HORTICULTURE AT NEW ORLEANS.

By J. C. Plumb, Committee of Collection.

It is not within the province of this paper to give a full account of what was the largest exhibition of fruit the world has ever witnessed, therefore, I will briefly give its outline features, leaving the details to be found in published records of the great exposition.

THE PLACE AND OCCASION.

At the most southern of the large commercial centers of our country, near the lower edge of the great Mississippi basin; latitude 30°; in a sub-tropical climate; where is perpetual summer (when the sun shines). It was under the auspices of the Cotton Centennial and World's Fair, and in connection with the annual meeting of the American Horticultural Society, thus bringing foreign countries to compete with our own, as well as the states of our own country into a competition never before so extensive.

It also brought together the best skilled and most energetic practical horticulturists of our country to set up the show, as well as a great number of studious visitors who found this the main attraction.

HORTICULTURAL HALL

is 600 feet long and 100 feet wide, with transept wings at the center, 100 feet by 50 feet each side, giving an entire area of about 70,000 feet. It is a light airy structure, the frame mostly of wood; a grand arch, glazed throughout with heavy glass on a plan new to this country. The height of this arch is throughout about 50 feet, with a central tower 100 feet high, under which there is a grand series of fountains which give a most refreshing coolness when the mercury reaches into the nineties. There is also the hot house, where the tropical plants are especially cared for. The entire margin of this hall is thickly set with growing plants in great variety, mainly from Mexico and the West Indies, 14—H.
while the central portions are occupied with tables for the display of fruit, and the whole floor area is paved with shells from the gulf.

The objects which first take the eye of the visitor from the north are the great variety of strange plants from the tropics. The cocoanut palm, 45 feet high, loaded with fruit in different stages of growth, the giant cacti, 30 feet high and one foot in diameter; the graceful banana and odd looking orchids, the latter of which being "air plants," are hung on the walls of the hot house with only a bit of wood to cling to. Here we find plants arranged in groups and families, the rare and the new with those more familiar, all interesting and instructive to the botanist and florist. But the center of attraction was

THE GREAT FRUIT SHOW.

California first came to hand with 1,045 plates and 90 varieties of apples; 120 plates and 10 varieties of pears; 21 plates and 7 varieties of quinces; 177 plates and 18 varieties of grapes; 78 plates and 5 varieties of lemons; 30 plates and 8 varieties of persimmons; 10 plates of oranges and 10 of pomegranates, with medlars, Italian chestnuts, English walnuts, filberts, almonds and other nuts. Oregon and Idaho came in for a share of the prizes for Pacific coast apples, in smaller lots.

The show of Citrus fruits from Florida and Jamaica was grand. At one stage of the exhibit there were 10,000 plates of these fruits on the tables, embracing the common oranges and lemons of commerce, with a great variety of the fruits of the tropics seldom or never seen in our markets.

But the chief point of attraction was the great display of the prince of all fruits,

THE APPLE.

As we enter the main door of the great conservatory we come first to Wisconsin's large display of 1,000 plates and 250 varieties of apples; then Iowa with 125 varieties and 500 plates; Michigan, 200 varieties and 400 plates; Illinois, 250 varieties and 1,000 plates; Pennsylvania, 120 varieties and 150 plates; Ohio, 100 varieties and 200 plates, with lesser
displays by Maine, New Jersey and other states, while Nebraska with 75 varieties has a spread of 500 plates, which is less than half what they had on the tables before the competitive show began. Minnesota shows only grapes, 13 varieties of which are here in excellent condition, while her apple display is confined to her state exhibit.

At the other end of the hall the magnificent display of apples from the southwest made sharp competition between Kansas, Missouri and Arkansas, and the honors seem about equally divided. Kansas shows 130 varieties and 1,000 plates; Missouri, 134 varieties and 500 plates; Arkansas, 160 varieties and 400 plates, all of which are of wonderful size and perfection, which shows that these states are to lead the country in apple growing. Colorado comes in here with 80 varieties of beautiful apples of medium size, grown near Denver, with irrigation, which are very perfect in form and color, and, with the small collection of big apples from Idaho, are a great attraction.

It is remarkable that these states show fall and winter varieties in about equal condition, after four months of packing and repacking and rough handling that would break down the same varieties grown with us. This is doubtless owing to the uniformly cool and clear weather in which they grew, and which gives them a delicate complexion and tough mealy flesh.

The pears and quinces seem all that could be desired. We find here samples of new President pears, of which one measures five by eight inches, weight, two and three-eighths pounds, the plate of four weighing nine pounds. While viewing this grand spread of fruit, Joaquin Miller remarked: "More gold in the apples of California than in her mines."

Of the foreign exhibits England showed two hundred varieties of apples and France fifty varieties in fairly good condition considering their long voyage and custom house delays; but in size and general appearance they could not compete with our western apples. The pears from France, by two exhibitors, were remarkably fine, consisting of over one hundred plates, and in fair condition. A collection of apples from Russia, of ten varieties, was of much interest
to northern men, but little could be judged of their quality, as they were mostly past their prime. Mexico showed only two varieties of apples, both small and sweet. Canada, by Charles Gibb, showed some high-colored apples of small size as compared with our own of the same varieties. Minnesota took several prizes on grapes, having twelve varieties in good condition.

New Jersey and Massachusetts had each some five varieties of pears, of which the Kieffer was conspicuous.

The competitive show of apples grown north of latitude 40°, was from five State Horticultural societies, namely: Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Ohio. For the exceedingly well grown and carefully selected collection of the Iowa society, that state took the prize on “best collection, not to exceed two hundred varieties,” with fruit mainly from the southwestern portions of the state. For the “best one hundred varieties,” our society took the prize, with Illinois competing.

The “best two hundred by individual exhibitor” was given to A. C. Hammond, of Warsaw, Ill., against competition from Iowa, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, and “best one hundred” to J. T. Johnson of the same place.

“Best fifty” was awarded to E. M. Griffin, Iowa, against Wisconsin, Ohio, Illinois, Nebraska, New Jersey and Canada, a total of nine competitors.

“Best twenty-five” was given to G. B. Brackett, Iowa, against thirteen competitors.

“Best ten” to Geo. Seagrave, Spring Lake, Mich., against fifteen competitors.

“Best five varieties” to J. M. Smith, Wisconsin, against fifteen competitors.

Among the lesser premiums awarded, Wisconsin took those for 3 autumn, 5 autumn, 5 winter, 10 winter. That for “largest and handsomest” was awarded to Wm. Springer, on Wolf river, against four competitors. This variety also took the prize for “best new autumn apple” against three competitors. Geo. Peffer took the prize on collection of crab apples against Minnesota and Iowa. On “single plates,” Wisconsin took the prize on Alexander, Blue Pearmain,
Colvert, Duchess, Golden Russet, Fameuse, Herefordshire Peermain, Longfield, Melon, Marsden, Pewaukee, St. Lawrence, Tallman Sweet, Walbridge; and Winter Néris Pear.

A careful analysis of the awards shows that out of the forty-nine entries for our state, we took twenty-nine premiums on fruit.

For further details of this grand competitive exhibition, I must refer you to the final report from our President, Commissioner Smith, to whose persevering labors our state owes much of its success in this and other departments of the great exposition.

Here I would also gratefully mention the cordial sympathy and free contributions of a large number of fruit growers of our state, who responded so promptly to our appeals for their "best fruits." The following data only are at our command at present:

Wm. Springer, of Waupaca county, furnished 15 varieties of grafted, and a large collection of the seedling apples of that county, about 125 varieties, many of which, from their beauty, added largely to the display; Geo. P. Peffer, also a large collection, which not only helped the state show, but won several prizes to him; Geo. Barnard, Esq., of Plymouth, Sheboygan county, and Mr. Eastman of the same place, sent fine collections; Joseph Plum, Stockbridge, 50 varieties; C. Hirschinger, of Baraboo, 33 varieties; R. B. Bones, of Racine, 20 varieties; E. W. Daniels, Aurora, 20; Henry Floyd, Berlin, 15; H. Smith and Mr. Daugherty, Green Bay, 30; F. C. Curtis, Rocky Run, 20; also small collections each, from A. J. Philips, Geo. Jeffery, D. Huntley and others, and an especially fine one from Theo. Borst, Esq., Kilbourn, and a small collection of Russian apples from C. Perry of Beaver Dam. We secured choice specimens at several of our fairs, state and county. At the Ripon fair we were greatly assisted by H. W. Wolcott, and at the Walworth county fair by friend Phoenix. But we found that very few specimens so gathered were available at this winter exhibition, except as a guide to secure further selections later on.

The final showing of our state in this department will remain a monument to the faithful efforts of those in charge,
as well as to our resources in apple growing. The following official report will show how we stand in comparison with other states:

FRUIT.

North of Parallel 40° North Latitude.

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<th>Value</th>
<th>Quality</th>
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<td><strong>$1,510</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.00</strong></td>
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OTHER AWARDS.

TREES.

Wisconsin, 14 Premiums, $800. 1 Gold and 8 Silver Medals.

OUTSIDE VIEWS.

One feature of the Exposition not generally noticed is the great variety of trees, shrubs and plants which are now in place in various parts of the park. Many of the states have their individual plant of trees from their home nurseries and forests, which, in compact groups, but with plenty of room for years of growth, are here to show their adaptation to this climate and soil. Among those several and distinct collections none other equals that from our own state in the eyes of professional growers, in variety and perfection, which is due largely to the good judgment of our Mr. Peffer, who made and forwarded the collection.

These groups are to remain as a permanent investment by the several states in this now to be popular resort, and their success or failure will be watched with interest.

In addition to the above mentioned, there are large plats of flowering plants and shrubs which will be in full bloom in the course of a few weeks. There are also long stretches of borders filled with bulbs, thousands of which are showing their varied bloom. One million of the flowering bulbs were
furnished by one firm, whose card is modestly displayed along the borders. This outside work of tree planting has been under the superintendence of Governor Furnas, of Nebraska, with the assistance of Professor Tracy, of the Missouri Agricultural College.

LESSONS.

1st. Winter in the Sunny South means great extremes of climate — from 32° to 80° — frequent changes of temperature. The air surcharged with moisture, and rainy days the rule for two months at least.

2d. These conditions are so favorable to the spread of fungoid growths that only those fruits with tough, waxy, outer covering can be safely grown and handled in that climate.

3d. That all fruits in that climate should not only be carefully wrapped, but in well ventilated cases, with the most perfect non-conducting packing possible.

4th. That in the words of our friend Stickney, “there is more money in growing apples in Wisconsin, than oranges in the south, not excepting Florida.”

TRUNKS OF APPLE TREES.

Throughout the northwest, orchardists have found, especially during the last three years, the trunks of apple trees, in one way or another, seriously injured or diseased. Sometimes the difficulty is limited to a small area, and sometimes extends so as to ultimately kill the tree. Thousands of apple trees have in this way perished in our own and adjoining states. It seems that no kind, age or size is exempt, though some varieties upon the whole suffer less than others, and on some kinds of soils and exposures less damage occurs.

In studying the matter somewhat closely, four principal kinds of injury have been found, viz.: by insects, by rabbits and mice, by blight and by frost. Of the first and second nothing is to be said in this place, except to mention the wood borers and the so-called “woolly aphis” as the insects specially referred to. The third must also be dismissed with