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SPEECH  
OF  
HON. H. W. COLLINGWOOD

—EDITOR OF—

THE RURAL NEW YORKER

—DELIVERED AT THE—

AGRICULTURAL RALLY

CLARKSBURG, W. VA.

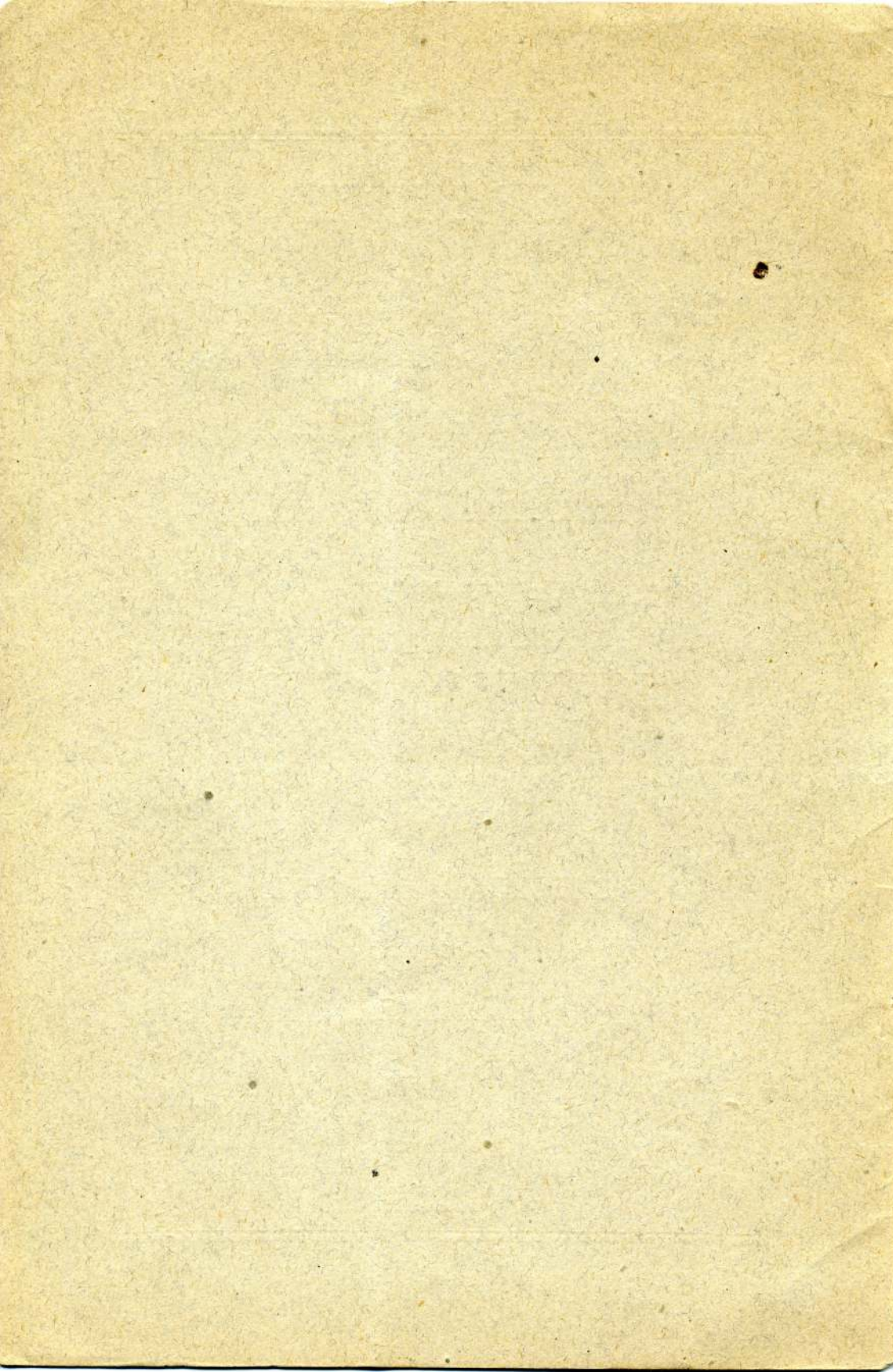
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# SPEECH

OF

HON. H. W. COLLINGWOOD

EDITOR OF THE RURAL NEW-YORKER

*Compliments of*

*Wm. E. Glasscock,*

*West Virginia.*

*Governor.*

MAY 28TH, 1910.

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“I wish to say that I am greatly impressed with the possibilities of West Virginia as a Farm and Orchard State. It certainly is a great State and I believe there are better opportunities there for a certain class of our surplus people now at the north, than in any other locality.”—(From letter of Mr. Collingwood to Governor Glasscock.)

# SPEECH

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**“There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.”**

I regard this part of the 72nd Psalm as a lesson in faith. It may well apply to a state like West Virginia. No man who lacked faith or hope would select the top of a mountain as a place for growing grain. Probably if he were calling for a “sign” before attempting something that seemed impossible he would demand evidence that the top of the hill could respond as the valley. Yet, here we are told that so small a thing as a handful of corn in this unpromising place shall, through faith and enthusiasm, shake like great trees. I think we can make from this a special lesson for West Virginia.

Send a thoughtless observer down through your rough country and he could not dream of the future which your hills and mountains carry. Yet you men who are making history and planning the state’s tomorrow have glimpses of what is to come to your children. It is the corn on the mountain top—the wealth which comes in unexpected places, which makes a state strong and great. The miners burrowing into the darkness at the heart of your hills bring forth your coal and your metals. The unthinking might say that the future of West Virginia depends upon your ability to break down and destroy the wealth which God packed away in your mountains. But it was the handful of corn on the top of the mountain—in the unexpected places, which wrought the miracle. You men with faith and insight know that the orchards at the top of your hills will give the world greater value than the coal and metals underground.

So it is this thought which I wish to bring out. The future of

West Virginia does not rest upon the shining back of a dollar; not upon the strong brain of your wise men, but upon the tender life of a little child. The life of that child and its relation to your state and to society will depend upon its education and the ideals which surround it. If you did not care for the future of West Virginia, you surely would not be at this meeting. If you did not believe that it is only through the child that you can touch the future, you would care little whether the education of that child carried ideals or not. I wish to lay down the proposition that the orchard in the sunshine on the top of the hill teaches truer ideals than the mine in the shadow underground.

You cannot get away from the thought that the future of West Virginia will depend upon the ideals which are formed in your schools. Not the dead facts and rules, but the living and true ideals. What then is the secret of the education which makes a man the true citizen? The germ, or life, or spirit, or whatever you call it, must somehow get into the child and haunt him for life with a certain feeling of pride and duty. I have heard of an economical man who thought it great waste to plant such a large piece of seed as corn. So he had it cracked and sowed cracked corn. That man could not understand why his crop failed. You and I know it was because the little pieces of cracked corn contained no germ. Each piece was dead. It could only decay in the soil without life. The failure in much of our modern education is due to a similar cause. We simply give our children words and dead facts, from which they cannot learn ambition or true human nature. I do not see that the child can gain ideals unless the teacher has them. I do not see that the teacher can have them unless it be a part of his ambition to make West Virginia not only rich beyond the dream of avarice, but envied for its good citizenship and honorable record.

Now the true destiny of West Virginia is to be written on the outside of your hills rather than at their heart. It is the handful of corn on top of the mountain, rather than the fistful of gold below ground. What I mean is that farming and fruit-growing are to be the true salvation of the state. The miner alone wastes and destroys. There is little sentiment about his work of turning your soil into money. Let us suppose that working your mines of coal or metal were to be the chief or only business of your state for the next fifty years. Suppose your children and children's children were to go on year after year doing nothing

but scrape out the inside of your hills and provide freight for your railroads. Suppose farming and fruit growing become mere side issues,—taking a back seat and waiting, hat in hand, upon other industries. You know what would happen. Your towns and cities would be rich, and you would have poured uncounted millions into the great cities of the North for others to spend. Yet the true spirit of your country home would be dead, there would be no real pride of patriotism in your public life, and West Virginia would contribute little or nothing to the great cause of human liberty, because there would be no chance for the handful of corn on the top of the mountain to take root and grow.

I believe it is the destiny of West Virginia to play a peculiar and glorious part in the future history of this country. During the next fifty years there must come a period of moral adjustment which can only be brought about through a revival of strong country homes. It seems to me at times that God has held back your mountains from settlement—held back the knowledge and thought of their possibilities, in order that a new experiment in industrial democracy may be tried here. Your country homes are to be your salvation. Your mining and manufacturing are abundantly able to care for themselves. The great force of your system of education should be devoted to making farming and fruit growing popular and prosperous, and, as will then naturally follow, respected. Therein lies the great hope of West Virginia, not only for your own people but in your relations to the country. The world does not need your money half as much as it needs your manhood and your womanhood. We have simply come to a time in the development of this country when the farm and what it stands for is of greater importance to society than the factory or the mine.

We all understand that for years the food producer was at a disadvantage. He was on the underside of the market. So much food was produced that under any fair law of supply and demand it became so cheap that it was wasted. I can well remember when sound corn was burned as fuel in western towns. The result was a rush away from the farm. Men and money both crowded to the city and built up great centres of population. The force which once drew people away from the farm is now reversing itself, for there is no longer a surplus production of food. There is no evidence that there will be a surplus in the

next fifty years. There is greater evidence that the American people will be forced through economy to change their diet, slowly, perhaps, but surely. There is to be a shortage of meat, and this will mean more poultry, more vegetables, and more fruit. In European countries this change has come about without loss of health to the people, and upon the whole with a gain in intelligence, prosperity and spirit. In Germany and France the farm competes with the mine in providing light and heat through denatured alcohol made from potatoes, beets and waste fruits. This change is also coming in America and it will be all to the advantage of a rough state like West Virginia. It will give greater value to your pasture lands, and bring your hills into use for orchards and poultry. The thought and skill which take advantage of this change will be like the handful of corn on the mountain top. The child of today in your public school is the certain heir of possibilities in orcharding which we, who have gray in our hair, have hardly begun to imagine. With this prospect and the hope and profit which belong to it, you may well make every teacher in your public schools the true partner of a tree.

Teach your children that orchards as well as armies have changed the world's history. Imagine California today without her fruit orchards. Sixty years ago no one was wise enough to dream that California could give the world much besides gold and cattle hides. Today few think of California as a gold producing state. It imports the greater part of its meat; but the great orchards, sweeping from apple at the North to orange and lemon at the South, have made the state wonderful, and made possible a marvellous class of people who almost rank as a new race. In Australia the same miracle has been wrought. Where, years ago one passed through a heart-breaking desert, orchards have made homes and surrounded them with prosperity. Tasmania is probably the most prosperous part of Australia, and has been made so by the orchards, for in that climate fruit grows to perfection. On a streak of soil running down through your state, certain varieties of apples grow to perfection—no less so than fruit prospers in Tasmania. Looking into the future, I believe that in time your hills will become as famous for your orchards and vineyards as are the famous counties of California which have given a new empire to America.

In New York state the only agricultural counties that are

growing in prosperity and population are the fruit counties clustered around the lakes or along the Hudson. And not only that, but in these counties we find the patriotic spirit of reform and the courage to fight public abuse as no where else in the state. There is something about the growth of a well cared for tree that teaches men lessons in honorable dealing and public spirit. Nature has used the Homeopathic principle of using the wood from a grafted orchard to help kill the "graft" in public life. New England history was changed by a rolling dollar. When the West opened its rich land, the hill farmer in New England felt that his opportunity was gone. The best of the boys went West, and those who remained at home sent every dollar they could save rolling westward for investment. I know what this meant, because I know how this craze to roll the dollar away dwarfed and crippled my childhood on a New England farm. I have recently been tracing some of these wandering dollars from the town of Plymouth, Mass. They were earned over 150 years ago by a sea captain, and have been uniformly invested in farm land. First in New York at 12 per cent. When that part of the country developed so that rates of interest fell below 10%, the money moved to Ohio, then to Illinois, then to Iowa and Kansas, and then to Montana and Idaho. Always used for developing farm land, and always moving on when the people grew prosperous enough to refuse to pay more than 8 per cent. Now that same money having crossed the continent on its mission of development, has been brought back to Massachusetts and invested in cranberry bogs in Plymouth, within a dozen miles of where it was first earned. And millions more of these wandering dollars are coming back to New England to be used in growing apples on the farms from which an older generation ran away. I speak of this to show you how orcharding is changing history, making waste land profitable, filling up lonely places, and giving men courage and hope as they gain home and opportunity. In old times we know how the Barbarians broke out of the frozen North and fought their way to Italy and Spain. Historians tell us that one of the strongest inducements which led these fierce bands Southward was the story of the wonderful groves and vineyards on those Southern hills. Right in your own state the objects which will most attract home seekers and men that the state needs, are the orchards on your hills rather than your mines and furnaces. I will put it to any thoughtful



West Virginian if the country home is not more important to the future of your state than the abnormal development of your railroad and mining towns. Turn your hills into orchard homes, and you can breed a strong and hopeful race of free men. Pile all your wealth along the railroad track, and at the mouth of the mines, and you doom men with their children and children's children to industrial servitude. Your education and your ambition and your hope should all be bent upon developing the outside of your hills as well as the inside.

There are no doubt teachers here who fight their peaceful battles in the school room. There are college men or farmers' institute lecturers who go out close to the people in lonely places. Whether you teach children or older people, you find it necessary at times to go to history or mention men or women who stand as heroes. You cannot put spirit or hope into people without some sentiment. I think we have been wrong in our ideas of history and great men. Shortly after the Spanish war we heard little or nothing except the rush up San Juan hill. It was heard at fruit meetings, dairy meetings, funerals, weddings, live stock shows and conventions of undertakers and nurses. Every man who could open his mouth told how our heroes ran up that hill with flags flying and bands playing. And right where they were talking sat silent men and women who for years in their own lives had given finer examples of Christian patriotism than any soldier ever did in battle. I wish you men and women who teach young and old in country districts could get a set of historical ideals and heroes not now in the books. For example, what man from West Virginia, or from the middle South, has done more for his section, or whose deeds will really LIVE longer in history than Thomas Grimes, who gave the Grimes Golden apple to the world? I ask that in all seriousness, and it will appeal to any man who can understand what that beautiful apple has done for this section and for the world. I publicly challenge any one to name any railroad king or captain of industry whose work will be remembered, or whose name can last as long as that of Thomas Grimes. Time will rub the graven record from the hardest stone, but one apple tree follows another—each one a new monument to the man who started a choice variety. It is not likely that the average pupil in your schools knows the story of the Grimes Golden apple. I do not suppose that any of your text books relate how men like Judge Miller laid the foundation of a new industry—that of orcharding. Very likely they are told of the

wealth of coal and iron in your hills, and of the men who build railroads to carry the crude wealth out of the state: You need an overhauling of text-book and theory of teaching, that will put the name of the man who gave that fruit to the world, and of him who showed us how to grow it commercially, above many a tin hero who has for years held the stage. There are barely six Presidents of the U. S. who can be said to have done more for West Virginia than Grimes and Miller. If you want your state to shine in history, call her the apple-pie state. The time is coming when the American apple will be our most valuable item of export.

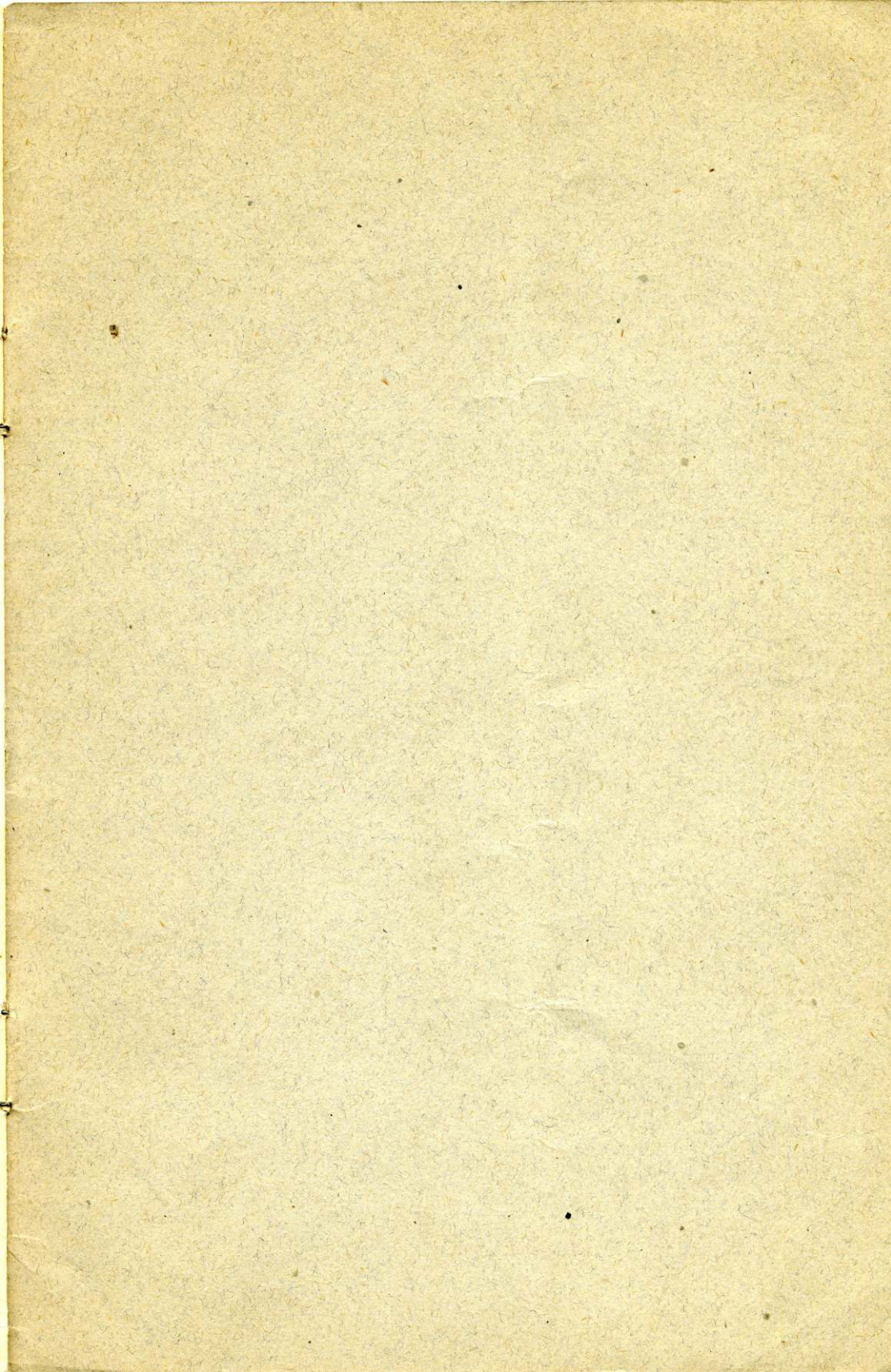
One of the most interesting stories of Roosevelt's African trip I have read is that of a dinner given him by an American missionary. It was far inland—away from the stores or markets. That missionary did his best to show the greatest honor to the great American. They gave him the best dinner Africa could provide, and at the end brought him an old-fashioned apple pie made from genuine American apples. This fruit had been carried from the seacoast on the backs of porters; and Roosevelt said that nothing could have brought to him the soil and the spirit and the skill of America as did that apple pie made by an American under the African sun. I hope the apples were West Virginia Grimes Golden or York Imperials; yet I believe that even a Ben Davis under such conditions would have brought rich and mellow thoughts of home. I give you this as evidence of the sentiment and pride which may go out from your orchards. And there is solid business as well. I make the prediction that ten years hence the value of our apple exports will be greater than those of wheat, and in twenty-five years greater than those of cotton. Twenty years ago we exported annually about \$1,000,000 worth of nuts and fruits. The amount is now nearly \$20,000,000. Within a few years our exports of wheat and meat must largely stop. We shall need the food here. Canada and Argentina are to keep Europe in bread and meat sandwiches. The former has millions of rich acres yet untouched. The latter can grow alfalfa to perfection, and any country which learns to do that will feed itself and have surplus for the world. You are not to have a monopoly in the production of coal and iron. Alaska is to be your rival. You may call me a dreamer, perhaps, but I expect that my children will see the time when there will be in Alaska a city as rich as Pittsburg, and as popu-

lous, handling quantities of coal and metal from the Alaskan mines, which would dazzle us were we to imagine them today. I tell you that West Virginia cannot hope for any monopoly in the production of coal and metal, or lumber or wheat or cattle. The future offers you nothing in the shape of a monopoly except the production of a few varieties of apples, which reach their best on your hills. Men like Grimes and Miller who thought out and started the industry were they who threw the handful of corn on the top of the mountain. The real fruit of their work will shape the future of your state. That is why their lives and the story of their work should be more to your children than the heroes or old legends of ancient days.

And where can a teacher find a better illustration of both the theory and practice of teaching than in the growth of a good tree? I remember as a little child how I ventured over the hill, alone, into a field at the back of the farm. It was like a man venturing far into an unknown land, and finally, home-sick and fearful, marking the spot and turning back. I saw the sun dropping into the West, and filled with terror, I thrust a green willow stick into the ground and ran home. Years later in going again to that back field, I found that the willow cutling had taken root and grown to a tree. We put a little stick into the ground—puny and dormant. If planted in the Fall, it stands through the Winter's ice and snow apparently as lifeless as a stake or fence post. We plant a fence post to obey the law; but a tree is planted to obey the Lord. A Cuban or a Porto Rican coming to your hills in Winter and seeing your leafless and dormant young orchards would call it the end of things. He would say that God had put a curse upon the world. But we who have the faith of experience know that the trees are not dead. The germ of life and possibility in them is growing fixed and true from the bud. And in that faith we cut the trees back, shape their branches, feed and care for them, until, responding to the skillful hand, they grow to noble shape and fair fruitage. There could be no better model for the training of a little child. It comes to us like the little tree, with hope and possibilities, but needing pruning, direction and care. And these should be given it as they are given the tree—hopefully, and with a sublime faith that, sooner or later, the mind and character will respond and take shape. That is why I would have, if I could, apple trees growing in every rural school yard. I would have the children learn to graft, until these school trees carried wood from every farm in the district,

and of every variety which needs to be tested. I believe that such trees would draw neighborhoods together, give the children practical ideas regarding a great industry, give the teacher better opportunity, and best of all, give the children some little idea of the sentiment and companionship of a tree. Let them know how the tree lives and helps life. Birds nest in it, the wind blows harmonious through its branches, weary men rest beneath its shade, and when the fruit has ripened, it may send the air and sunshine of your state as a blessing into every land, upon every sea where the sails of commerce are blown. There is an entire education to be unfolded from the story of a tree. Men like Grimes and Miller years ago threw the handful of corn upon the mountain top. Others have kept it alive through faith. Your children who are to work out in the sunshine upon these hills will, in the years to come, make your state flourish like the grass of the field.









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