PROCEEDINGS

Of the Annual Convention Held at the Gaynor-Blackstone Marsh, Tuesday, Aug. 13th, 1901.

The hospitable attention of Messrs. Gaynor Bros., the thoughtful care and artistic taste of the ladies, the large attendance and fine weather, contributed to make a red letter day for the fifteenth annual convention of the Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers’ Association.

The morning was spent in inspecting the grounds of the experimental station and the following report shows the lines laid down for the testing and propagating of the best varieties.

EXPERIMENT STATION REPORT.

I may not be able to give the time and attention to the Experiment Station in the future that I have in the past, and yet I will feel much disappointed if the station work is ever neglected; for so long as cranberries are grown a systematic effort should be maintained to improve the quality of the fruit. So I will now take the space offered me in this Report to lay down a plan for the future management of the work, in the hope that it will be faithfully carried out by the Association.

The Experiment Station should contain about one-half of an acre, divided into sections ten feet square. These sections should be separated by shallow sanded ditches or paths about 20 inches wide. Only one vine should be planted on a section, and while most vines for this purpose
should be selected on account of the general superiority of the fruit from a commercial standpoint; there should always be at the station two or three vines that would represent in a high degree each of the following desirable characteristics:—size, color, form, early ripening, keeping quality, productiveness, uniformity of the fruit in the above characteristics, and lastly and of the highest importance to the consumer, the flavor or palatableness of the fruit. That is, there should always be at the Station two or three vines to represent each of the above qualities in a remarkably high degree; and these two or three vines should be selected on account of that one quality without regard to any other qualities or defects they might possess. These special vines will be very useful later for the purpose of producing new varieties by cross fertilization.

A record book should be kept showing a plat of the Station with the number of each section, the vine number being the same as that of the section on which it is grown. A full history of each vine should be entered upon the proper section number showing where the vine was found, the name of the giver with his postoffice address, the merits claimed by him for it, when planted; and when it begins to bear there should be noted annually about Sept. 10, the size, color, form, time of ripening, productiveness, uniformity and flavor; and about that time a sample of the fruit should be gathered and exhibited to the growers at the January meeting and the keeping quality noted. And such samples as are superior should be marked on the record book “Propogate.”

The seed of all marked “Propogate” should be planted on separate sections at the Experiment Station and the cuttings from that section should be planted at the Nursery and propagated there until four square rods of ground is fully covered by
that variety. Then cuttings from the Nursery should be distributed to Wisconsin growers upon such terms and under such rules and regulations as the Association may prescribe. I have uniformly promised to the giver of a vine one half of the first cuttings taken from the Experiment Station, but I believe all other cuttings distributed to growers should be taken from the Nursery only.

About the 20th of Aug. a letter should be sent to each leading grower in the United States asking him to send to the station a vine that bears the finest fruit to be found on his bogs, and if he has what he claims to be a distinct superior variety he should send to the station a half pint of these berries to be exhibited at the January meeting as his finest fruit. The vine he sends should be propagated for him at the Experiment Station on the usual terms, and the fruit should be kept until spring to test its keeping quality and the seed from this fruit should be planted at the Nursery about May 20. It will come into bearing in about five years and if it should yield a superior variety one vine of that variety should be planted at the Experiment Station to be treated like other vines there. It will pay any cranberry grower to maintain his own nursery on the lines I have indicated. The progress of the age demands it.

This method of selection will insure a steady improvement in the quality of the fruit. Cross fertilization might give more rapid and wonderful results, but we have not at our command the time and talent that such work requires.

JOHN A. GAYNOR.

At noon a sumptuous repast was admirably served after which the meeting was called to order by President Briere.

As minutes of previous meeting had appeared in published report their reading was dispensed with and the secretary next presented his report
as follows:

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

Of Daniel Webster, it is reputed, when asked by a young student as to the hardest thing in the practice of the law, replied—"to get at the facts." Of Doctor Agnew, it is related, when asked as to outcome of Garfield's Case, responded, "I know too little to be infallible and that little too imperfectly to be dogmatic." Of Captain Sigsbee, it is reported, when asked who he thought blew up the Maine, remarked, "it is better to know than to think."

From which distinguished authorities, it would seem that ignorance is the stumbling block and knowledge the stepping stone encountered in the way of human progress.

In accord therefore with the purpose and practice of the association I submit the correspondence received since our last meeting.

In answer to inquiry as to the prospect of crop as compared with yield of last year, it appears conditions vary considerably, in different sections. Some reporting a large amount of winter killing, others a favorable season, with good supply of water, and comparatively little loss from frost. But in one thing there seems to be an agreement, namely, the damage by blight, and this fact has been brought out specially by a circular letter of Judge Gaynor asking for careful observation and investigation of the matter.

Among other objects of our organization is that of improved quality of fruit and I have a letter from Wm. B. Clafin, Hopkinton, Mass., in which he says: "I have the largest cranberry yet found, and the most productive. Will send you plants for trial next spring if you will plant them amongst your collection to test their merits."

As this is what many growers are looking for