

the guava, the pineapple. We marvel at the adaptability of the orange that will grow and thrive in holes blasted in this rock; we hear with wonder the accounts of the crops of early vegetables that go forward to market from this section and we envy the mildness of climate that makes that earliness possible. But above all, we admire your natural and artistic

surroundings. The bay and harbor that make this port a gateway to the Indies; the palms and tropical foliage that give an air of romance to your homes; the public and business edifices that show the substantial nature of your city's growth.

In behalf of the Florida State Horticultural Society, I thank Miami for its royal welcome.

President's Annual Address.

G. L. Taber.

Members of the Florida State Horticultural Society, Ladies and Gentlemen:

In welcoming the Society to Ormond in 1892, C. A. Bacon told us in his genial, humorous way, how the town at which we were then convened, "happened to be on the map," and how with the advent of the locomotive "the affrighted deer gave his note of warning, the black bear leaped over the scrub and put for cover, the natives ceased the crack of their whips, their women raised their hands in horror and exclaimed, 'Them Yankee notions have come, where be our cattle and hogs? Light-ud is gettin' scarce; we will put for Miami.'"

Although an astute and far-seeing gentleman, I am sure Mr. Bacon, at that time little thought—and I am equally sure none of the rest of us did—that only a decade later the Florida State Horticultural Society, in convention assembled, would vote almost with one voice, to "put for Miami." To be sure, we did not take this action for the good of our "cattle and hogs," or because "light-ud is gettin'

scarce," but, in another phase the parallel holds good; the women took the initiative. From time immemorial they have been man's moving cause—as well as his saving grace.

To go a trifle deeper into this matter:

When the reverend gentleman, who so zealously and ably represents Miami's horticultural interest came before this Society at Tampa with pockets bulging full of facts and figures showing Miami's greatness, and entered his plea, backed by an invitation from the city fathers, there were some among our members who thought his labor would come to naught. They suggested the distance was too great, hinted at possible dynamitic danger after arrival and made other minor and wholly vain excuses. Vain because, in advance, by wholly honorable, upright and fair methods, the kindly interest and services of the ladies had been enlisted in Miami's behalf and the coup d'etat that developed showed the reverend gentleman to be a general as well.

But generalship lay not alone with the

gentleman from Miami, for another, who has had much to do with the promotion of Florida's interests, quick to discern the quarter in which the balance of power lay, and alert to direct this hitherto unreckoned-with energy into a channel of permanent usefulness to the Society, made a motion that a committee to solicit new members and otherwise promote the Society's interests be established, and that each lady member be placed on this committee. The motion was carried, and as a result of the vigorous campaign carried on by this committee of ladies, with Mrs. C. T. McCarty at its head, the paid membership of this Society is now larger than ever before in its history. Whether the ladies, recognizing the tremendous power thrown into their hands, will press their advantage to what might seem a natural sequence, forcing the gentlemen members to the wall and capturing for themselves all the offices of the Society, and the perquisites that pertain thereto, remains to be determined. In the meantime in the absence of any such avowed intentions on their part the hearty thanks of the Society are due these ladies for making this meeting one of the most pronouncedly successful in the Society's annals; for such we can all see in advance it is bound to be.

A Bit of History.

Ladies and gentlemen, this Society celebrates at this meeting its fifteenth anniversary. We organized at Ocala in 1888 with a charter membership of eighteen. From the beginning the Society has shown healthy growth. We have sailed along smoothly during sunny weather, and we have worked like beavers through storms that tried men's souls; but through it all we have felt the life-blood of action and progress flowing freely through our

veins. Although in the beginning we were small in numbers our purpose was, as it is now, the betterment of Florida horticulture and of Florida horticulturists. Among our first official acts we extended invitations to the American Pomological Society and the Georgia State Horticultural Society to meet with us the following year. Both invitations were accepted and at our second annual meeting, held at the Semi-Tropical Exposition building in Ocala, in February, 1889, in the midst of a most magnificent horticultural display, we entertained guests of national horticultural reputation. Who of us in attendance at that Ocala meeting will ever forget the felicitous address of President Adams as he welcomed our Northern visitors? He said, in part:

"On account of universal and sturdy usefulness, by acclamation the apple has been called the 'king of fruits.' So for her sweetness in the bloom of infancy, for her beauty, grace and goodness in the flush of womanly maturity, shall the orange, undisputed, wear the queenly crown. As a loyal subject of our beautiful queen I bid you welcome to this her chosen realm. Here she reigns supreme, and other fruits which in less favored climes would wear a crown are proud to be in her retinue. Her citrus sisters, the lordly pineapple, the peach and pear and grape, the guava, banana, mango, strawberry, kaki and loquat—a horticultural aristocracy of purest blood—are her most loyal and faithful subjects."

Ladies and gentlemen, I am but emphasizing our acknowledgment of the gracious welcome extended us today by the people of Miami when I say that the quoted words with which President Adams welcomed our more Northern visitors to the State at large, would, in great meas-

ure, be applicable today by the people of Miami in welcoming their horticultural kinsfolk from farther up the State to this section.

That this is true of a section which only a few years ago was horticulturally unknown is striking evidence of the rapid strides that horticulture is making within our borders and of the healthy optimism that has made these strides possible.

Something About Optimism.

Now some of you may object to the use of this word optimism, but the sense in which I am using it is, I think, eminently proper. It is that definition given by Webster as follows: "A disposition to take the most hopeful view of things—opposed to pessimism."

In reading from a well known writer a few days ago I was struck with a query and reply which, with your permission, I will quote. The query was, "Why are successful men optimists?" and the answer:

"Because optimists are successful men. Success is not the cause; it is the effect. Optimism is practically applied faith and hope. Also it is energy. (The laggards all are pessimists.) Faith, hope and energy—there is the optimistic standard, and wherever it waves it signals success.

"The optimist goes forth to unlock the door of progress equipped with one great essential, the key, which is the realization that within him lie all the powers there are. All that remains is to find the material on which to use and so develop them. He does not hesitate to wonder if this or that be his mission. He does what his hands find to do. The weight of destiny and fate does not oppress him. He knows that

these are makeshifts—words. What is this dummy we call destiny? An excuse for failure, for pessimism, for fear; a rant against our own weak spirit which does not dare and do; a wail of bitterness which should have been a whoop of courage; a surrender to the land as it lies instead of an onslaught on thicket and bramble. We must make our own clearing. We must hew our own path. There is no landscape gardener at work, sodding and graveling and beautifying paths for each of us to follow to some rose-embowered garden at the close. Fate is not done up in prize packages, each labeled with a name. Fate is the fruit of the day's work. We are given a compass and land and sea on which to use it. The journey rests with ourselves.

"The pessimist ignores these truths. He refuses to acknowledge his own responsibility. He acknowledges nothing that is good; he dwells on all that is bad. He does more. He fashions ugly spectres and imbues them with life. He fears them and flaunts them. He is a pest. He is a failure and a fool; a mental and moral and sometimes a physical suicide. And why? Because we assume the image of our idols. Our natures grow with what they feed upon; our characters develop according to the qualities we exercise and those we restrict; and our lives unfold for good or ill, for failure or success, according to the way we handle them."

The Work of Optimists.

Why, ladies and gentlemen, the very fact that the town of Miami is known throughout the country today is the result of optimism. The gentleman who had the faith and nerve to lay iron rails through miles and miles of desolation, in order to open up this and other salient

points on the lower east coast, was and is the most daring optimist this State has ever known. Again, the men of faith and daring, the settlers who followed the advent of the locomotive into this section, were optimists. What they believed it was their part to prove—first to themselves and then to an unbelieving public—that the peculiar conditions which prevailed here were not necessarily prohibitive to the production of fruits and vegetables in ample profusion and of high quality.

And still again this Society, we who have the honor to be the invited guests to this section, are optimists. What but optimism could have given the handful of members organized at Ocala fifteen years ago the faith and hope to believe that this Society would become in fact, what we dared to name it, the Florida State Horticultural Society? And later, what but optimism carried us through the dark days that came upon us when disaster followed disaster throughout the State and enabled us to see the rejuvenated, regenerated, fruiting trees that should and must grow from the frozen stumps?

What but optimism gave to this Society the faith and hope and courage to face exigencies such as had never before fallen in equal measure, upon men engaged in similar pursuit? What but optimism enabled us, in addition to carrying our individual burdens, to institute the most thorough investigations ever undertaken by any organization in this or any other country, toward demonstrating the best methods of tree protection during periods of abnormally low temperatures, like those then upon us?

In short, what but optimism held this Society together and enabled us to accomplish work and place on record results of

which any society might be proud, in the face of statements freely made by the pessimists that not only was our Society dead, but that the very horticulture of which we are an exponent was dead in Florida.

Now, I trust none of you will construe what I have said into the meaning that we have accomplished everything we set out to do and that we can now complacently rest on our laurels. Such is not the idea at all. The kind of optimism that I have referred to, which we have practiced in the past, and which we must practice in the future, contains a large ingredient of action. Action is developed energy and this combined with faith and hopefulness—in a word, optimism—is, to my mind, as necessary to the well being of a society as it is to that of an individual. It is this kind of optimism that will maintain our Society in its present high position among kindred organizations and that will make us eager to cope with and settle, correctly if possible, questions of moment already under consideration, as well as such other questions as may arise in the future. It is this kind of optimism that will make of us individually better men and women and that will impart to others with whom we come in contact the feeling that our living is not in vain.

Our Real Mission.

Our Society is simply a combination of individuals having a common purpose, and if each of us does the best he or she knows how toward lifting the horticulture of the State to a higher level, we shall have done what we can toward accomplishing the primary purpose for which we organized. But let us not forget that, in working toward the accomplishment

of this primary purpose, the work will be easier and pleasanter and the world in which we live brighter for ourselves as well as for others if we can scatter a little sunshine along the way. Let us as individuals be so imbued with faith, hope, courage and energy that we may impart a little of each of these life-giving and life-worth-living attributes to the man or woman less highly endowed. In short let each of us try to demonstrate that he or she might have been the particular person the poet had in mind when he wrote:

"It is easy enough to be pleasant
When life flows along like a song,
But the man worth while is the one who
will smile
When everything goes dead wrong."

Ladies and gentlemen, a glance at our printed program will convince you that we do not expect to be idle at this meeting. We shall have valuable reports from our able standing and special committees and we shall be favored with carefully prepared papers on scientific topics by skilled specialists. A free and full discussion of these reports and papers is desirable. Let us work every available mine of horticultural information that we have with us, until we shall have extracted all the gold-

en nuggets of thought; and let us not forget that it is as incumbent upon us to give as to receive information. We expect the printed report of this meeting to be, like those that have preceded it, a valuable addition to the horticultural literature of the South, and to those of us in actual attendance our meeting means much more, for no printed record can adequately set forth the amount of good we receive and impart from personal contact at these annual reunions. I heartily endorse and would like to emphasize the following exposition of our tenets as set forth by our former President, Dudley W. Adams, in one of his memorable addresses:

"Besides the growing and marketing of our fruits and the mere making of money the State Horticultural Society hopes to have a beneficial influence. We hope to make men better morally, more intelligent mentally, more agreeable socially, for, meeting together, we shall be better fitted in every way for the duties of home and citizenship. We shall get new ideas of how to make our homes enjoyable by adding new beauties, new comforts and new pleasures. In short, let us make these meetings so pleasant and valuable that we shall all be glad to come, and our homes so lovely that we shall be glad to return to them."