such knowledge accrue if not to that of the people? If I originate a new fruit or improve an old one, is it not an additional luxury to you who eat it—another contribution to, and article of business—another means of creating wealth as well as of imparting pleasure and giving food? Is there not, then, a manifest propriety in the state lending its aid in these researches, made by men whose sole object is the benefit of the state itself? But the response may be to the effect that such matters are best left to individual enterprise. Such a response, however, carries with it a very transparent contradiction, in the fact that many of our states—Illinois on one side of us and Iowa on the other—acknowledge by a state appropriation the value of horticulture to their people, while the general government has long, at a considerable cost, imported new seeds and fruits, and plants, and by its experimental garden, at Washington, sought to introduce and acclimate them. All I ask is, that each of the states follows the example and helps the good work of the general government.

With these views, with some of the facts and merits of the case before us, it becomes my duty to recommend another earnest appeal to the legislature for an appropriation to this society for the purpose of carrying on the state horticultural experimental garden, and for the advancement of the science of horticulture in Wisconsin. We are but a department of the State Agricultural Society, and consequently are without funds for such a purpose. The University is in a like condition. So that, unless we can obtain assistance from the legislature, our gardens, so prosperously begun, must, to the dishonor and detriment of the state, become a loss and a failure.

In conclusion, gentlemen, it becomes my painful duty to allude to the death of the late Hon. B. F. Hopkins, member of congress for this congressional district, and some few years ago president of this society. Mr. Hopkins was not a horticulturist, but he was a friend to horticulture and a helper in everything calculated to promote the interests of his adopted state. He accepted the position of presiding officer over this society for the purpose of giving it a start and a stand in the estimation of the people, and I speak of him the more feelingly, that he was not only a personal friend, but that it was by his advice that you did me the honor to elect me your president. He has gone from among us, a tree withered in its prime—and for this reason the more lamented and the better remembered.

Mr. O. S. Willey then read the

## REPORT OF THE RECORDING SECRETARY.

*Mr. President and Friends of Horticulture:*

The official position which I occupy renders it my duty, as well as pleasure, to address you at this time, reporting the year's progress and the prospects and desires of the future. But as I discharge this trust, I assure you that I also, like your President, shall endeavor to be brief; and ask your attention and careful thought to the lessons of the hour.

It is gratifying to know that pomology has not been stationary, but has kept at even pace, and even in advance, of the other arts and sciences of the day. Few, if

any, of the enterprises of the day exhibit so marked improvements as that of the culture of fruit. The doubt which rested upon the many ten years ago is now scarcely mentioned—but instead, men are talking of their fruit farms, and calculating upon the returns of their orchards and vineyards with as much certainty as any other farm crop. With a single exception, 1869 has been remarkably fruitful. The apple crop was very heavy; all small fruits very abundant, except grapes, and also, excepting grapes, were well ripened. It is one of the duties of this meeting to inquire what was the cause of the insipidness of most small fruits the past season, and the partial or total failure of the grape crop. Another marked token of the signs of the times is the formation of horticultural societies. This association was formed in the fall of 1853—but sixteen years ago; struggling for an existence—half dead, with the other half but little better for twelve years—your life-span may be reckoned to date from 1865. Since then, how changed the scene! New life, new energy, new sorts—and all move on with a record none need be ashamed of; and with this progress, local societies are springing up in all parts of the state. Six have previously been reported; two have been formed during the past year, viz: Milton, Rock county, and Leon, Richland county. An effort should be made to have all these societies more efficient auxilliaries to the parent society. Still one more sign of progress is in the demand for horticultural reading, and we are glad to report that the supply equals the demand. With a decided improvement in the old and reliable *Western Farmer*, we have now a new candidate for public favor, the *Western Pomologist*, published at Des Moines, Iowa, by Mark Miller; and I am glad to note that a worthy and esteemed colaborer of our society and one of its founders, is the editor and proprietor. These are omens of good, and may their influence never be less, but grow stronger and more extensive till they shall be a weekly visitor to every family in the state! Then will horticulture and its kindred labors prove labors of love. Meanwhile, let nothing dim your brightest prospects, and ever hopeful, go on—

> "Give new endeavors to the mystic art,
> Try every scheme, and riper views impart.
> Who knows what meed thy labors may await?
> What glorious fruits thy conquests may create."

The marked feature of the year has been the bringing to notice of new varieties —although this is not confined to the efforts of 1869 alone, but is the culmination of a series of years. This progress I would note as one of the dangers of the times. Within a comparatively short space of time fruits have increased almost beyond belief; for instance, but a few years since two hundred was the limit of the apple list. Now Mr. Downing enumerates 1840. Pears have increased from a little over 200 to about 1000; cherries from 75 to nearly 200; plums from about 100 to nearly 300; currants have thribbled; raspberries six times as many now as formerly; strawberries number 250, or more than seven times the former catalogue lists; of native grapes we have nearly 150, or about twelve times the number of fifteen years ago. Of other fruits there is as marked an increase, so that turn which way we will, new seedlings are offered—each thinking he has an acquisition. Some are fair to good—but the large proportion, of course, are no better nor equal to the

named sorts now in our books. In view of this, too great caution cannot be used in accepting and naming the seedlings placed upon exhibition. For, while such labors are worthy of all commendation as triumphs of the noblest ambition, conquests which scar not, nor leave an unhealed wound, upon memory or heart, nor stain upon the hand, and are worthy the life and labors of any man or woman, yet the danger is ever here, viz: of bestowing names unworthily, or in too great haste, or of re-naming a sort already in the books.

I would call your attention to the labor of a thorough revision of the premium list. It is very much to be desired that this be done while the society is in session, that all may participate in its revision; and not as heretofore, be left to the executive committee. There should be some radical changes made, many of which have been suggested from time to time, and more probably will be while you are in session. But whatever may be the result of a general revision, we would respectfully urge the using of as large a list as practicable of horticultural journals. The reason of this is two-fold. It in a measure compensates the publishers to whom we are indebted for much service by way of advertising, and without whose aid we could hardly survive. Then again, it is a means of circulating knowledge, and many may thus become readers of the horticultural press who had never done so before. So that, while we help the publisher, we are also educating the people to a stronger desire for horticultural progress.

A special feature of addition to the premium list should be that of encouraging a system that shall give us better reports of committees. As worthy of imitation in this respect is the report of the Boston Horticuftural Society. It is not enough for the world to know that one takes the first premium and his neighbor none. The objects are, or should be, two-fold, viz: to educate the people, and to encourage horticulture. We are free to say that the masses do not know a good, or perhaps better, a perfect specimen of few sorts, hence the labors of examining committees may well be given to writing out not only the reasons why Mr. K. takes a first premium but *why* others have taken none. It is not enough to say because they were the best; we want to know why others were not just as good. Was it because they were over size or under size? I have only time to allude to it here. Many things will suggest themselves to you in this connection, and I would urge that a premium be offered of sufficient amount to encourage good reports from the chairmen of the several committees. Such reports need not be presented till the winter meeting after the fall exhibition—being then in time for publication in the volume of transactions. It is a subject worthy your consideration, and a source of gratification to the future officers, if the manner of arranging the fruit at the fairs should be discussed at some length. In the department of cattle and horses, they are classed as best Roadsters, best Devons, etc. Now is it not well to inquire if we may not have our fruit similarly classified. Best three, or five, or ten sorts, all to occupy a table by themselves, and with a suitable card printed thereon to designate the place the fruit occupied in the premium list. This manner has but one objection to it, viz: that mentioned by our friend Mr. Stilson, in a late number of the *Western Farmer;* and while this (the handling of fruit by visitors) is worthy of all consideration, yet are not the advantages more than sufficient to compensate. The great convenience

of this system to the various committees, and the better opportunity for visitors to study and compare sorts competing for the prize—it being one of the chief objects of the society to afford facilities for the 40,000 visitors to see and inform themselves—I say will this not more than counterbalance the inconvenience spoken of above, which inconvenience I hope might be remedied before another fair, by more room to our building, thus enabling us to give a wider space for the exhibitors' aisles? With this brief notice of change, for the fall exhibition, I pass to what I have no doubt you are all anxious to hear something of, viz:

*The Horticultural Gardens of this Society.*—And I am sorry to be obliged to report any less favorably than in my last annual report, and perhaps I have no reason to do so, yet, under the present arrangement, we cannot say that we are likely to get the benefit of such a garden as the founders have a right to expect. The reasons of this are obvious to those who have participated in its management, and now, without a complaining spirit, I shall speak briefly of its objects, how managed, and make suggestions for the future. Our idea of an experimental garden is one in which different fruits, trees, plants, shrubs and vines are grown, and a complete record of the same is kept. For instance, if vines, when set, age and sort, growth from time to time, how trained, when pruned, winter protection, what and when given, condition of vine when put into winter quarters, and date of same, in what condition it wintered, and time of uncovering in the spring. This now, compared to or with some other sort, other things being equal, and we have gained some knowledge that ought to be of public good. I am sorry to say that under the present arrangement no such lessons of instruction are gained; and why? The entire planting and care of the grounds are left to the farm superintendent, under the general supervision of the President of the University, who, I rejoice to know, has a love and desire for the success of these grounds beyond your most sanguine expectations. The grounds have been reasonably well cared for. Donations have been limited, both in number of contributors and quantity. A. S. Fuller, C. H. Greenman and A. G. Tuttle were the principal ones who forwarded donations. Plants have grown reasonably well; but I am sorry to report that it is next to impossible to keep up a record as mentioned above with one set of men to do one part and another to do the rest. For instance, when are the strawberries, grapes and other plants to be uncovered? Your secretary goes out with paper and pencil; farm superintendent has no time or men to attend to it to-day; will be ready at such a time; then the secretary, perhaps, is miles away or busy in his other affairs. The remedy is simple and easy. The department of agriculture at the University is carrying on and conducting experiments all the time. Their time is fully occupied. What can be done? I will tell you. These grounds are nominally under the care and management of this society, although the regents have really paid the expenses, and what we need is that they allow this society to expend a certain amount of labor in the planting and care of these grounds, not necessarily more than it now costs them. By this means this society will be enabled to direct what shall be done, and place a laborer there who is competent to record the various items essential to making a history. This is the first thing to be gained. Without it we can see but little encouragement for continuing the care of the garden. After this there should be some

definite plan for a continuance. The former system of soliciting donations, while it is well to a certain extent, is poor when continued as a dependence for the entire stock to plant. My own idea would be to decide on some one or more things that it is desirable to test. For instance, there are about one hundred and fifty varieties of the willow. What finer collection could there be than to have these arranged in rows or groups and their value fully tested for this climate? But how to get these? For this purpose we should appropriate a given sum for the purchase of plants, the Secretary never forgetting to use his soliciting power for the general good. By this means we may be enabled to focalize our efforts, expending them one year upon one thing—another year some other branch may be taken up. I mention the willow as it suggests a broad and very interesting field of labor. Others are just as much so. Even that much neglected bush the currant, numbers in the list about thirty named sorts; and yet how few in our state ever saw a half a dozen sorts. And so we may continue the list of subjects or items of special interest which should be taken up from year to year, as time and means are given us. Nor is this, gentlemen, like an idle tale, to be wafted away from us. There is great good in store from our labors. A plan can be matured which will prove tangible and result in great good. Shall we put our shoulders to the load, and with our joint action resolve that the sons of Pomona in the Badger State will lead the van in the successful organizing and carrying out an experimental garden? A state like ours needs just such a garden—a place where every known fruit, vine, and especially the small fruits, may be tested, not so much for profit—though in time it may grow to be a source of income—but particularly as a source of information to those who would be encouraged to plant orchards and ornamental trees if they knew what to plant. Another reason for requiring the continuance of this work is that we may have some place where all the old and new sorts may be congregated, worked in some manner so that they will fruit at the earliest possible moment, and by comparison of sorts very much can and would be done to correct the nomenclature of our present lists, and these lists, so corrected, should become the authority of the state. This garden in time should grow to an influence of no mean proportions. Imagine for a moment a thousand varieties of apples growing there, five hundred of pears, one hundred or more plums, and as many grapes and strawberries, not to mention other fruits, ornamental trees and plants. With a managing committee of say three of your best pomologists and botanists, whose duties should be to visit as often as might seem necessary the garden, comparing the various fruits and noticing its progress and condition. Will any one present say that such a work is not worthy your best efforts? Might it not become a labor of love of this society, and the pride of the state, to which other states may point with envious pride? Still another benefit, and one which to my mind is of incalculable benefit to the state, is the influence it would have upon the young men, students, who will see with honest pride the fruit resources of their state, and in their leisure learn to study its development, from thence the fruit sections or localities of their own homes, and when they leave their college life they will have learned what the books do not teach—practical horticulture; its effects will be known and read of all men in the renewed activity in tree planting.

Can our state officials do less than to grant a helping hand for the encouragement of one of the *most* useful of the industrial pursuits?

The Secretary laid before the society a communication from P. A. CHADBOURNE, LL. D., and President of the University, in relation to the experimental grounds on the University farm, in which he expressed the willingness of the University to do any team work for this society, but could not, for want of means, perform the ordinary labor and care now demanded by the garden, and keep the required records. He thought the state should allow the society all the money needed to conduct the experiments in this ground, where the advantages of the University roads, fences, screens, etc., would allow every cent expended to tell to the greatest advantage in the experiments upon the plants themselves. Such experiments would furnish subjects for discussion at meetings of the society, and also the successful ones could be repeated and proved by the members, and thus the fruit capabilities of the state could be learned thoroughly in a short time.

The Secretary also read a communication from ISAAC J. HOILE, Corresponding Secretary of the Oshkosh Horticultural Society, inviting the society to hold its next meeting at Oshkosh, and promising facilities for the accommodation of the members and the society.

Judge KNAPP introduced to the society Messrs. SCOFIELD and MCAFEE of Freeport, Illinois, as representatives of the Northern Illinois Horticultural Society, who were in attendance, and moved their admittance as delegates to this meeting. The motion prevailed and they were admitted to seats.

Mr. SCOFIELD said he came specially charged to urge the joint action of this society with the Illinois society for the abolition of duty on imported seeds.

Mr. MCAFEE said he had brought with him a *lignarium* of the native woods of Stephenson county, embracing 49 genera and 168 varieties, which he would explain during the session. He also alluded to the position of Wisconsin, so far to the north, and yet it suffered less than regions farther south from changes of climate, though it required plants adapted to its condition.

### THE TREASURER'S REPORT

Showed that he had a balance on hand of $326.31, and that there were no demands outstanding. The report was referred to the committee on Finance.