

The winds have often such unbroken sweep that they carry away the pollen, so that it cannot fructify the blossoms; or if these chance to set, they shake down the fruit before it ripens, or break the branches, or with wintry breath kill the fruit buds. Therefore, I suggest that in the planting of orchards we select, as far as possible, sites protected by hills or forests, for the protection nature affords will be found much more reliable than that of legislation. Where these do not already exist, a belt of trees planted to windward will be found not only a shelter to the orchard, but an ornament and improvement to the farm. Then there is the mildew, which will sometimes ruin our grapes, and we ask how to prevent it. My own experience leads me to suggest that the best protection against mildew is to plant those varieties known to be least subject to its attacks. No wise man will plant extensively any variety without first inquiring whether it possesses a healthy constitution, and foliage not liable to the attacks of mildew. By observing this simple suggestion one may often protect himself from serious disappointment and loss.

We have this season experienced a drought of unusual severity. How can we best protect ourselves from the serious effects of these long-protracted droughts? We have lately seen trees stripped of their foliage, fruits dropped prematurely upon the ground, and strawberry plantations nearly killed outright. Is there no remedy for these evils? Permit me to suggest that I think there is—that by the frequent stirring of the surface we can to a large extent prevent the ill effects of drought, and preserve our orchards and gardens in a growing state. If any doubt the efficacy of this method, I wish that they would give it a trial next season, by keeping up a frequent stirring of the soil during the whole period of plant growth, not waiting for the drought to set in before they begin operations.

Another matter of protection I must not leave unnoticed. It is one upon which I feel particularly qualified to speak, if considerable experience can be considered as constituting a qualification. Perhaps there are some in this audience who have not had the pleasure of sending their season's crop to market. The fruit was gathered with care, sorted with nicety, put up in clean barrels, and consigned to the commission man, and they waited for the returns—a draft, a cheque, a post-office order—and though this took place perhaps years ago, they are waiting still. If there be any such present they will know what I mean. Now, against such disappointment I think the fruit-grower may justly ask for protection. If I entrust a man with my money and he applies it to his own uses, he becomes a defaulter. If I entrust my fruit to a man to sell and he applies the proceeds to his own uses, why is he not a defaulter and a criminal? The fruit is not sold to him; he is merely my agent to sell my fruit; and when it is sold the money he receives for it is my money, and when he applies it to his own uses why should he not be liable to criminal prosecution? This is a case for legislative protection, and producers must make themselves heard in the halls of legislation until the law is so amended that middlemen who do not pay over the proceeds of products consigned to them for sale are treated as criminals.

The Council of the Agricultural Association has awarded a silver medal to the manufacturer of a waterproof boot, thereby indicating their sense of the injurious effects arising from wet feet. Not only do our sons and daughters, however, go into a state of premature decline as a consequence of wet feet, but the evil effects of wet feet may be often seen in the early decay of our most valuable fruit trees. I do not know that any one has thought of offering a silver medal to the manufacturer of waterproof boots for apple trees, but this I have seen—orchards, and not a few, dying of wet feet. The only remedy, however, with which I am acquainted is, not the use of a boot to protect their feet while standing in the water, but to first so drain the soil that there shall be no water in which their feet can stand. I cannot too urgently press upon your attention the truth that an orchard will not thrive in a wet, cold subsoil, and that if you want healthy trees you must protect their feet from the wet.

Gentlemen, for me to prolong this address would be but to weary you. I thank you for the courtesy you have shewn me in listening so patiently and so long to my desultory remarks. I trust that in my successor you will have one better able to interest and instruct you.