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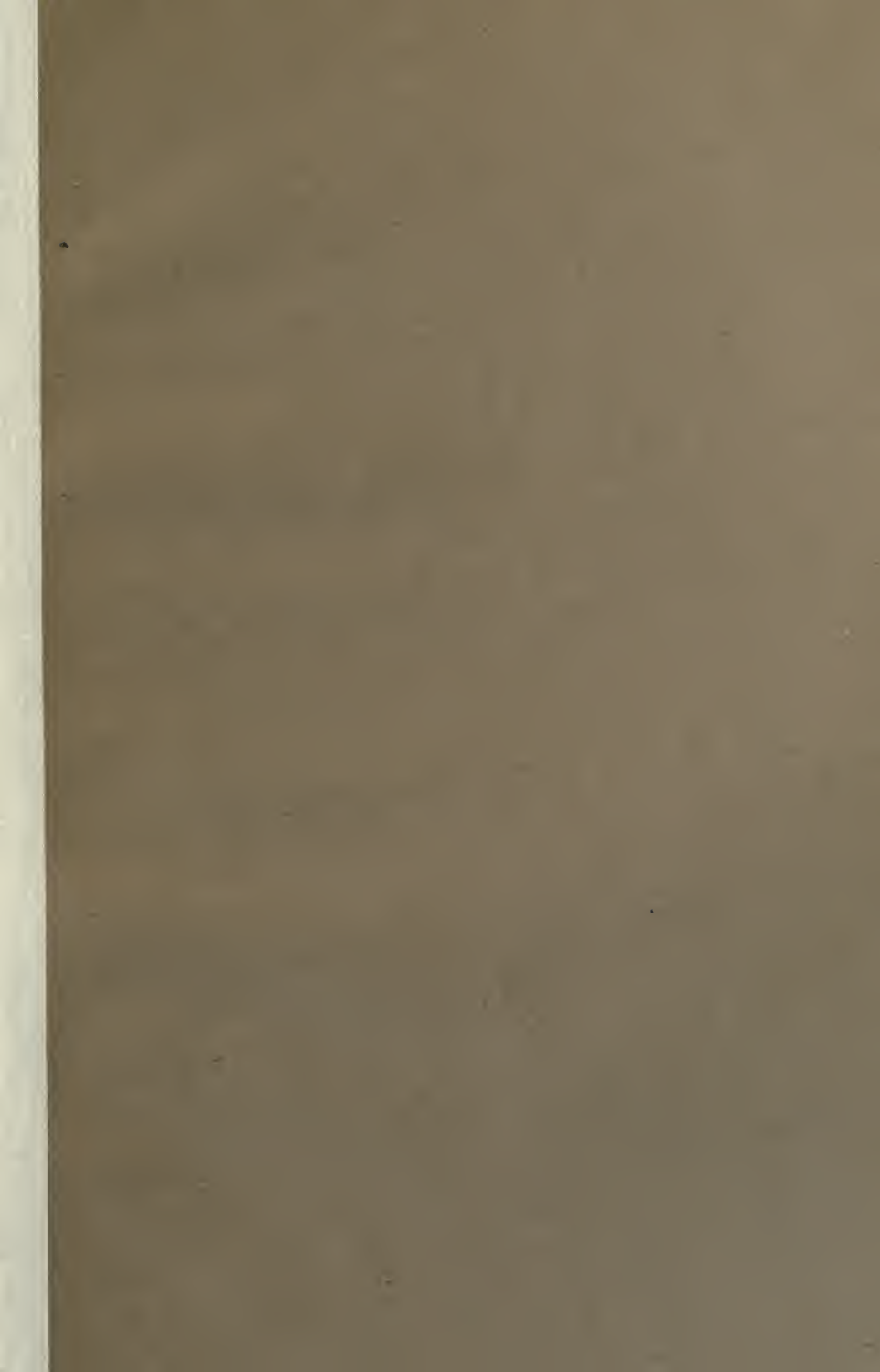
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ADDRESS

AT THE

EIGHTH MEETING

OF THE

American Horticultural Society

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IN SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA,

January 25, 1888.

BY PARKER EARLE,

PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND. :

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1888.

American Horticultural Society.

OFFICE OF SECRETARY.

GREENCASTLE, INDIANA, March 25, 1888.

DEAR SIR :

The members of the American Horticultural Society, and others who were so fortunate as to be permitted to listen to the reading of the following able address of President Earle, which formed part of the late interesting meetings held in California, the proceedings of which will soon be published in book form for distribution to members of the Society only, unanimously voted that it was too valuable a paper to be lost on so small an edition—that it should be freely distributed as a missionary document in the interest of American horticulture. To this end a voluntary fund was created, by subscriptions, for the purpose of enabling the Secretary to publish in pamphlet form, for more general and *free distribution*, a large number of copies of the address.

Complying with these instructions, the Secretary now takes pleasure in presenting you a copy of this able address, believing that its careful perusal will fully repay you.

LOAN STACK

W. H. RAGAN,

GIFT

Secretary A. H. S.

PRESIDENT EARLE'S ADDRESS.

It was nearly fifty years ago that I had my first dream of an horticultural paradise as I read in the good old Bible story the report of that exploring committee which Moses sent out to search the land of Canaan, and spy out its resources, and "to bring back the fruit of the land." Now, Moses being the wisest of his race, and the greatest leader of men, did not ask his committee to bring back samples of the grain, the merino wool, the short staple cotton, or the best breeds of live stock, short-horns or Jerseys, but simply to bring back *the fruit of the land*. For Moses seemed to know that the country which could grow the best fruits was the very best country for the chosen people of the Lord to emigrate to. And when this first horticultural deputation returned laden with the figs, the pomegranates, and the great cluster of grapes from the banks of the brook of Eschol, that the two men bore on a staff between them—and I know that the cluster of grapes reached from the staff on the men's shoulders nearly to the ground, for my mother's great Bible pictured it that way—then Moses and Aaron and Caleb and the few wise men of Israel wanted to go up and possess the land, notwithstanding the sons of Anak dwelt there and the other tribes of great stature. But the mass of the people of Israel were ignorant, and did not appreciate this horticultural exhibition, and the promise of the better life that was possible in a fruit-growing country, but they grumbled and rebelled; and they all suffered the righteous penalty for their neglect of such a noble opportunity. But I well remember the longing with which I considered that enormous bunch of grapes and the impulse I had to go and find a country where they grow grapes in big clusters. Now, I think that there are many thousands of men and women who were little boys and girls a little while back like myself—only a half century or so—who have been carrying visions of the great grapes of Eschol in their brains ever since those early Bible readings. And we have all been wanting to come to the land of Canaan ever since we found out where it was—that we might see its fabulous fruits hanging in the golden sunshine, and taste the perfumed air of its happy valleys, while we strolled along the banks of the wonderful brook of Eschol, and, perchance, find opportunity to lift some of those big grape clusters that are not wholly of the imagination.

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THE EARTHLY PARADISE.

And so a few of us horticultural dreamers have come over the great fertile plains, across the thirsty deserts, and have climbed the gigantic walls which fortify you against invasion, to test for ourselves the climate and the fruits of this earthly paradise. We think we like the land and the fruits thereof, and shall make a good report of them to all the chosen people of Israel.

My friends of the land of Canaan, we are glad that we came. We are glad

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to be with you and to see the welcome which shines in all your faces. We come as fruit-growers, and gardeners, and forest planters, and builders of homes, to greet our brethren in a land whose conditions of culture we have long envied. We have come to study these new conditions for ourselves; to gain new ideas which we may apply where our surroundings are less favorable; to compare views as to many questions regarding which we have a common interest; and to drink with you at the fountains of enthusiasm which have inspired you to so many brilliant enterprises all along this golden coast.

HORTICULTURE.

Horticulture is a broad term. It covers almost everything that makes our country beautiful and sweet to live in. It embraces the operations of the fruit-grower, the skillful manipulations of the gardener, the arts of the landscape builder, and all that relates to the planting of forests in a land that perishes without them. Every horticulturist should be a missionary. He should be an educator of the public taste as regards trees and flowers and lawn plantings and fruit gardens. He should be an enthusiast for the beauty of his town. He should stimulate the making of parks, the adorning of cemeteries and school-house yards, the planting of groups of roadside trees. The true horticulturist will make his mark in the community in which he lives. I think that one of the great needs of the time is a generous enthusiasm for horticultural improvement. We want tree-planting associations in every town in the land. Every man should not only make his own home beautiful, but should find some stimulus for his neighbor whose grounds are lean and bare.

The work that has been done by horticultural agencies in redeeming this great country, its towns and its farms, from the nakedness of forty years ago is something to rejoice in. The land is blossoming with beauty in thousands of parks and lawns and cottage door-yards; but many leagues of barrenness still stretch along almost all of our railways and highways, a vast field for the preacher of this new gospel of beauty and home comfort; and until every farm-house and cottage in all the length and breadth of this magnificent country shall be blessed by sheltering trees and blooming beds, or climbing vines, or some sweet spot of green turf which shows the outbursting longing of the immortal spirit for beauty—until every American farm shall have its garden for vegetables and fruit, and every village lot its fruit-bearing tree or vine, will the duty of the horticulturist as a teacher and a missionary be partly undone.

NARROW DISCUSSIONS.

I think it has often been a fault of our horticultural societies that their range of discussion has been too narrow. They have been given too much to the special interests which affected the business of the majority of mem-

bers, and too little to those relating to the public welfare. In fact, we are often simply pomological societies or nurserymen's clubs. We come together with our great problems of culture, of insect management, of the cures for mildews and blights, and our whole business success is often involved in finding answers to these vexing questions, and we are prone to neglect the sweet influences which make for beauty alone and the refinement of the home.

I hope for an extension of all horticultural influences, for more societies, for more horticultural columns in the press, for social rural clubs and tree-planting associations, because I believe that the great horticultural movement of this age is doing far more for the higher civilization than all the factories and forges and trade guilds in the land. Let us labor generously toward that millennial day when every cottage shall shine with some of the beauty and every laborer's table carry some of the fruits of our art.

FRUIT-GROWING.

But while I would exhort everybody to grow trees and vines and plants for beauty and fruits for home supply, I do not by any means seek to influence any large increase of fruit-growing for commercial purposes, for I believe that fruit-growing as a business is increasing quite as fast as our facilities for distribution, and rather more rapidly than is profitable to the growers. It appears to me that there is no subject of more immediate practical interest to the commercial fruit-grower than this one of the means for a wide distribution. You are all well aware that our most important and staple fruits often sell at ruinous prices in our leading markets, not only on particular days, but for long periods. The shippers of pears from California, of peaches from Delaware, of apples from Michigan, of strawberries from Illinois, and of oranges from Florida, can all testify to this. Yet I do not think that too many of either of these fruits of good quality have ever been grown in any of these states, nor enough for the markets that were within practical reach of them, or the mouths that were hungry for them. The fault is with our transportation, and our lack of any far-reaching and elaborate system of distribution. I think I have known good oranges to sell at not much over one cent apiece at wholesale in Chicago, the market being overloaded, when there were a thousand towns within a day's ride of that city in which you could not buy an orange for less than five cents—and not many at that—and millions of people within the same radius who did not taste an orange in the whole winter. Yet the fruit distribution from Chicago is more closely worked than from any other American city.

DISTANT MARKETS.

There have been many winters in which the price of winter apples has paid the producer very lean profits, and paid the large dealers more losses

than gains, while at that same time an apple was a rarity, if not an absolute stranger, in half the farmers' homes and laborers' cottages in America. The delicious apricots of your Pacific coast are often left to decay in the luxuriant orchards that bear them for want of a market, while not one-tenth of the people of the United States ever tasted an apricot in their lives. Yet, by using the best modern means of transportation, your most delicate varieties, picked ripe from the trees and full of excellence—and not, as they are now for long shipment, too green to be of high quality—can be laid down in all of our great eastern markets in very perfect condition.

The same difficulty exists with most of our fruits. So many of our available markets are not reached; and the fruit-grower suffers from an apparent over-production when half the people go hungry for fruits which they need and can not obtain. This condition of trade is not found in the case of staple goods of other kinds, and manufactured articles; for all these goods are handled according to a more thorough business system. The more perishable nature of our fruits must of necessity modify and limit the same system of thorough commercial canvassing by which more durable products are placed constantly in every town and hamlet in the country; but I feel sure that regular fruit markets can be built up in thousands of towns that now get no supplies, except in the most irregular way, by an energetic system of canvassing. This subject demands the serious attention of our growers and dealers.

TRICKS OF TRADE.

This leads me to notice one grave reason why the building up of a regular fruit trade is more difficult than it should be. This reason is the irregular quality and serious imperfections of a majority of the fruits sent to market. Both the dealers and consumers soon get disgusted when they find half the peaches in a basket, or half the apples in a barrel, wormy; and in the case of the peaches find all of them green, hard and inedible below the top layer; and even the top course seeming ripe and well colored only when seen through the delusive tarlatan which is bound tightly over them. A basket of green peaches with a goodly supply of worms, and with sizable specimens placed on top, and then all covered tightly and beyond examination by a colored netting which makes them all appear blushing with ripeness, is a cheat and a fraud so contemptible and disgusting that it should consign the perpetrator of such a swindle to the tender couch of the county jail. It is only equaled by a barrel of apples that is faced up handsomely at both ends and is filled with scabby and wormy scrubs through the middle.

I regret to say that such baskets of peaches and such barrels of apples are forced off upon an innocent buying public by hundreds of thousands every year. I think and hope that the most abused fruit market in the world in this respect is that best of all the fruit markets of the world, the city of Chicago. I will venture the guess here that, of all the millions of people that have this year bought peaches coming through the Chicago market, not one in four

has had occasion to bless the grower of the fruit; and in most cases he has been oburgated, if not cursed. I dwell particularly upon this kind of fruit and this kind of package because it is the most notable example of a widespread attempt to deceive the buyer to be found in all our fruit marketing history. It will not be a good excuse to say that red tarlatan is necessary to hold the fruit in place in the baskets, because *white* netting with a very open mesh will serve that purpose equally well and will not obscure the real color. And no well-colored peach can be made more beautiful by any kind of covering. Is it any wonder that respectable grocers dislike to trade in our fresh fruits, and that the people get sick and weary of buying them, when the opening of every new package is the unveiling of a new deception?

AN EARNEST PROTEST.

I am a fruit-grower, a fruit-packer, and a fruit-buyer, and I stand here in all three capacities to protest, in all the earnestness of my soul, against all kinds of deception in fruit-packing. It is impolitic in the highest degree, and it is unworthy of all decent men. A large dealer not long since said to me that the whole business of fruit-packing, east and west, north and south, with now and then an exception, is worm-eaten, and rotten with dishonesty. My friends, I hope his denunciation was unjust, and I believe it is far too sweeping, but severe criticism is called for.

Let us away with all stuffings and facings, with all deceptive coverings, with all undersized packages, with the packing of all green, half-grown, gnarly and worm-eaten fruit in any kind of packages. If we must pack poor fruit, put it on top where it will tell its own story. Let us do this, and we shall find that it will pay in money, pay in the plaudits we shall win from all men, and in our own self-respect and integrity of soul. I should say here, and I cheerfully do say, that I believe that the California fruit packers are generally far less open to criticism in this matter of straight packing than are the majority of eastern growers. You can not afford to pay freight on trash two or three thousand miles. Yet there is some room for improvement in the selection and grading of fruits from this pre-eminent horticultural state. It can not be too often or too earnestly impressed upon fruit men everywhere that to secure the best results the most scrupulous pains must be taken, not only in growing fruit properly, but in careful handling, thorough grading, and unflinching honesty in packing. The man with a high standard, well worked up to, is the man who will come out best in the race.

FRUIT PRODUCTION.

The business of fruit production is growing to be so vast a one in many sections of this country that the time has fully come for giving it more thorough organization than it has had before. There are many considerable sections of the country where it is already the overshadowing industrial in-

terest, and it seems to me probable that in your great and glorious state of California it will soon overtop every other producing interest. For you, as for Florida and Delaware, and large sections of New York, Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Georgia, Arkansas, and other states, these questions of transportation, distribution, a high standard of packing, and a high standard of quality of fruits, are questions of overwhelming business importance. The United States is the great fruit country of the world. There is no limit to the possibility of our fruit production when insect and fungoid troubles are handled by energy guided by science. There will be no limit to it except that of pecuniary profit. We can furnish the nations of the old world with fruit, as we do with bread and meat and cotton. There is no reason why the peaches of California and Mississippi and Michigan and Georgia should not be laid down in the European markets. I speak temperately, and my conclusions are based upon my own experience as a shipper of fruit. The facilities for doing this do not at present exist, but they are known, and within the reach of a properly organized effort. Hence, I see a future for the horticultural interest of this country that is glorious and vast as the blue canopy of a summer sky. To reach any grand and rewarding results every step must be taken with care and thoroughness.

MICROSCOPIC FUNGI.

Among the many obstacles to success in fruit-growing, the most destructive and most difficult to overcome are the myriad tribes of microscopic fungi which assail plant and tree and vine and fruit. There is no branch of our business which does not suffer serious annual losses from these obscure enemies, and no climate or section so fortunate as to long escape their attacks. The discouraged fruit-grower who has lost his pear trees by the omnipresent blight; his peach trees by the insidious yellows; his grape-vines by the mildew, whose white shroud extinguishes all hope for fruit; his apple crop having become scabby, and his strawberry plants having been burned by the rust as by a consuming fire, turns his face away from the old homestead upon which all these horticultural curses have fallen, and travels to some new fair land where smiling skies and sweet winds promise him immunity from all these evils. For a few years these promises are kept, and his virgin crops are fair as the golden apples of Hesperides. But his obscure enemies follow him with the certainty of an avenging fate, and they will follow him the wide world over, even within the gates of Eden itself, if he does not wage an exterminating warfare upon them.

You can not probably name a fruit that we grow which is not preyed upon by four or five or more of these lilliputian foes. The number that affect the interests of horticulture can not be stated, but it is certainly counted by hundreds, a single one of which, like the scab on pears and apples, costs the American fruit-growers millions of dollars annually. I think it safe to say that the quantity of fruits entirely destroyed, or so seriously defaced as to

lose their market value, in this country by these low forms of vegetable life is far greater than all that escapes their attack. This difficulty grows greater year by year in all fruit-growing neighborhoods. That this is a situation which demands the serious attention of all horticultural people I need not suggest.

LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

Our definite scientific knowledge of the nature of this vast underworld of microscopic life, which pervades and attacks and overwhelms all the higher and nobler forms of vegetable organism, is as yet incomplete, and is all very modern. It is the most obscure domain of physical research. The botanists who have thoroughly studied the fungology of this country, and have done something to master its elusive problems, can be almost numbered on the fingers of the two hands. We have thousands of scientific men, and hundreds of specialists, who are making plain paths through the intricacies of scientific obscurity, but this great and universal realm of the infinitely little things which attack all superior creations, and assail the integrity of every structure which enters into our civilization, has received little investigation.

What we need is more workers in this field. We must have more knowledge, and that we may have investigation we must provide in some definite way for the support of it. Is there any more important kind of work for our agricultural colleges, and for our state experimental stations? I urge this matter upon your thoughtful consideration.

A NOBLE OCCUPATION.

The business of fruit-growing is one of the noblest occupations of the world, if carried on with a faithful spirit. The results of our work contribute directly and powerfully to the betterment of mankind. We minister to the health and the moral stature of the community. I would have every horticulturist regard his vocation with becoming pride. We work with the great forces of nature. We form alliances with the sunshine and the rain, and the secret affinities of the soil. We manipulate the occult energies of chemistry. We join hands with Providence to produce our harvests. The American fruit-grower, like the American farmer, should hold his head proudly, but reverently, as the best man of the world. As I look at it, there is no man on earth that outranks the well equipped and competent American farmer and American fruit-farmer. But equipment of knowledge and intellectual competency mean a great deal.

THE NEED OF BROAD CULTURE.

The successful and ideal farmer must be a man of culture and of science, must have a wide knowledge of the world, its great industries, its history,

its commercial needs. He must be a power in the community and in the state. Are we taking the necessary educational steps to produce such farmers? There is no question which a convention of horticulturists, representing every section of our country, can more appropriately consider than that of the facilities we are providing for the education of the American farmer as he should be. We have the foundation for the best educational system of any nation in the world, and we have a more earnest general desire to find the best kind of education. Our farmers and our agricultural writers are more widely imbued with this desire than this same class in any other country.

Yet I fear that the present tendency is to place our standard too low. I am greatly in sympathy with our agricultural colleges and with the industrial departments of our universities, but I can not join in the general criticism of those institutions which attempt to give a generous literary culture as well as a good technical training. In fact, I feel like protesting earnestly against the general trend of the discussion in the agricultural press toward a purely technical, manual, industrial education.

The American farmer should be the most liberally educated and broadly cultured man in the American state. The farmers as a class far outnumber the class of manufacturers, or of merchants, or of professional men, or of all these classes together, and yet they have less influence in molding the industrial and political policies that govern us than either one of these other classes. Why is this, except that the farmer has learned how to plow and to mow and to dig ditches better than he has learned how to think? His education has been too generally confined to those rudiments necessary to give him practical success as a farmer in a narrow sphere. And here come the doctrinaires of the new industrial education and propose the same policy for our agricultural colleges, only in a larger degree.

This wide spread sentiment is, it seems to me, one of the saddest mistakes of the age. It proposes an education as deficient in general mental culture as the old classical schools are lacking in scientific and technical training. The true education that will make broad-minded, forceful men of our bright boys must embrace all that is best and all that is possible of both the old and the new systems. Let us by all means shed all the light of science on the difficult problems of agriculture—let us teach engineering and drainage and stock management and veterinary practice; but let us not try to eliminate the Latin from the nomenclature of science or go into editorial spasms at the sight of a pile of Greek roots.

I believe that the farmer will never take his proper place as a director in great affairs of economy and statesmanship until he is educated as the lawyer, the minister, the physician, manufacturer, merchant and statesman are educated; until he becomes a student, if not a master, in all lines of classical, literary, æsthetic and scientific culture, as have the controlling men who gauge our policies and direct our affairs. The plea so earnestly and

frequently made against classical and literary teaching in our agricultural colleges is a plea for mental narrowness and intellectual incapacity. The technically educated farmer may guide the plow to turn the truest furrow, but he may not be able to do much good in holding the helm of state. Facility in forging plowshares, in turning the parts of an engine, in grafting and training fruit trees, in the economical care of stock and the treatment of sick animals—all these accomplishments so essential to the artisan and the farmer as such—nevertheless fail to qualify him for the higher social duties and the solemn responsibilities of the citizen who should be foremost of men in controlling the great policies of the commonwealth. In fact, a well trained faculty for tile drainage is not a liberal education. Cincinnatus was called from the plow to the chieftaincy of a people, not because his hand could hold the plow well, but because his educated brain could master the great problems of the state. The men who have made farming and horticulture a noble occupation, who have given dignity to labor, who have voiced the needs of agriculture and the longings of industry, are not the men who have had simply a dexterous manual skill, but they are men whose minds have had that generous training and culture in all the learning of the ages, as well as the science of to day, which have given them a masterful position among the best men of the time.

FORESTRY.

I should be recreant to the duty of this hour if I did not call your attention, once more, as I have often done before, to the commanding question of forestry. To one who has watched the deforesting work of one generation of men in all the woodland portions of this country, and noted the gradual change of climate from one of mild conditions to one of extremes as the great conservative forests have disappeared, it would seem that no appeal should be necessary to arouse every class of thinking men to take some immediate action to arrest the threatening waste of our forests and to rebuild these faithful guardians of climate and soil. There is nothing better established in physical science than that a good proportion of forest is necessary to maintain equability of climate. It is conceded by scientific men, and sustained by practical experience in many countries, that as much as one-fifth or one-fourth of the land should be in forests to secure the greatest aggregate of agricultural crops. I can not stop to discuss the philosophy of this statement, but the fact will scarcely be questioned. There are several of our states that have passed the limit of safety in timber waste; but the work of woodland destruction goes on with remorseless energy. I can name you states where nearly or quite one half of the total area of land has been laid bare of forest growth in about a quarter of a century. Some of them have not five per cent. of their valuable timber left; and so far neither the nation nor any state has made any serious attempt to stop the waste or to promote forest culture. The governments of other countries show much

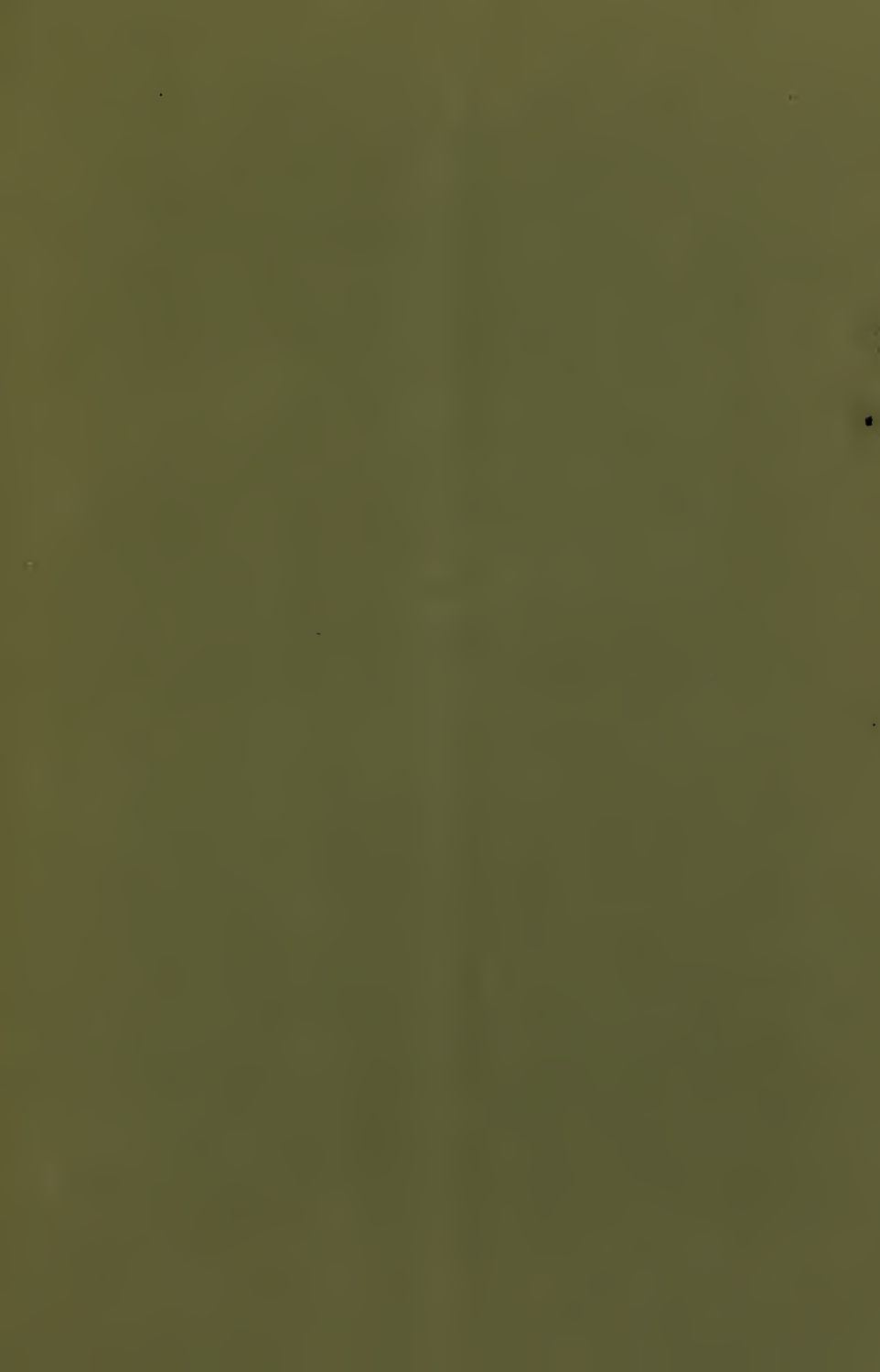
more wisdom than we. The European governments live in the immediate presence of the ruin and national decay that have come to once fertile and populous lands. The institutions of civilization have never declined in a country that has maintained its forests—I think I can safely say that they have never been maintained in any country that has wasted its woodland heritage without repair. Hence, these enlightened governments have been long taking the most vigorous measures to conserve and to restore the great protective agency of the green and glorious woods.

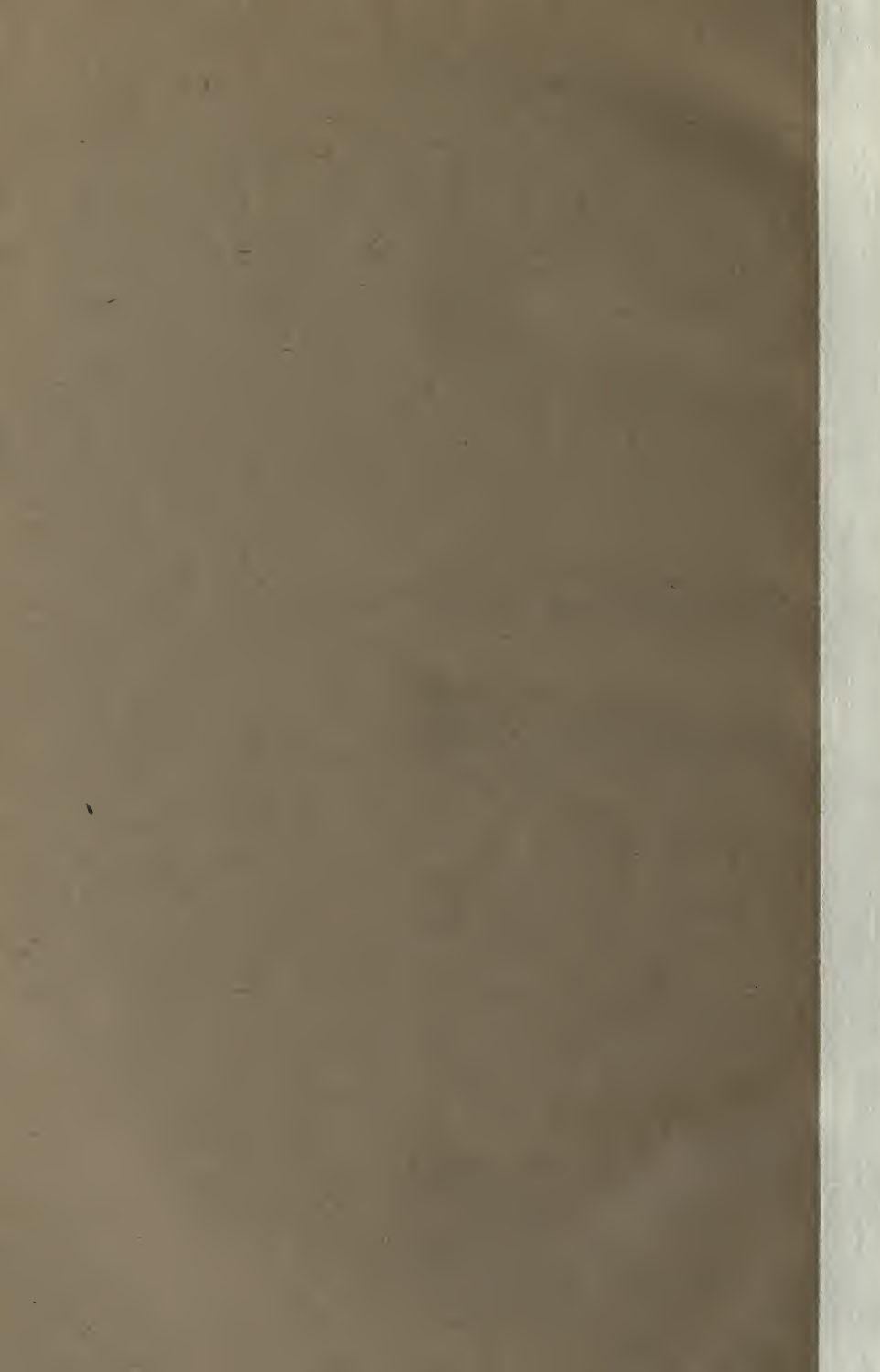
It is the clear duty of our general government to absolutely prohibit the further slaughter of the timber on its domain, and to withdraw all forest lands from sale except to meet the pressing needs of settlers. And why should not this government take similar measures to those taken in the old world to establish forests on treeless public lands? And can not our state governments encourage timber planting by a judicious system of bounties, and arrest its waste by a very heavy tax on timber cutting? By some such plan, or by *some* plan, the states should take prompt action for the upbuilding of forestry; and no graver responsibility rests upon our legislatures than this.



THOSE GONE BEFORE.

There is one sad duty remaining to me on this occasion: to announce the names of two friends who have passed onward beyond the reach of mortal vision. This society had no more zealous member, and horticulture no warmer friend, than A. C. Kendel, of Cleveland, Ohio, who died during the last autumn. Many of our members mourn his loss as that of a brother. Mr. Kendel was one of our largest and most useful fruit merchants, and was one of the class whose faithfulness and integrity all men praised. He was the affectionate head of a devoted family; he was active in every good work for helping his fellow-men; he was in all places a gentleman, and in all the relations of life the soul of honor. In the death of such men in the maturity of their powers society suffers a great loss. We who knew him well will never know a better man.

The death of Colonel Marshall P. Wilder, the venerable president of the American Pomological Society, although not unexpected—for he was eighty-eight years old—yet cast a certain sorrow over the entire horticultural world. For half a century he had been at the head of American pomology. His fame was world-wide. Boston has been the home of many great men, but she had few citizens of such stately presence as our noble friend. President Wilder had a kingly aspect and bearing, but he had a queenly heart, as gentle and true as your own mother's. None knew him but to admire him and to love him. He lived out a great and well-rounded life here, and he has gone forward to those happy uplands where frosts wither not nor blights destroy the immortal fruitage on the heavenly hills.





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