

Dr. Donald Barton, Director of the Geneva Experiment station, the first morning was spent in Jordan Hall examining a large collection of fruit of selections and varieties. After lunch at the Food Science building, Dr. Willard Robinson discussed the grape research program being conducted in the Food Science Department at Geneva. In the afternoon, the group toured the vineyards of the New York State Experiment Station and observed variety collections, selections, and new seedlings. A banquet was held in the evening and was followed by a film on mechanical grape harvesting.

Reports were given by participants on the morning of the second day. Reports on grape breeding progress were given by John Mortensen, Flor-

ida; W. B. Nesbitt, North Carolina; J. N. Moore, Arkansas; Harry Meyer, Texas; B. O. Fry, Georgia; and Aubrey Owen, Georgia. A report on breeding for disease resistance was presented by J. R. McGrew, Beltsville, Maryland, and a report on the use of growth regulators on grapes was given by Bruce Barritt, New York. Deran Markarian, Michigan, discussed the evaluation of grape varieties for cold hardiness.

The final afternoon of the Conference was spent touring the commercial Finger Lakes district. The group was taken on a tour through the Gold Seal Winery, and visited some of the Gold Seal vineyards.

The group elected to hold the 1969 Conference at Urbana, Illinois, with Dr. H. C. Barrett in charge of arrangements.

The Wilder Medal

WESLEY P. JUDKINS*

The Wilder Medal is one of the oldest and most distinguished awards for service in the field of horticulture. It was established in 1873 by the American Pomological Society in honor of Marshall Pinckney Wilder, the illustrious founder and first President of the organization. The award consists of a beautifully engraved medal which is usually presented to the recipient at the banquet at the annual meeting of the society.

The prestige of the medal may be appreciated more fully if the eminence of its creator is likewise understood. Marshal P. Wilder was born in New Hampshire in 1798 and died in Boston in 1886. During his 88 years he was a successful business man and developed a deep interest in horticulture. He was one of the founders of

the American Pomological Society in 1852. He served as its first president and retained this office until his death 24 years later.

During the period when Mr. Wilder was active in the American Pomological Society the major emphasis in horticulture was the testing and selection of fruit varieties which were to become the foundation for the commercial industry in the United States. Very few native fruits were available which were acceptable for commercial production. As a result, many European varieties were brought to this country for testing and hybridizing with native species. The large numbers of hybrids from controlled breeding, as well as the many seedlings which originated spontaneously, had to be evaluated if the best selec-

*Professor, Dept. of Horticulture, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va.; and Chairman of A.P.S. Wilder Award Committee.

tions were to become available for mass production. Mr. Wilder was a leading figure in these evaluation efforts. In 1873 for example he exhibited over 400 varieties of pears from his own orchards. He is credited with having tested over 1200 varieties of pears in addition to large numbers of other fruits.

In his zeal for promoting horticulture, and the development and introduction of new and superior fruit varieties, Mr. Wilder proposed that a suitable award be established to recognize individuals who made outstanding contribution in this field. As a result of this suggestion, a committee was appointed in 1871 to design a medal for this purpose. At the annual meeting in 1873 the committee reported as follows: "The wishes of the Society have been carried out, and a die bearing the likeness of our President has been prepared, which they confidently hope will receive the approval of the Society; and your committee beg that in honor of the worthy President of our Society, who has devoted more than one-third of his lifetime to its interests, the medal shall be known as, and styled 'The Wilder Medal'."

Over the years some relatively specific criteria have been developed for selecting winners of Wilder Medals. This high honor is now conferred on individuals or organizations which have rendered outstanding service to horticulture in the broad area of pomology. Special consideration is given to work relating to the origination and introduction of meritorious varieties of fruit. In evaluating nominees involved in fruit breeding, individuals associated with either commercial concerns or professional organizations may be considered as long as their introductions are truly superior, and have been widely accepted and planted.

Significant contributions to the sci-

ence and practice of pomology other than fruit breeding are also considered. Such contributions may relate to any important area of fruit production such as rootstock development and evaluation, anatomical or morphological studies, disease control with special emphasis on viruses, or unusually noteworthy publications. Activities relating to olericulture, ornamental horticulture, or the processing of fruits and vegetables are not considered to be eligible.

One or more Wilder Medals may be conferred each year, but the number is restricted to maintain the prestige of the award. In exceptional cases medals may be awarded posthumously. The recipients are selected by the Wilder Awards Committee, which is composed of nine members of the Society appointed by the President.

Nominations of individuals or organizations to be considered for the Wilder Medal may be submitted to the President or the Wilder Awards Committee by any APS member at any time. A brochure covering the activities and contributions of the nominee is then assembled and distributed among committee members as a basis for selecting recipients.

Outstanding Nursery Catalog

Hilltop Orchards & Nurseries, of Hartford, Michigan, is to be congratulated for their fine, new catalog. Its unusual format is very attractive, and the black-and-white illustrations of their patented apple varieties are exceptionally good.

Charts showing harvest dates for Michigan, and pollination requirements for the major tree fruits, are very noteworthy. Growers will also find a useful planning chart, rootstock-variety combination recommendations, and spacing suggestions for different planting systems.