one of which, at least, possesses like vigorous habits.

In regard to bearing properties, we should select those which come early into fruit, and set their fruit readily, and annually, like the Louise Bonne de Jersey and Vicar of Winkfield pears,

and not like many kinds which flower freely, but do not set their fruit until the trees have attained a great age. With the apple, we should aim to produce varieties of the constitution and beauty of habit, as well as of fruit, like the Baldwin, King, and Gravenstein, and should avoid, if possible, those of an opposite character. It may be said, that many of our earliest fruits are necessarily of medium, or small size. This can be overcome. There is no general law which limits this feature. The improvement is all within the hand of man to mould them as he will. The field of progress is endless, and it is our duty to occupy it. The same Divine Power that created the infinite species of plants and trees, also furnished them with the ability not only to perpetuate themselves, but like the animal kingdom, under judicious treatment, to produce improved varieties.

The success which has attended the application of judicious labor, leads to the conviction that great improvement is also to be made in our methods of cultivation. Compare, for instance, the magnificent specimens of some varieties now on exhibition with those of ten years ago. What has produced this great change? Why manifestly a better knowledge of their several characteristics, and of the best mode of cultivation. What has given the little Delaware grape a world-wide celebrity but proper cultivation? What has rendered Hovey's Seedling strawberry so deservedly popular in the Boston market, but a knowledge of its characteristics and the right method of treatment? In the former case at the Iona Island, and in the latter, at Belmont, it would seem that perfection in culture had been attained.

THE VINE.

Of all fruits the grape is the most excellent, delicious, and salutary in its uses. It is in the vegetable kingdom, what gold is in the mineral, and man in the animal.

When Providence designs the rapid progress of any industrial art for the welfare of man, attention is suddenly turned towards it, and a new zeal and enterprise awakened in its development. Thus, in the nineteenth century, the coverings of the gold mines of California and Australia are removed, and the immense deposits of coal and the fountains of oil in their bosoms are discovered, just when the age demands their use. So with the cultivation of the grape in our land, a fruit so universally and highly appreciated in the old world; yet here, it has been allowed to slumber until the necessities and the demands of progressive civilization require the vine to minister to the wants of the community.

We hail, therefore, with pleasure, the deep and general interest awakened in the culture of the grape, in the production of new varieties so well adapted to their respective districts, as to indicate the near approach of that day, when "every man may sit under his own vine."

No department of the pomologist is of more importance than the vineyard. No other fruit, at the present moment, awakens so deep an interest in our country as the grape. None, I imagine, is more intimately connected with the future commerce or well being of our country. Strange, that a fruit of such antiquity and excellence should not have received more of our attention. The grape is often alluded to in the Old and New Testaments; also in the classics, whose authors wrote under its shade, and whose songs were redolent with its sweetest perfume. Thus the grape comes down to us hallowed by a thousand memories, and honored with a genealogy extending back to its primitive Eden. In the days of the Prophets, the grape constituted one of the chief articles of food in Syria, and other orient lands, and the loss of a crop was considered as a judgment of Heaven.

How sacred and holy are the references to the vine by our Saviour. References to the vine are numberless in the Bible, in the Greek and Roman classics, in sacred and profane writings, — in festivals in honor of the vintage, in nearly all civilized nations, and in every age.

We believe that the grape is destined to become, in modern times, as it certainly was of old, one of the largest and most important of our crops. When we shall have produced varieties suited to the various latitudes of our country, appropriate for early use and for late keeping, adapted for drying into raisins, for other culinary purposes, and for the manufacture of the various kinds of wine, we shall begin to realize the great value of the grape, — equal, perhaps, in its future uses to that of the apple.

It appears from the census taken at the close of the last decade, that there was an increase in the population of the States, during that period, of thirty-five per cent., — in the products of the orchard, one hundred and sixty per cent., or fifty per cent. more than any other product, except that of the single article of wine, which increased nearly seven hundred and fifty per cent.

INFLUENCE OF RURAL ART.

Never before have we met under circumstances so well calculated to impress us with the quietude, pleasure, and salutary influence of rural life. Providence constrains us to view our fertile grounds in contrast with fields drenched with blood, and our peaceful homes with the tumult of battle and the horrors of war. We cheerfully recognize our obligations to the good Government under which we live; and we would hold ourselves in readiness to sacrifice all that is most dear on the altar of her

liberties. Yet we cannot refrain from a brief allusion to the beneficial and positive tendency of our calling to minister to the comfort and happiness of the human race.

The influence of pomological pursuits may be classed not only as one of the most interesting and benevolent, but one of the most useful and refined employments, opening the heart to the study of nature in her most beautiful, bright, and fascinating mood. The love of the garden is the sure precursor of a higher state of civilization and refinement. Whatever pleasures may be derived from other sources, this seems to have been the criterion of taste and comfort in all past ages.

The high estimation in which fruits have been held by all nations, may be inferred by the frequent allusion to them in the Scriptures, and other branches of literature. Not only did Solomon cause the temple to be ornamented with carvings of fruits, the robes of the priests to be embroidered with them, but he frequently alluded to them to illustrate the graces of the Church. Trees, fruits and flowers furnish some of the most sublime representations of the Bible, the standard of all that is beautiful in imagery, of all that is excellent in character, of all that is hopeful in destiny. What a chain of exalted metaphor is seen in the Holy Volume from Genesis to Revelation, in allusion to trees; from that generated from the smallest seed, to that "which yieldeth twelve manner of fruits, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations." The love of these is natural and instinctive, inbred in the soul of man. What an intimate communion exists between yourself and the tree which you train up in the way it should go, so that when it is old it will not depart from it.

The imagination of man has never found any other scenes so enchanting as the associations of the garden. Consecrated as the birthplace of mankind, holy as the burial-place of the

Redeemer, and sanctified by intimate associations with the eternal home of the blessed, where else can we look so rationally for joyful aspirations and felicity on earth? Nor can we estimate too highly the influence of these pursuits, in multiplying and sweetening the endearments of home, and in increasing the welfare of society. You enjoy the benefit of the trees you plant while you live. Other property may be lost, but the tree lives on and blesses you with its annual crop, and when you have done with earth, it still flourishes to enrich the inheritance of your successors, and to tell them of your love to them and to your country.

The cultivation of fruits, as a science, is one of the most interesting and delightful that has ever occupied the attention of man. It furnishes an endless variety of objects for contemplation, constantly exciting his wonder, and leading forth his soul in admiration of the providence, wisdom and goodness of that Almighty Hand, which bespangles the heavens with radiant orbs, and carpets the earth with living gems no less brilliant or wonderful. Whether we study the canopy above, or the carpet beneath, we are filled with admiration at the order and infinitude of His works,—

> "A world of beauties that throughout their frame,
> Creation's proudest miracles proclaim."

The more, therefore, we instil into the minds of our youth the love of our delightful art, the more will they appreciate the wisdom, beauty, and perfection of the external world, and the more will their souls become invested with that purity and refinement which enlarges the sphere of social happiness, and elevates the mind to contemplate with reverence and delight that Infinite Source,

> "Which sends Nature forth the daughter of the skies,
> To dwell on earth and charm all human eyes."

When our work on earth is finished, how precious the monuments which this art rears to perpetuate our memories! It was the custom of some of the ancients to bury their dead under trees, so that future generations might sit over their graves screened from the parching heat, and to dedicate fruits and flowers to distinguished men.

What an honorable testimonial to have a luscious fruit dedicated to your memory, — a fruit which shall bear the name not only of yourself, but of your family long after you shall have been buried beneath the sods of the valley! How transporting the thought, that future generations will sit under the cooling shade of the tree reared by your own hand, and regale themselves with its precious fruit! Think you not they will shed the tear of gratitude, and bless the hand that planted it! How chastening the anticipation that when we shall have been gathered to our fathers, and these frail tenements are consigned to the bosom of our mother earth, the particles of our bodies shall be regenerated and reappear in the more beautiful forms of fruit or flower, and shall thus minister to the comfort of generations to come. Oh! let me be remembered in some beautiful flower, some graceful tree, some luscious fruit. Oh! yes, far better than storied monument or sculptured urn, let me be remembered as one who labored to adorn and improve the earth, to promote the pleasure and welfare of those who are to follow me.

In creation there is a wonderful fitness between the native instinct of man and the object of his attachment. Thus God gave us trees adorned with inimitable beauty, "pleasant to the sight and good for food." Thus we have the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, symbolic sacraments of the patriarchal Church. Witness the inherent love of these in Abraham, when he said, "Let us have all the trees that are in the field, and

that are round about;" — in Solomon, planting orchards and vineyards, and classing these pursuits "among the delights of the sons of men;" — in our immortal Washington, retiring from public life to sit beneath the shades of Mount Vernon; — in Rousseau, longing to be laid under his own favorite tree; — in Temple, directing that his heart should be buried beneath the trees of his own planting; — and in the untutored Indian, who, beholding a tree of his native land, sprang forward with one joyous bound, exclaiming, "O! tree of my home, welcome to my heart." So does the human soul sympathize with the objects of nature.

CONCLUSION.

GENTLEMEN: It has been my desire, and my custom, on these occasions, to confine my remarks to subjects strictly connected with the objects of our Association, to unite my rejoicings with yours in the progress of the past, and to look forward with cheering hopes to the future of our favorite art. But this calling, our homes, our institutions, and all we hold dear and sacred on earth, are so involved in the civil conflict in which our country is now engaged, as to demand, in conclusion, a passing notice.

Accustomed as we have been, for half a century, to the enjoyment of uninterrupted peace with transatlantic powers, to the contemplation of the prosperity and rising greatness of our Republic, and to the belief that the very name of war was fast becoming obsolete, we find it impossible to comprehend the gigantic proportions and ulterior influences of that dreadful evil which is upon us, and which has taken from the peaceful pursuits of active life two millions of our fellow citi-

zens, and plunged them into the most dreadful and bloody conflict, — which has suddenly, as by the stamp of Ajax's foot, raised up a Navy second to no other on earth, and which has concentrated the astonishing improvements of the last half century in machinery and progressive science for the relief of human toil and the happiness of man, into the single art of his destruction by war.

At a crisis so momentous and fearful, involving our existence as an independent and united people, and our relation to every other nation under heaven, our paramount duty is plain. We must support with all our means that good Government which the patriotism and wisdom of our fathers established, and which, after every effort to avert the evil, is compelled to robe even her white-winged messenger of peace in the fiery habiliments of war for the preservation of the Republic and the enforcement of its laws. We must hold on to the Constitution as the very palladium of our liberties, and the sheet anchor of our hope. We must frown upon every attempt at insubordination and fanaticism to invade our rights, and having done all, we must stand by the flag of our Union. Yes, stand by those glorious stars and stripes, which, for more than fourscore years, have waved over the land of our birth, and the cradles of our infancy. Stand by this flag, whose every thread is luminous with the history of our Nation's greatness. Stand by that flag, which has floated in the breeze of every sea and clime. Stand by that flag, the harbinger of civilization, and the herald of salvation to the distant isles of the sea. Stand by it, as the emblem of all that is great and good in the history of the past, or the dearest hopes of the future. Stand by the flag of our Union, in prosperity and in adversity, in life and in death — here and everywhere — now and forever.

The cloud that overshadows is indeed dark and foreboding,

yet we trust it will retire gilded with the bow of promise, and radiant with the hope of a brighter to-morrow. We believe that He who rules in mercy as well as in justice, will in the end bring our beloved nation out of all its troubles, and make us a wiser and better people; that He will yet make us one in interest and destiny, a people whose love of self-government, union, and strength, shall, in the future as in the past, be the wonder and admiration of the world. Terrible as this crisis is, we doubt not that the progress of this great Republic is to be onward and upward in the cause of freedom, civilization and humanity, and in all that tends to the development of the comfort, happiness, and perfection of the human race. Yes, we fondly cling to the hope that the day is coming yet, when war shall wash his bloody hand and sheath his glittering sword, — when our fields shall no longer be ploughed with the deadly cannon, or fertilized with the blood of our brethren, — and when peace shall again wreath her olive leaves around these distracted States, and bind them together in one great circle of life and love. The night is dark, but the morning cometh. That golden age is "coming yet."

> "Its coming yet for a' that,
> When man to man the warld o'er,
> Shall brothers be for a' that."

To this delightful result our chosen art is to contribute its full share; and when it shall have accomplished its whole mission on earth, our orchards and gardens will be crowned with the choicest fruits of Pomona, our hill-sides rejoice in the rich burden of the vintage, and man at last, as at first, enjoy the fruition of Paradise on earth.