ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

DEDICATION OF THE NEW HALL

OF THE

Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1865.

BY C. M. HOVEY,
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

BOSTON:
HENRY W. DUTTON & SON, PRINTERS,
90 AND 92 WASHINGTON STREET
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Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

HORTICULTURAL HALL,

BOSTON, Nov. 11, 1865.

At a meeting of this Society, held to-day, on motion of L. Wetherell, Esq., it was unanimously

Voted, to present to you the thanks of the Society for your able, eloquent and instructive Address, delivered on the occasion of the Dedication of our new Building; and to request of you a copy for publication in the Transactions of the Society.

In pursuance of that vote, the undersigned were appointed a Committee to await your reply.

Respectfully yours,

E. W. BUSWELL,
F. PARKMAN,
C. O. WHITMORE.

To C. M. HOVEY, Esq., President.

CAMBRIDGE, Nov. 16, 1865.

GENTLEMEN—

Highly gratified at the complimentary manner in which you have alluded to my Address, and pleased to know it has your kind appreciation, I submit it entirely to your disposal.

Respectfully yours,

C. M. HOVEY.

E. W. BUSWELL,
F. PARKMAN,
C. O. WHITMORE.

ADDRESS.

WINTER, with its storms of snow and chilling blasts, its leafless trees and withered verdure, has come and gone, — spring, with its genial air and welcome showers, its unfolding buds and emerald turf, has passed away, — summer, with its glorious sun and balmy air, its leafy groves and brilliant blossoms, has ended, and we are again upon the threshold of autumn, with its cloudless sky and cooling breeze, already spreading her robe of varied colors over hill and valley, tinting the copse and dell with her kaleidoscopic hues, embrowning the orchard with its ruddy fruits, and spangling the fields and pastures with countless flowers of purple and gold. Another varied year has run its course ; — a year crowded with momentous events, filled with alternate hopes and fears, with joy and sorrow, — a year of war and desolation, when thousands of our fellow-men have perished in their devotion to freedom, — and we are once more permitted, by the blessing of Divine Providence, to assemble here at this joyous season, when the earth is yielding its bounteous harvest, to dedicate this beautiful

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Hall, which, after the assiduous labors of two years, you have now brought to a successful completion.

Welcome, then! thrice welcome to this Temple of Fruits and Flowers which you have reared, over which Ceres, Flora and Pomona shall preside. Here shall each hold high court, and all who worship at their shrine bring annually their chosen offerings,

“Flowers of all hue and without thorn the rose,”

wreathed and garlanded in all the fancied forms of grace and loveliness which cultivated taste may direct. Here bring your orchard treasures,

“The wide, projected heaps
of apples,”

“The Pippin burnished o’er with gold,”

“The juicy pear
In soft profusion scattered round,”

and make this ample Hall like fair Pomona’s arbor,

“With flowerets decked and fragrant smells.”

Rejoice with thankful hearts, that, through the great crisis we have passed, we have been permitted to steadily pursue our pleasant and peaceful avocations, and, in such an eventful period, accomplish the work you so zealously begun, continued with so much energy, and brought to a successful close. For all these blessings let us acknowledge the power and wisdom of Him who rules the Universe and governs all things well.

Let me congratulate you upon this happy attempt to reunite the science and art of Gardening with its sister arts of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting; for they are each regulated by the same principles and pervaded by the same feelings. In the best days of art they were united, and if, by misapplication of these principles, they have been separated, how important and gratifying that they are henceforth to be brought together. Not only shall this building be a record of progress in architectural art, but that greater progress of a refined and intelligent community, and the truest testimonial of that liberality which has grown with our material wealth, until it has become a pleasure, as it should be a duty, to contribute to every enterprise which has for its object a higher civilization.

In eligibility of site, — in the accessibility of location, — in the style of architecture, — in the proportions of these halls, — in the ample space of each, — in the convenience of the Society's rooms, — in the lesser details of accommodation of members and exhibitors, as well as in the arrangement of the whole for other uses when not needed by the Society, — all is believed to be highly satisfactory; and when we add, that financially it has proved more favorable than was anticipated, should we not feel grateful! Having shared, to some extent, in your labors and responsibilities in the erection of the building, I am glad to congratulate you upon what has been done in so short a period of time. Not without some anxiety was the work undertaken, at a period when few had the courage to proceed in any similar

enterprise; but what, two years ago, was a vague conception, is to-day a reality. If your committee have failed in the attempt to render this building as perfect as possible, or to provide everything that the space and means of the Society would allow, it must be attributed to error of judgment, and not to gratify any personal views or to wilful design. How well it is adapted to our greatest wants another week will enable you to decide. Welcome, then, once more, to this hall, which you have already adorned with some of the lovely treasures of your ceaseless care,

“Flowerets of a thousand hues,”

whose sweet companionship has been the solace of your summer hours, whose buds and blossoms you have formed in various shapes of graceful beauty,

“as by a master hand, disposing well
The gay diversities of leaf and flower,”

to offer here upon the altar of Flora. If we have not been more lavish in ornament to render it more symbolical of its purpose, it is because we desired you to see it “unadorned and plain,” that the brilliant display you have in store the coming week may appear in stronger contrast.

So much has been said on a previous occasion, in reference to the condition and prospects of the Society, that it will be unnecessary to repeat it at this time. But a hasty glance at its early history,—a brief notice of its gradual progress from small beginnings to its present standing,—

may not be unprofitable, or seem a waste of time. For its history is the history of Horticulture in our country. As a science and an art it was then scarcely recognized; and Pomology, at least, was unknown. A few varieties of fruits, a meagre number of flowers, and a scanty supply of vegetables filled our gardens, or found a place in our markets. How much have the united labors of your members, and others engaged in Horticulture, changed all this! What Pomological riches are now brought before an appreciative public! How vast the beautiful acquisitions of our greenhouses and gardens, how diversified the trees and shrubs of our pleasure grounds and villa residences, and how great the variety of our culinary vegetables! To attempt to set any value upon all these improvements would be "ridiculous excess." Well may we exclaim with one of our humble poets, whose pen was principally devoted to the advancement of rural industry,

"Hail, Horticulture! Heaven ordained,
Of every art the source,
Which man has polished, life sustained,
Since time commenced his course.
Where waves thy wonder-working wand,
What splendid scenes disclose!
The blasted heath, the arid strand,
Out bloom the gorgeous rose!"

But while we may, with perfect justice, claim the accomplishment of so much, and while our efforts have been directed to a continued progress in every department of Horticulture and Rural art, we must not neglect to award

that meed of praise which belongs to a few zealous, enterprising and public spirited men, who paved the way for such an association as ours; who did the rough work; who removed the rocks and stones, and grubbed up the underbrush of prejudice and ignorance which lay in the path we were to follow, sow the better seed, and reap the rich harvest which the wisdom and sagacity of these noble pioneers foresaw was in store for those who should succeed them. To fruits and flowers, to trees and shrubs and gardening generally, they gave but little time, occupied as they were in recording facts, and diffusing information upon agricultural science.

The imperious demands of man are food and raiment, and it was the task of these great men to talk of improving our herds of cattle, and the fleeces of our sheep; — how to manage pasture-lands, and raise corn and wheat; — of the introduction of grasses and forage plants, the quality of manures, and all the details of farm improvement. For a nation's greatness is in proportion as its agriculture is flourishing; and to promote the noble art in every way, both by precept and example, was the leading aim of these disinterested and patriotic men. How much they did and how invaluable were their long-continued labors, we have the best evidence in the exhibition of superior products, and in the establishment of similar associations in our own State, which had a powerful influence throughout the country. Yet horticulture was not wholly overlooked; no narrow lines confined the minds of

such men ; their vision comprised the world abroad as well as at home. Thoroughly American in all their views, loyal almost to excess, jealous of all attempts to depreciate the character or skill of our people, yet ever ready to avail themselves of everything new, come from what source it might, and perfectly familiar with European works on agriculture and horticulture, they had not omitted to perceive the rapid progress of the latter art ; and while devoted to the one, the other was not forgotten. It was thus that the foundation was laid, upon which much of our subsequent advance in horticulture was reared.

It is only in the pages of the Massachusetts Agricultural Repository that we can find any very particular and detailed account of horticultural art previous to the formation of our Society, and from one contributor, almost alone, came nearly all that was written of much value for some years. This was the late Hon. John Lowell, who has not improperly been styled the Columella of America. He was an amateur cultivator in the true meaning of the word, and he never failed to record everything new and important concerning horticultural art. Time and again he brought it before the public, sometimes by recording his own practice, but generally in the prefatory remarks to some scientific work upon the subject. It was in one of the latter articles that he remarks : "To those who may be disposed to consider horticulture as less interesting and less within the province of this Society, we would observe (at the hazard of *repeating* and *reinforcing* the remarks we have already made), that it

is precisely the branch of agricultural industry which, in our country, needs the most attention. It is the one in which we are the most deplorably ignorant. We feel only a sentiment of humiliation when we reflect that countries which the sun never heats produce the most luxuriant fruits, while our sun wastes its powers in many parts of the country on a rich, productive soil, which in most cases is applied to the production of vegetables which our Indian predecessors bequeathed to us."

And on another occasion, when speaking of the importance of the introduction of new fruits and the culture of trees, shrubs and flowers: "Let those who please laugh at the absurdity of talking seriously of the importance of rearing ornamental trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants; let them ridicule the zeal which would furnish us with all the varieties of fruits which grow from Palestine to Archangel, which would supply our tables with lettuce in February and green peas in March; yet there are few of these laughing gentlemen who would not gladly see and taste these varieties, and they must be had and will be had in spite of ridicule. They are in truth as rational sources of pleasure, and as just objects of pride and display, as a fine carriage or superb dresses. They in truth give more pleasure; for while the coach and the muslin robe are chiefly gratifying to the owner, those who cannot afford the one or the other, *can feel*, and often do feel, more exquisitely, the pleasures derived from the display of the beauties of flowers, or the taste of the delicious fruits of

nature. The cultivator, then, of fruits and flowers is much less selfish. Their sweets are not produced for him alone."

That you may have good evidence that Mr. Lowell is the best historian of the progress of Horticulture we quote once more. This was in 1825: "As to horticulture, the field is newly explored. In my short space of residence in this mutable world, I remember when the May Duke and the sour Kentish cherry could alone be found in our market. I remember when our strawberries were only gathered from the grass fields. I remember the first boxes of cultivated strawberries ever sent to Boston market. Who ever heard of an English or Dutch gooseberry or raspberry at market twenty-five years since? The Jenneting, Catteren, Minot and Iron pears, some of them execrable, were often seen, but not a single delicious variety was known out of the gardens of the rich connoisseurs. There never was a more rapid progress in any country than that which we have made in horticulture, and yet there is no one point in which we are so defective; I hope and believe, however, that we shall supply this defect."

These remarks may seem curious enough to many of you, yet we regret to say that there are still too many who think that a taste for plants and flowers, and a love for fine fruits and ornamental trees, exhibits a sort of effeminacy which unfits those who devote their leisure moments to these objects for the business relations of life. Alas! that a love of Nature's charming works, and the pleasing

and alluring toils of the garden, should render us less capable of performing all the active duties which may devolve upon us, than those who tread the "dim and treeless city," occupied in a ceaseless competition for wealth and fame.

How much, indeed, do we owe to such illustrious pioneers as Lowell, Welles, Quincy, Sullivan, Pickering, Preble, Guild, and others. May their zeal, perseverance, integrity, high moral worth and Christian spirit be an example to those who succeed them, and may their distinguished services be held in perpetual remembrance.

It was about this period, 1822, that Mr. Lowell wrote to Mr. Knight, President of the London Horticultural Society, for a copy of their transactions for Harvard College. "He replied," says the writer, "in a most friendly manner, appeared to be highly gratified with opening an intercourse with our country, expressed his strong attachment to it, his disgust at the libels on our country, in some presses of Great Britain, and his intention to send some of his best new fruits which the late improvements had introduced."

In the following year, 1823, Mr. Knight's promise was fulfilled. A letter was received, and with it a box of trees and scions containing ten varieties of pears, two of apples, four of cherries and two of plums. All these Mr. Lowell, at Mr. Knight's particular request, was to cultivate in his grounds and disseminate them as extensively as possible. To this opportune correspondence, the actual possession of these new fruits, their high reputation abroad, and the

general desire and eagerness to possess them, as well as the subsequent donations from the same source, may be traced the unbounded zeal and enthusiasm in fruit culture, which culminated in the formation of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in 1829.

The addition of eighteen new kinds of fruit, though at this time considered of little importance, was then an acquisition whose value we cannot adequately appreciate; with only the St. Michael, St. Germain, Brown Beurré and a few other pears; the Black Tartarian, Black Heart, May Duke and some other cherries; the addition of twelve new sorts to these fruits was in proportion to the kinds then cultivated as five hundred at the present period. "Who would not be pleased," inquires Mr. Lowell, "to have *ten new and excellent varieties* of pears in the prime of youth" to supply the place of those we have named. You can therefore understand the surprise and gratification of the few enthusiastic cultivators who took a deep interest in fruit growing at the anticipated pleasure of securing three times the number they then possessed, and among them new seedlings of the highest reputation. The result was that inquiries were frequent for the scions, greater in fact than could be supplied. Some descriptions of these fruits in the agricultural papers augmented the demand, and yearly the circle of cultivators increased — more new fruits were received — glowing accounts of their merits given — and the inquiry was kept up. The pear especially began to have a reputation as a superior fruit, and as the Urbaniste

and Marie Louise — then little known, but since famous for their great excellencies — ripened their luscious fruit, enthusiasm had reached its highest point. Individual efforts were too limited, and a society was talked of to aid in the introduction as well as dissemination of still other new fruits, especially the pears of Van Mons, which had just before begun to attract the notice of cultivators throughout Europe and this country. Even the cultivation of some of our native pears began to be a subject of consideration, though these had hitherto been ignored, especially such as had not the supposition of foreign origin, so strong was the belief, even by Mr. Lowell, that it was scarcely possible to find natives of so much excellence as the Andrews, Cushing, Seckel and others. But these were submitted to the ordeal of a trial, and were acknowledged to be equal to those from abroad.

But enough had been done to stir up a spirit of improvement and stimulate to renewed exertions, and as the speediest means of arousing the public to the importance of Horticultural art, a society, upon the model, so far as possible, of the London Horticultural Society, was talked of in private, and publicly discussed in the *New England Farmer*, and an announcement was made that a meeting would be held for this object. On the twenty-fourth day of February, 1829, this took place at the office of Zebedee Cook, Jr., in State Street, at which the Hon. John Lowell presided. Sixteen gentlemen were present, and a committee of three, of which Gen. Dearborn was chairman, was

appointed to prepare a Constitution and By-Laws, and report at a future meeting. On the 17th of March this took place; the Constitution and By-Laws were read, and unanimously adopted as the Constitution and By-Laws of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society. Gen. Dearborn, most fortunately, was elected President. In one month one hundred and sixty gentlemen had joined the Association. The meeting, it is stated in the *New England Farmer*, was held in their "Hall" in North Market Street, which was a small room, twenty feet square, in the third story of the Agricultural Warehouse of John B. Russell, a gentleman whose enthusiasm in the cause was unabated, and whose labors in the organization of the Society contributed in an eminent degree to its success. On the 18th of June an exhibition took place, and as it may not be uninteresting to many of you to know of what the first exhibition was composed, I copy from the published report:—

"From the garden of Gen. Dearborn, several ears of sweet corn, a new variety from Portland. From G. W. Pratt, Watertown, several dahlias, among which the *Coccinea superba*, *helianthia flora*, and the *Royal Sovereign* (purple) were considered superior to any seen in the vicinity of Boston; one of the flowers measured $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter. From Z. Cook, Jr., several specimens of *Althæa nigra* and *flava*, very elegant. From Mr. Rufus Howe, several varieties of marigolds, dahlias and lilies. From N. Davenport, Milton, specimens of early vegetables."

Compare this with the recent exhibitions of our Society, and say, if we cannot exclaim with Mr. Lowell, "Horticulture never has made such rapid progress!"

From this period the exhibitions were held weekly in summer, and various fruits—many of them new—flowers and vegetables were shown. At nearly every meeting donations of books, seeds, plants, &c., were announced by the President, and a library of considerable extent was soon established, which at that time was exceedingly valuable to many members, such works being expensive as well as difficult to procure.

On Saturday, the 19th of September, the first annual exhibition was held in the dining room of the Exchange Coffee House. I shall not detain you with an account of this, other than to state that it was every way creditable to the members, and embraced in round numbers about thirty varieties of fruits and a fair show of flowers and vegetables. An address was delivered by the President, Gen. Dearborn, in the picture gallery of the Athenæum. In the evening the members sat down to a dinner, and toasts and sentiments were drank, songs were sung, and the whole passed off to the delight and satisfaction of all. Gen. Dearborn's address was an elaborate eulogy upon the pursuit of gardening, recording its triumphs, and rekindled anew the enthusiasm of the members.

An Experimental Garden was a favorite project of Gen. Dearborn, as an indispensable object in connection with the Society, and to the furtherance of this he gave his

distinguished services freely, both publicly and privately; but it was at once found that the want of means precluded the accomplishment of his wishes. The establishment of a Rural Cemetery had also occupied the attention of several gentlemen interested in the subject previously to, and immediately after, the organization of the Society, and the combination of the two, it was thought, would bring about the desired result. In December, 1830, therefore, a plan was submitted to the Society for purchasing Sweet Auburn, the property of George W. Brimmer, Esq. The plan was accepted and a committee appointed to carry the same into effect, by which the Society were to become the owners of Mount Auburn. In June, 1831, a detailed report was submitted by Gen. Dearborn, in which it was declared expedient to purchase the property, and proceed to the formation of a garden and cemetery.

This report was a most interesting and valuable recapitulation of the labors of the Society for two years, and an elaborate account of the mode of establishing and conducting an Experimental Garden. Such establishments in Europe were successful, but it was overlooked that they were sustained by the aid of Government. So grand were the conceptions of Gen. Dearborn's comprehensive mind, that all the income from the Cemetery in its present prosperous condition would scarcely support it; and to encourage individual efforts in Horticultural art was more within the province of the association than embarking in such a hazardous enterprise. It was subsequently abandoned.

From this period the Society went on flourishingly, at the close of the year numbering two hundred and fifty members. The exhibitions were continued, and the interest in them increased so rapidly that more space and better accommodations were needed, and rooms were taken in the third story of Joy's Building. Here the Society remained till 1835, when a larger and more commodious room was obtained in Cornhill. It was at this period that the important change took place which has been so highly beneficial to both the Society and Mt. Auburn Cemetery, and has been in part the means by which you have been enabled to erect these walls. Owing to the various interests of both the Experimental Garden and Cemetery it was deemed expedient to form two associations, the Society relinquishing the fee of the property, but retaining an interest in the sales of lots. It was after much consideration arranged to the satisfaction of all parties.

From Cornhill the Society removed to Tremont Row, where, with a still larger room, in fact a fair-sized hall, they remained until the erection of the old hall in School Street, which was built in 1844 and dedicated in May, 1845. During this period of nearly sixteen years, the members had continually increased, and the interest in horticulture was unabated. The annual exhibitions were so extensive as to require the largest hall in the city to display the increasing quantity of fruits. It was from this period that the Society began to take that prominent position, which it has since maintained throughout the country. By the

accession of means received from Mount Auburn and the donations of liberal-minded men, it was enabled to offer large prizes, which stimulated members to renewed exertions in every department of gardening. The donations of Mr. Knight, already noticed, and of Van Mons, had enriched our gardens with an immense number of foreign pears, more than two hundred and fifty of which had then fruited in the garden of that eminent pomologist, the late Robert Manning of Salem, and from thence had been distributed throughout the State, and to a partial extent throughout the entire country.

To these had been added, after great research and extensive correspondence, almost an equal number of native fruits of superior quality. All were under cultivation in the gardens of numerous amateurs, and the annual exhibitions of the Society presented a display of the pear, unequalled, it is believed, either in France or in Belgium the land of pears. Hundreds of new plants and flowers had been introduced from abroad or raised by our cultivators at home, and by the spirit of emulation, encouraged by premiums, these were annually gathered together in such numbers that even the new hall was soon unable to hold them. The largest room in the city was too limited, and in 1852 the Society were compelled to pitch their tent in the Public Garden or on the Common, where for two or three seasons were presented to the public a display of fruits not surpassed in the number of kinds, if they have been equalled in the quality of the specimens, since that period.

Fortunate was the Society in having in the presiding officer one who was so thoroughly imbued with a love of horticulture — whose leisure hours were devoted to its pursuit — whose means had enabled him to introduce various new fruits, plants and flowers, and whose distinguished services in Pomology continued up to this day, though now lessened by illness, but whose presence we hail to-day with more than ordinary pleasure after an absence of nearly two years. Others, also deeply interested in our pursuit, were called to the responsibilities and duties of President, and the Society enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity, such as few similar associations can claim.

In the space of ten more years the Society had awarded numerous gold medals, in addition to its regular prizes, to the amount of several hundred dollars, for Seedling Camellias, Strawberries, Roses, Azaleas, Cherries, and for the introduction of fruits and flowers, the result of the interest created by the activity and zeal with which it had been conducted by those who had been called to discharge the responsible duties of officers and committees. Just at this time that large and elegant hall,—so long wanted by the increasing musical taste of our citizens,—was erected, and its great size at once commended it as the only suitable place for our annual exhibitions — always hazardous when held in the open air so late in the season, in our changeable climate — though acknowledged to be delightful and agreeable in other respects. The tent was abandoned and the spacious Music Hall has since then afforded

abundant room for the constantly augmenting number of fruits, flowers and vegetables.

But while we award all praise to the pioneers in horticultural art in our own country, and to the numerous cultivators who have shown the same zeal and rendered important services in everything pertaining to the prosperity of our institution and the furtherance of its objects, we must retrace our steps and make some slight acknowledgment for that wealth of information and that magnificent example which has been given us by the English amateurs, cultivators and gentlemen of leisure, of the preceding, and the early part of the present, century, when Horticulture first took rank as a science and an art, and during which period such gigantic strides were made in the art of culture as well as in the addition of new trees, plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables from the most distant and unknown regions of the world.

Though we may look with sincere regret upon the course which England has pursued toward us as a nation, and more particularly in her recent attitude while our efforts were directed to the preservation of our Union, we cannot, at least as cultivators and lovers of nature, as well as of art, withhold our admiration of the illustrious men whose disinterested labors have done so much to accelerate our own advancement in every department of rural industry. With Milton as the herald,—with Addison and Pope as champions,—with Walpole and Shenstone as aids, and Mason, Whately, Price, Knight and Gilpin as promoters

of landscape art, — England became the Garden of the World. With but the scantiest indigenous flora, yet the trees of every clime enrich and diversify the land. With a cool and moist climate, where but few fruits succeed well in the open air, yet the pine-apple, orange, grape and fig are the products of many of her gardens.

From the remotest region of a kingdom, on whose dominions the sun never sets, have been gathered, through the energy and intelligence of gentlemen of taste, and the enthusiasm, perseverance, courage and adventurous spirit of numerous botanical collectors — who suffered every privation, and even death, that they might add one more exquisite form to the thousands already reclaimed from the desert, the mountain or the plain — all the great phalanx of varied, curious, splendid and majestic objects which have contributed, by their number, their variety, and by their disposition for landscape effect, to produce that picturesque beauty which is the prevailing character of the modern or English garden. If there are any scenes which bring to recollection the sublime description of Paradise in that immortal poem —

—— “the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades,
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain” —

these are to be found at Chatsworth and Trentham, at Cliveden and Woburn Abbey.

Perhaps it may have never occurred to many of you, even those who are the dearest lovers of trees, to learn the history of the introduction of our American species to England and from thence back again. This commenced to considerable extent about a century ago, but reached its height in the early part of the present century. During this period so great was the demand for every new tree, that immense numbers were introduced, and the price paid for them almost fabulous.

From 1750 to the close of the century the Bartrams of Philadelphia sent to England a very large number of trees and shrubs, in all some one hundred or more species. Bishop Compton of London and Peter Collenson, a wealthy merchant, were the principal promoters of their introduction, and they kept up a correspondence with this country for many years.

It was now that the taste for planting, which, in the seventeenth century had been mainly confined to tradesmen, clergymen and others, began to extend itself among the wealthy landed proprietors, and in 1804 the idea of establishing a Horticultural Society originated with John Wedgewood, Esq., and a meeting was called at his house to consider the subject. Sir Joseph Banks was one of the gentlemen present. Mr. Wedgewood presided and a society was organized. From 1804 to 1809 it continued to increase in the number of members, but a charter was not obtained until the latter year. From this time the taste rapidly progressed. Collectors were sent to all parts of

the world, and Mr. Frazer, who had previously explored a part of our country, during three several tours, made his last voyage in company with his eldest son. He sent home in all upwards of seventy-five new species, numbering thousands of specimens, part of which were purchased by the Empress Catherine of Russia.

Mr. John Lyon, about the same period, introduced American plants on a gigantic scale. In 1805 he returned, after an absence of three years, with the greatest collection of trees and shrubs ever brought to England at one time. His catalogue filled thirty-four closely-printed pages, and the sale occupied four days. In 1812 he again took to England a similar quantity. In 1823 the London Horticultural Society sent Mr. David Douglas to the Northwest Coast, and the plants and trees he introduced—from a newly-explored region—were greater than those of any other botanist. Only a few of the trees, however, are found hardy in our northern climate; but among the shrubs was the beautiful Mahonia, with its deep-green glossy leaves, exquisitely tinted and bronzed on the approach of winter. The flowers he discovered are now the most common and decorative ornaments of every parterre. The whole number of species of trees and plants introduced into England from 1800 to 1835 was six hundred and ninety-nine, and of these five hundred and twenty-eight were natives of North America! How long before our planters will cease to introduce foreign trees to the neglect of our own, the pride and boast of every English garden?

Such was the taste for trees and shrubs in England at the time the magnificent demesnes of White Knights and Blenheim were planted, the picturesque beauty of whose grounds and extent of their plantations eclipsed the regal splendor of their palaces. As early as the commencement of the century the Duke of Marlborough began to plant Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Kalmias and Magnolias, when these and others of our commonest American plants sold readily for twenty to thirty guineas each. Twenty-two plants of the *Magnolia grandiflora*, the most noble tree America has produced, occupy a wall at Blenheim one hundred and forty-five feet long, twenty-four high, and cost five guineas each.

What useless extravagance, perhaps you may exclaim, especially when it is remembered how deeply involved in debt was the Duke. But why extravagant? Are not twenty or thirty or even one hundred guineas often paid for some gay equipage, for some favorite jewel, or some costly article of dress? and will either of these afford more unalloyed pleasure than a magnificent tree, beneath whose refreshing shade you may repose, listening to

—— “The bend
Of stirring branches,”

watching the sunbeam as it plays among the leaves, and, yielding to their tranquilizing influences, muse on the beauties of nature.

The occasion will not admit of a more minute history of gardening, nor should I be capable of undertaking the task,

in the brief space of time you have allowed me, to extend a few introductory remarks into an address. It would be pleasant to trace back the progress of the art to the time of the Grecians, and to speak of the gardens of that period; of that of Alcinous, described by Homer with all the brilliancy of his fertile imagination, illustrating the simple state of horticulture of the time:

“ Four acres was the allotted space of ground,
 Fenced with a green inclosure all around :
 Tall thriving trees confessed the fruitful mould,
 The reddening apple ripens into gold.
 Here the blue fig with luscious juice o’erflows ;
 With deeper red the full pomegranate glows ;
 The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
 And verdant olives flourish round the year ;
 Beds of all various kinds, forever green,
 In beauteous order terminate the scene.”

Or of the Villa Laurentina of Pliny, the most reliable historian of Gardening, situated on the Tiber; the Italian Garden of Isola Bella (so recently visited and its magnificence even now described by one of your Vice-Presidents); of the Imperial Gardens of St. Petersburg, or of Versailles, the grand conception of Le Notre, executed in all the magnificence of the time of Louis XIV. I should be glad also to allude to the services of the distinguished men who have fostered and encouraged the art of Horticulture, by their wealth, their taste, their honorable example, or by their works. But beyond that of recalling their names, that their memory may be ever fresh, I shall not trespass

on your time. This record contains among others the illustrious names of Bacon, Evelyn, Addison, Cowper, Pope, Temple, Allison, Du Hamel, Knight, Van Mons, Soulange Bodin, Thouin, Repton, Miller, Darwin, Poiteau, Loudon, Hooker, Lindley, Mackintosh, Hosack, Prince, Fessenden, Buel, and Downing.

Of those of Garden, Frazer, Lyon, Pursh, Michaux, Douglas, Nuttall, Bigelow, Gray, Hartweg, Fortune, Lobb, Humboldt, Catesby, Siebold, Veitch, Russell, and others, who have explored all parts of the globe, and gathered in countless profusion the untold treasures of every clime.

Of the names of Gray, Loddiges, Lee, Knight, Perry, Van Houtte, Leroy, Veitch, Verschaffelt, Linden, Vilmorin, and other practical cultivators, who have not only introduced at immense cost thousands of plants, but by their skill in growing and propagating them have increased and duplicated their number until they have become the inmates of every garden.

To attempt in your presence to eulogize the pursuit of Horticulture, in which so many of you are engaged, and in which you have experienced so much delight, would be an idle waste of time. To refer to the production of new fruits and new flowers, so rapidly augmented of late years by the now well-known and reliable process of hybridization,—to their various modes of propagation, now so well understood by skilful men,—to their cultivation, systems of pruning, &c., or to their relative value for the market or garden,—would be at the risk of tiring your patience. You have

witnessed the exhibitions of the Society, weekly, monthly, annually, year after year, and are undoubtedly familiar with our fruits and flowers, and have yourselves added, by your own skill, to the long catalogue, many varieties, whose acknowledged beauty and superior qualities have enriched every garden and given value to every orchard.

If, through a period of more than thirty years, you have, by your devotion to the great purposes of the Society, followed it from place to place—cheered and encouraged by its onward progress—until it has reached the elevated position it now holds, how great must be your delight, and what deep emotions of gratitude spring up in your hearts, that you have found a permanent home! In the contemplation of the past, as well as in the anticipations of the future, how much there is to awaken in us renewed feelings of joy, exultation and pride, not in a vain or arrogant spirit, but humbly thankful that, through the course of so many years, unvarying success should have attended your labors, harmonious action governed your deliberations, and a judicious administration of your affairs enabled you to erect this costly and beautiful edifice.

But let not this prosperity decrease your ardor or lessen your labors in your favorite pursuit. Rather let it rekindle and fire your zeal for new conquests. Your duties and responsibilities have increased with your growth. If you have pulled down that you might build greater—if you have grasped the prize of a life-long ambition—let not this result satisfy you. If you are the possessor of a garden

filled with beautiful trees or shrubs to which you may retire from the turmoil of the crowded city, and among whose sylvan shades you take your daily walk—making them your companions and friends—come hither often with branch, or flower, or berry, to inspire the same delight in others. Or if you are only the owner of a little spot of ground, filled with the choicest flowers—whose constant nurture has occupied the moments snatched from life's busy scenes, and whose opening blossoms are daily eloquent with lessons of grace and loveliness—do not refuse to offer them here as tokens of your affection and triumphs of your art. And if neither tree or flower or fruit can yet claim your care, will not the recollection of youth's golden hours, when gathering the first snowdrop of spring, or the last aster of autumn, touch, as with a vibrating chord, that latent love for nature, which few do not possess, awaken aspirations for things beautiful, and bring you into sympathy with the objects of our association.

Welcome then to us be this Temple of Flora. Here come and bring your lovely flowers, gathered, it may be, fresh from the dewy fields and pastures, or plucked in early morn in the cultivated border—the choicest offerings of your tasteful care—arranged in innumerable forms and sparkling with colors of every hue. From these walls may ever irradiate that spirit of beauty which shall not only draw within your extending circle every lover of Nature or Art, but whose glorious effulgence shall not be dimmed until the whole world becomes a garden.

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