

A Message from the President

GEORGE M. SLATE*

"Among the varied difficulties attending the cultivation of fine varieties of fruit, there have perhaps been none of a more serious nature than the want of accurate and well-defined knowledge of their flavor, productiveness and habits of growth."

This quotation is the first sentence of the "Proceedings of the National Congress of Fruit Growers" held in New York, October 10, 1848, under the presidency of Marshall P. Wilder. In 1850 this organization became the American Pomological Society.

From the beginning of fruitgrowing and for as long as fruits shall be grown the choice of varieties has been, and will continue to be, the most important decision to be made by the pros-

pective planter. At the first meeting and at the biennial meetings for many years variety discussions dominated the programs. The frequently revised catalogue of recommended varieties was published in each issue of the Proceedings. Since 1946 "Fruit Varieties and Horticultural Digest" under the able editorship of George Kessler has supplied this information. The American Pomological Society is the prime source of information about fruit varieties in North America.

We must continue to maintain our pre-eminence in this field. There is much to be recorded and made available to the pomologists of the country. We are serving the commercial fruit-growers, the amateurs, the extension people and the research pomologists. Our little magazine must appeal to all of these groups. Their support is needed if the magazine is to grow in usefulness. We hope that they will provide this support through memberships.

What shall we plan for the future? The apple variety book has been published, and a history of pomology in North America is being edited by former President W. H. Upshall.

A manual of fruit varieties is needed to replace the now out-of-date New York fruit books. It will be expensive and require the labors of many to produce. Your thoughts on a book of this kind will be appreciated.

I am very grateful to the Society for asking me to serve as its President for the next two years.



Fig. 1. George M. Slate, President, A.P.S., 1971.

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