

ADDRESS

By PRESIDENT A. B. SCOTT

One of the matters that greatly interests most of the cranberry growers is water conservation. I will refer you to Mr. C. L. Lewis' paper given in 1926, in which he stated the averages of the Weather Bureau records of rainfall from 1871 to 1925. In order to bring this back to you more clearly, I will repeat those figures. They are given in ten year periods in most cases. During the years of 1871 to 1875, the rainfall was 32.7 inches; from 1875 to 1885, it was 32.3 inches; 1886 to 1896, 28.7 inches; 1895 to 1905, 27.26 inches; 1905 to 1915, 27.16 inches; 1915 to 1925, 25.09 inches. We have no record of figures since 1925, but would have ample reason to believe the rainfall annually shows the same percentage of decrease. In constructing a graph to illustrate what this means, I have drawn a curve to show the amount of rainfall. It shows the rainfall during the period of 1871 to 1875 on the left hand side of the graph. The next ten years it rose a little, but continually after that it has been decreasing, until in 1915 to 1925 we have a little over twenty-five inches of rainfall. There is no question but that it has been decreasing at probably about the same rate since then. Adding 1930 and 1931 to it, would show, no doubt, a considerable greater decrease than before.

As further evidence, lakes are drying up in the northern part of the state. Lakes in the south central part of the state that have never in history been known to be dry have dried up. One that I know of has had people living near it for nearly ninety years, and it has always had water in it. This year it has dried up.

The reason for this decrease in rainfall, as described by weather bureau men and scientists, is that we have been recklessly destroying the cover to all of this land that holds moisture in the northern part of Wisconsin. The forestry work started here quite early—I think in 1890 or in the early nineties. In that year, we saw considerable decrease in the amount of rainfall. The period from 1893 to 1895 was very dry, with fires destroying a large amount of vegetation and timber.

If the cranberry industry is to be preserved for our future generations, it behoves the men in the industry to be vitally interested in some method of bringing back or restoring to this cut over country the former water conditions. That cannot be accomplished in a few years. It will take years of work, but if it is not started it never will be accomplished. I think there is no work of more importance that can be taken up by cranberry growers than to start some plan, or become interested and work with those who are working on the problem, to bring about former water conditions in the cranberry areas, which of course will be over a greater part of Wisconsin.

The chief method of procedure would be to become interested and boost the reforestation program. Conservation of water is best accomplished by damming up the drainage ditches, constructing cross dams on marshes across the flow of the water, holding back water wherever

it can be held back in any amount, large or small. Any water raised to the surface will bring benefits to that area not only in irrigation or sub-irrigation, but evaporation will help to restore the amount of rainfall.

With this idea in mind, we took up with Governor La Follette the matter of restoring, with the aid of the Conservation Commission, the water levels of the marshes. This also includes fire prevention and protection. Fire prevention cannot be carried on successfully without the aid of people who are interested. I have a letter here from Governor La Follette, asking this association to send a committee to Madison with whom he can confer in order to map out a program that will be agreeable to the industry. The Conservation Commission, the zoning committee and the legislature have set out to determine which land shall be used for farming, which shall be used for reforestation, etc. I think this is an opportunity that our Cranberry Growers' Association should not neglect. We have an opportunity to show our interest and have a hand in some work that I feel is very important.

CROP REPORT

A. H. CHANEY, *General Sales Manager*, American Cranberry Exchange, New York City

The crop in the East has not been definitely estimated. The guess at present by Franklin is 400,000 barrels for Massachusetts as against 375,000 last year. Rainfall was heavy; bogs are in good condition, the crop is not so heavy as last year but the size of fruit is making the increase. The New Jersey crop is more difficult to estimate. The bloom was enormous but the weather was very undesirable. During the ten days of bloom there was very little sun, causing a heavy blight especially on native Jerseys, Late Howes and Early Blacks. The size of fruit is large and early but water is very short, several growers being without water entirely. The water shortage is affecting all crops in New Jersey. A fair estimate for New Jersey berries would be about 125,000 barrels.

The Wisconsin crop is fine in the northern part of the state; others show very well. Reports from Cranmoor and Mather districts would make an estimate of about 48,000 barrels for the state.

General fruit crops are equal to 1926 yields but the prices are lower than any year since. Peaches double last year's crop, are heavy in the middle west and selling very cheaply. The grape crop is considered shorter, and better prices are expected, likewise the fresh prune crop in the northwest.

Industrial conditions were bad last year and are worse this year but fruits are being consumed. Food values are the lowest in twenty years. Wheat is the lowest on record—18 cents a bushel in Kansas. Corn is low and there will be no improvement until the surplus is gotten rid of. I feel the cranberry growers are more secure and have a better chance to get fair values, but I doubt if we would get the old high price even if the crop was short.