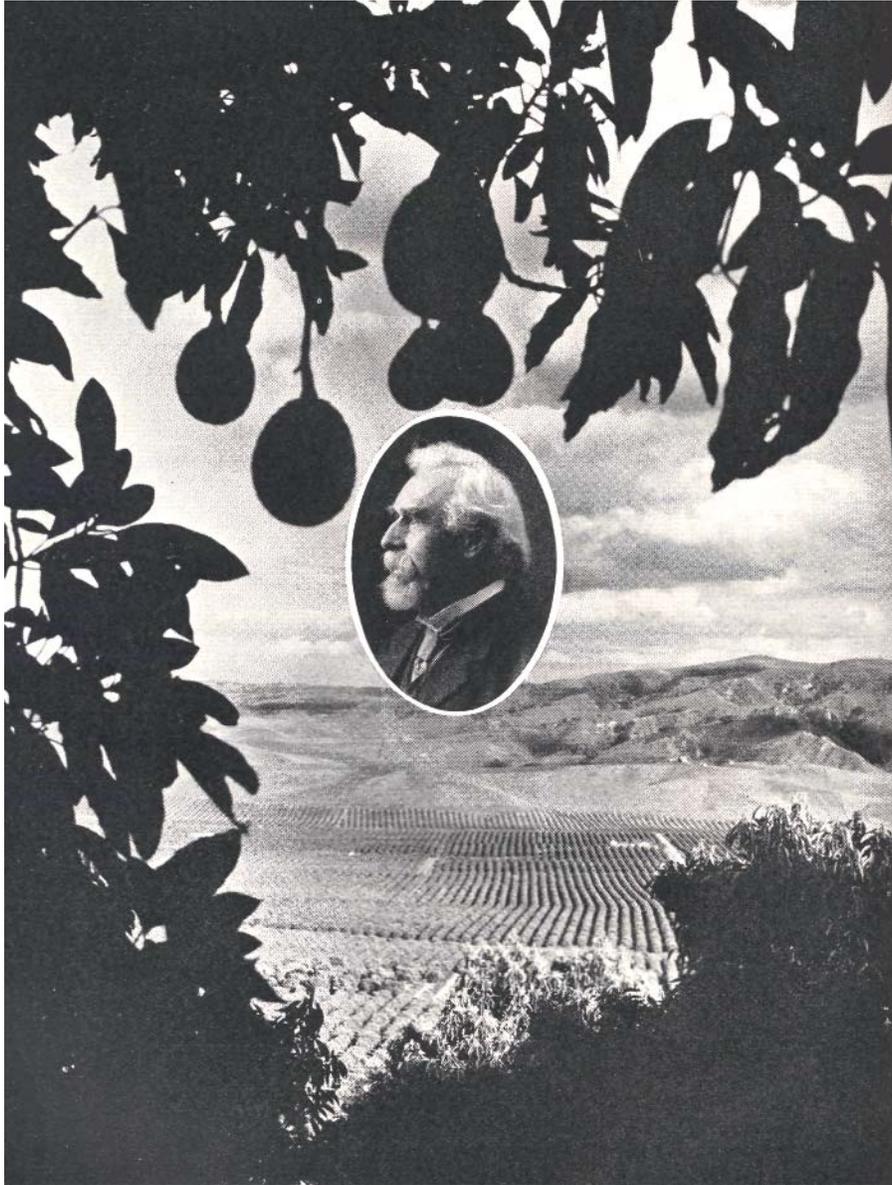


GULIAN PICKERING RIXFORD—AN APPRECIATION

September 21, 1838-October 27, 1930



Gulian Pickering Rixford, Honorary Member of the California Avocado Association, veteran plantsman, ninth recipient of the Meyer Medal awarded by the American Genetic Association for distinguished service in plant introduction, and for over twenty years a faithful employee of and indefatigable worker for the United States Department of Agriculture, was fatally injured in a train accident at Los Altos on October 27, 1930, at

the age of ninety-two years.

Mr. Rixford was born at East Highgate, Vermont, on September 21, 1838. The family moved to Canada in 1850, where young Gulian received his education first at the Academy, Stanbridge East, Province of Quebec, and later at McGill University, Montreal. He graduated in May, 1864, and soon after graduation married Caroline Corey. As Provincial Land Surveyor, he worked for an engineering firm for two years, laying out a street railway in Quebec, a railroad from St. Johns, Province of Quebec, to Swanton, Vermont, and a bridge or two, said to be still in service.

In 1867, the Rixford family, including one son, migrated to California via the Isthmus of Nicaragua. One other son and two daughters were born in California. After a short period of employment in a machine shop, Mr. Rixford accepted a position with the San Francisco Bulletin, serving for twelve years as commercial reporter and editor, and for nine years as business manager. During this period his interest in horticulture prompted him to offer seeds and cuttings of plants rather than the usual trinkets as premiums for subscriptions to the newspaper. The introduction of the Smyrna fig, in 1880, is an outstanding monument to his early horticultural achievements, although many other new plants and flowers now commonly grown were brought to California through his efforts.

Mr. Rixford retired from business in 1889, although for several years he was manager of the Inyo Marble Company. For five years he served as secretary of the California Academy of Science, and for many years has been a member of its Council. Owing to his active cooperation with horticulturists of the United States Department of Agriculture, he received, in 1908, a position as Crop Physiologist in the Office of Crop Physiology and Breeding Investigations. This enabled him to continue his fig studies as well as to carry on work with citrus fruits, pistachio nuts, avocados, passion fruits, dates, and various other subtropical fruits. He made several trips to Central America in search for new varieties and species of plants. Reports of a survey and study of avocado variety adaptations in central and northern California were written for the California Avocado Association and the agricultural press during his ninetieth year.

In transmitting the Meyer Medal at the meeting of the Annual Fig Institute, Merced, in 1929, the committee of award said:

"The Council of the Association has selected you, Gulian P. Rixford, of San Francisco, California, to receive this medal, the ninth to be awarded. Through your persistent effort, in spite of discouragements, delays, and difficulties, the Smyrna fig was introduced into California. You have developed improved varieties of Caprifigs and in many other ways have furthered the fig industry. In addition to your outstanding contributions to fig culture, you early devoted your energies to the introducing into California of seeds and plants of rare and unusual varieties, among them the casaba melon. You are now actively engaged in aiding the establishment of the pistachio nut as a commercial crop, and in furthering the avocado, persimmon and pomegranate industries.

The results of your labors are preserved in living memorials in the orchards and gardens of California and the Southwest. The horticulture of this region has been permanently enriched through your zeal, enthusiasm, and devotion through a period of over fifty years."