

## English Text of Address Given at the Presentation of Medal to Senor Le Blanc at Atlixco, April 17, 1938

### Professor Wm. T. Horne

*University of California, Citrus Experiment Station, Riverside, Calif.*

Illustrious Governor Maximino Camacho, Senor Le Blanc, Distinguished Guests, our Neighbors south of the Rio Grande, Friends:—A high honor has come to me this day, to represent the University of California at this interesting occasion. Your country is not entirely unacquainted with the University of California because you have a number of students in its many departments.

I am supposed to speak to you as one who has studied the diseases which affect the avocado tree and its fruit. At this time I should only say that we have made a beginning in these studies. It appears that there is no disease affecting the avocado which should seriously interfere with it as a source of wholesome food for the people, nor prevent its more extensive planting to make a more important fruit industry than at present.

### BOND OF UNDERSTANDING

You have heard the history of this Fuerte tree and the unselfish service which Sr. Le Blanc has conferred on us in caring for this tree, and in freely giving scions from it to us in California and to others. Wholesome and good food has its part in the well-being of a people. The avocado is a good food, and for supplying a large number of people the Fuerte is the best variety yet known. There seems to be no reason why it may not soon be available to practically all the people of the world. If this should come to pass it would be another bond of understanding between distant peoples.



Unveiling the bronze tablet at the parent Fuerte tree in Atlixco, Mexico, on April 17, 1938. Judge F. D. Halm of La Habra (on the left) is shaking hands with Governor Maximino Camacho of the State of Puebla.

## THE WAY OF UNSELFISHNESS

Nevertheless there is a vastly greater problem than merely food—it is how we should feel and act toward one another, as individuals, as groups of various kinds, and as nations. When we consider the wrongs of the past and the present, and the terrible and useless sufferings of vast numbers of the people of the world, our faith in the advancement of civilization may be weakened or shattered. The brightest ray of hope we see is exemplified in the way of Sr. Le Blanc—the way of unselfishness and of generosity— if by some means and in some measure we may all attain this way!

Some years ago, Mr. Carl Newman, a member of the California Avocado Association, visited Sr. Le Blanc. When he came back, he told us about his trip, a little about Mexico—its history and its people—and about this tree. Then, remembering the unfortunate past when the two nations were not friends, he said something like this: "Some people may speak of the possibility of a war with Mexico, talk about going down to Mexico to fight. No, we are not going to do anything of that kind. We are going to build a road and we are going to go down and get acquainted with that gracious and courteous people, and we are going to be neighbors and friends."



General View of Atlixco as approached on motor road, showing the chapel crowned, conical hill which dominates the landscape. The gardens nestle about its base.

Sr. Le Blanc, it is your way. Your country has built your part of the road and our country has built our part, and we are here to acknowledge our debt to you. This process of getting acquainted we hope may go on to the advantage of both peoples.

We hope that you will also use the portion of the road which we have built, and see something of our country and of us, so that in the future more and more we may be neighbors and friends.

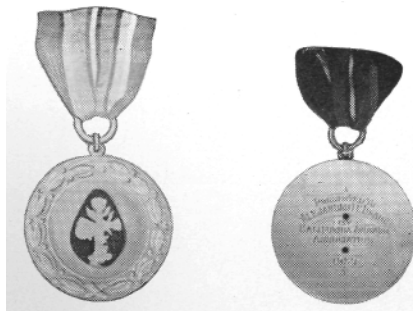
## PRESENTATION OF MEDAL

Sr. Le Blanc:

The California Avocado Association has desired that you should have a token to record their sentiment of indebtedness to you and to be a reminder of this day. They have entrusted this small medal to me to present to you. It is our hope that it may bring comfort and satisfaction to you in your advancing years and that it may at least in some measure serve also as a permanent bond and influence toward goodwill between your country and ours. May it also nourish the hope that life, for those who are to live in this continent of North America, may be, not worse, but perhaps in some ways a little better.



Governor Maximino Camacho of the State of Puebla, Mexico, bestowing Association's medal on Senor Alejandro Le Blanc at official ceremonies, on April 17, 1938, in Atlixo, Mexico. Wilson Popenoe to left of Le Blanc.



Front and back of medal, showing Aztec hieroglyph on green enamel background. Size about 1½ in. across. Medal of dull finish gold; inscribed.

Also, it has been our desire that this token should come to you, not from our hands, for after all we are strangers and foreigners, but from the hand of your own illustrious governor. Sr. Camacho, Illustrious Governor of the State of Puebla: The California Avocado Association desires and requests that you should give this small token of

esteem and indebtedness to one of your citizens, Sr. Alejandro Le Blanc. May it stimulate a better understanding and a greater/ sympathy between the people of our respective countries.

Mr. Carl Schmidt, the California Avocado Association has asked me to say something to you, also. Before the avocado shall have reached its maximum service to humanity, there remain many things to do. As each of these accomplishments materializes, the Association wishes to mark the event by presenting a token of appreciation, so that we may not forget the worker. Several things have already been accomplished, and one of the first of these was the finding of the Fuerte. This we credit to you. You were a lucky fellow. Some people just **are** lucky. To ride out of a pleasant morning, to meet Sr. Le Blanc for a little visit, and to send a few scions to the West India Gardens seems so happy a thing to do that anyone could do it. But there was something back of that. Only a few years ago I sat with Mr. F. O. Popenoe in his gracious home in Altadena, at the old West India Gardens, and had the story of how it happened that you found this Fuerte tree. First you learned the nursery trade with diligence and hard work. Then you learned all that was to be known about the avocado in California. Then in due time you came on down here, and you searched thoroughly and with courtesy. And you found your Fuerte. Yes, you worked, and you were lucky, and we have been the gainers by your good fortune.

Mr. Carl Schmidt, upright, diligent, courteous American, living among a foreign people and winning their esteem and affection, discoverer of the Fuerte Avocado, I present to you the first Token of Appreciation for Meritorious Service, from the California Avocado Association.

May your sort increase until the earth is covered with fine trees, fine fruits, and all-uniting goodwill!