

**FIRST ANNUAL REPORT  
ON THE  
NOXIOUS INSECTS OF  
THE STATE OF ILLINOIS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649536306

First Annual Report on the Noxious Insects of the State of Illinois by Benj. D. Walsh

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**BENJ. D. WALSH**

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THE STATE OF ILLINOIS**



The Report of Benjamin Dane Walsh as Acting State Entomologist of Illinois was made under peculiar circumstances, described on pages 5 to 8 of this reprint. At the 26th session of the State Legislature, an act was passed (approved March 25, 1869) "for the relief of the State Entomologist," which had the virtual effect to legalize his acts as a state officer during the period of nearly two years between his nomination by the Governor and his confirmation by the Senate; and his report, made to the State Horticultural Society and not to the Governor, thus became actually, although not nominally, the first report of the office. It was published in 1868, in the Proceedings of the State Horticultural Society (Volume I.) for 1867, and a separate pamphlet edition was printed by the Prairie Farmer Company of Chicago. In both these forms it has long been out of print and has become very scarce. I am pleased to have the opportunity to issue a second edition of this useful and interesting document, to the number of 1,000 copies, and I do not doubt that its republication at state expense is amply warranted by the intrinsic value of its contents, and by its importance as the first of a long series of reports of the official entomologists of this state.

The original edition has been closely followed in this reprint, and no changes whatever have been made except in the correction of a few obvious typographical errors.

S. A. FORBES.

State Laboratory of Natural History,  
September 30, 1903.

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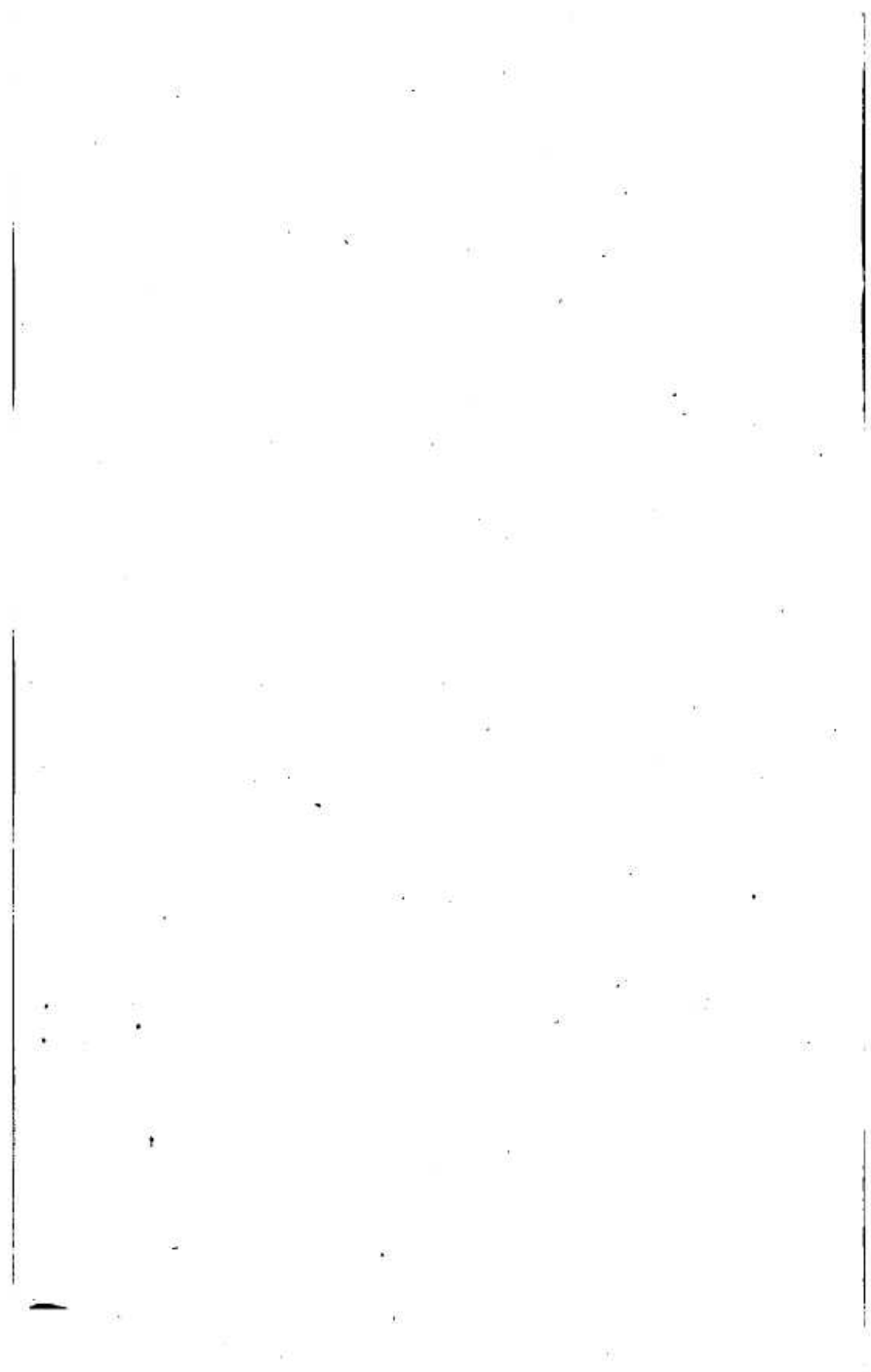
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## INTRODUCTORY.

*To Executive Committee of the Illinois State Horticultural Society:*

GENTLEMEN:—I present herewith, for publication in your Transactions, my first Annual Report as Acting State Entomologist.

What business I have to assume that title, I may be allowed briefly to explain to the people of Illinois, before I proceed to the discussion of subjects more immediately connected with the Report itself.

The Legislature of Illinois, as you are aware, at the close of the Regular Session in the winter of 1866—7, passed a law which enacts that a State Entomologist shall, by and with the consent of the Senate, be appointed by the Governor, with a salary of \$2,000 per annum, and for a period of two years and until his successor is appointed and qualified. Owing probably to the late day at which this Act was passed by the Legislature, (Feb. 27th, 1867,) the Governor made no appointment at this session.

On May 21, 1867—having in a previous resolution requested the Governor to appoint me State Entomologist in order that I might immediately enter upon the duties of that office—you passed the following resolution:

"That the President of the Society be authorized to engage Benj. D. Walsh to immediately commence entomological investigations in relation to horticulture; and be empowered to pay out for that purpose a sum not exceeding \$500 from the Legislative appropriation. This action is taken in case of a failure to appoint."

Having been duly notified on May 23d, by the President of your Society, of this most gratifying action on your part, and tendered the full amount of \$500 in case I performed the duties specified in the Resolution, I accepted with thanks the offer so liberally made me, in a letter addressed to your President and bearing date May 25th, 1867.

In the meantime the Governor had called a Special Session of the Legislature to meet June 11th, 1867. During this Session he presented my name to the Senate as his appointee for State Entomologist, along with the names of several gentlemen as his appointees on certain political Commissions. In all these cases the Senate took the ground, that they had no constitutional right to act upon such appointments at a Special Session, called for certain specified objects of which such appointments formed no part; and they therefore postponed all further consideration of all these appointments till the next Regular Biennial Session to be held in the winter of 1868—9.

Both you and myself were now manifestly placed in a false position. When the five hundred dollars was voted by you on May 21st, it was known that a Special Session would have to be called some time that year, and it was confidently anticipated by every one, that either myself or some one else would be duly appointed, and confirmed by the Senate as State Entomologist at that Special Session, whenever it met. As the matter actually stood at the close of that Session, neither myself nor any body else had any legal claim either to the title or to the emoluments of State Entomologist; and in the ordinary course of events no one could have such claim for a year and a half thereafter. It was manifestly absurd to suppose, that I could for the sum of \$500 perform for two whole years duties, for which the Legislature had thought \$4,000 to be a suitable compensation; and the impression on my mind was strong, that the whole movement in this direction had proved a failure and fallen to the ground. All men saw and felt that the Political Commissioners, who had been in the same boat as myself, were politically killed. I supposed therefore that the State Entomologist was entomologically killed.

Feeling as I have stated above, I wrote on June 19th, 1867, to your President, offering to release the Society entirely from any pecuniary claim that I might have on them, and, if they declined such offer, proposing to continue my researches and investigations in the matter of those insects that are peculiarly injurious to fruit, not for the entire period of two years, but for a fair and reasonable time. Your President in his reply, dated July 3d, 1867, declined the former alternative and accepted the latter, generously leaving the amount of labor to be done by me on account of the \$500 entirely to my discretion. And here the matter rested for the present; and I went ahead with those investigations, which I had commenced at the end of May and continued up to the receipt of President Baldwin's last letter.

It was my earnest wish to have attended the Meeting of your Society held at South Pass, Sept. 3—5, 1867; but, as will be seen from the following report, several insects—and in particular a very delicate small moth preying on the plum, which was an entirely new discovery of mine, and which will be found figured and described in the Report as "the Plum Moth"—would persist in coming out at that very period; and if I had then left home, almost all my specimens of this moth would have been ruined for want of immediate attention, and the discovery thrown over to be completed in some subsequent year. I had also other investigations in progress which required daily care; and I ventured to flatter myself, that I could do the fruit-growers of Illinois more service by staying at home and

minding my business, than by laying before them in person discoveries only half finished and theories based upon too slender a foundation of facts.

A month later, when the entomological season was nearly closed, I attended the Fair of the State Agricultural Society; and on conversing there with many of our leading Agriculturists and Horticulturists, I found—much to my surprise—that it was the universal opinion among them, that if I went on, fairly and honestly and to the best of my ability discharging the duties of State Entomologist till the next Biennial Session of the Legislature, the Senate would then undoubtedly confirm my appointment by the Governor; and I was strongly urged and advised to take this course by all these gentlemen. I may add that the officers of the State Agricultural Society proposed to me in private, to have the same sum appropriated in my behalf on the part of their Society, which your Society had already appropriated for a similar object. This offer, however, I respectfully but thankfully declined; for I had already made up my mind to go on and discharge the duties of State Entomologist for the whole period of two years for which the appointment was tenable, and to trust to the future liberality of the Legislature to reimburse me for my work.

I therefore, shortly after returning home from the State Fair, took care that the people of Illinois should be informed unofficially through the Public Press of the course that I had determined on; and I further, by the advice of friends, notified the Governor officially of what I proposed to do. I also informed your President, both by letter and personally, that I did not ask any pecuniary assistance whatever for the present from your Society; but that, if the Senate failed to confirm my appointment in the Regular Session of 1868—9, then, and then only, I purposed to call upon your Society for the payment of the sum, which had been so liberally appropriated in the first instance to meet a temporary necessity.

This whole matter is so complicated, and the misunderstandings respecting it have been so general, that I hope that I shall be excused for the publication of all these egotistical details. In justice to the Society, and in justice to myself, I could not well say less; and I have felt throughout, and still feel, a repugnance to thrusting myself forwards—without explanation or apology—to undertake functions, to the performance of which I am not legally and officially called. Time will show whether the people of this great State will endorse and approve what I am doing; or whether I am to be treated as an impudent pretender, who has been assuming a title to which he has no legitimate claim whatever.