

Burbank to Rest



Plant Wizard's Life Work to be Taken Over by Stanford University

By JOHN DICKINSON SHERMAN

LUTHER BURBANK is going to take life a little easier after this. He has earned the right to take whatever rest he chooses. He is seventy-six and for fifty straight years he has been busy at the work that has made him world-famous.

Just how much rest Luther Burbank will choose to take is a question. He is in good health and is as fond of work as Edison, than whom no one is fonder. Nevertheless, for two years he has been gradually getting his affairs in shape with the idea of having some qualified institution take over his experimental farms at Santa Rosa and carry on his work.

Stanford university, it is now announced, will take over the Burbank gardens for maintenance and perpetuation. The conditions under which Stanford was established require that each unit shall have its individual endowment. So a committee is now at work making the necessary financial arrangements.

It is not stated how much Burbank is to receive for his gardens. It is reported, however, that he turns them over at half their full valuation, the figures to be fixed by a friendly committee. The story goes that private interests made offers of \$100,000, of \$150,000 and of \$250,000 and that Burbank refused them, on the ground that he was unwilling to "commercialize" his half-century of work. It is also said that several mid-western and eastern colleges were desirous of purchasing. These Burbank eliminated as being too far away.

The story is that Burbank himself never would have thought of taking things easier, but that two of his personal friends, Edison and Ford, proposed the plan and convinced him of its advisability. David Starr Jordan of Stanford is another personal friend. He too took kindly to the idea. Among others interested in promoting the transfer are President Ray Lyman Wilbur, Herbert Hoover, William G. McAdoe, Rudolph Spreckles, Mrs. A. B. Spreckles, James Rolph, Jr., Herbert Slater, Mrs. Margaret Sartoris and William H. Crocker.

At Stanford it is intimated that a rearrangement will follow the transfer. The present idea seems to be that the gardens will be put in charge of a special faculty of scientists from all parts of the world. This faculty will be jointly chosen by Burbank and the university. Burbank does not plan to give up work entirely. He will presumably be needed. He is quoted as saying that "in twelve hours running" he would not be able to enumerate the experiments he now has under way in his gardens.

Luther Burbank was born on a 200-acre farm at Lancaster, Mass. He was the thirteenth child in a family of fifteen. His father gave him schooling in a private academy and then he had to go to work. He got a job at a wood-turning lathe in Worcester. The job paid \$3 a week. Forthwith he invented an improvement on the lathe, got himself put on piece work and earned some days as much as \$16.50. As soon as he got together a bit of money he went to work at farming—the Burbank kind—in Lunenburg.



of him as a Yankee who had turned his inventive knack toward growing things—an experimental crank with a mania for improving on nature. Burbank himself has written:

I desired to deal with the forces of life and mold the plastic forms of living organisms rather than classify fixed and immutable phenomena. We have learned that they are as plastic in our hands as clay in the hands of the potter or color on the artist's canvas, and can readily be molded into more beautiful forms and colors than any painter or sculptor can ever hope to bring forth.

In 1872 in Massachusetts, when Burbank was twenty-three, he undertook to improve the potato. Says Burbank: "In this country the potatoes were subby and small and subject to rot and when they ran to any size it would be in one direction so that they looked like lady fingers. Sometimes they would be all eyes running clear to the center. They had to be trained to produce good roots, and that was a matter of selection and inviting surroundings. They had to be taught to stay in the hill. I found the seed-ball of an Early Rose, which seldom bears seed, and got thirty-two plants from it that were practically all different. From these came the Burbank potato. I sold it for \$150. It has probably contributed \$150,000,000 to the food values of the world."

Burbank arrived October 1, 1875, in Santa Rosa, Sonoma county, California. He was unheralded and unknown. But he had in his baggage ten Burbank potatoes that he had retained from the Massachusetts sale. Had the "Plant Wizard"—he got the name early—chosen to padlock his gardens and keep his mouth shut he might easily have posed as an international mystery. He chose the opposite policy and when success arrived he proceeded to take the public into his confidence. In 1893 he published his first work, "New Creations in Fruits and Flowers." Other volumes followed; in them he described and pictured his achievements. He worked alone, with no pecuniary assistance, until 1904, when the Carnegie institute granted him \$10,000 a year for ten years. Burbank is not wealthy. It is stated—merely well-to-do.

The title of one of Burbank's books, "How Plants Are Trained to Work for Man," is significant of his methods. He considers that he trains plants. He cannot train the individual plant, perhaps, but he trains the plant family through generation after generation making use of cross-breeding, environmental influences favorable to variation, selection of those qualities valuable to man. Nature herself plays a Burbank prank every now and then—for example, the Delicious Apple and the Temple Orange (soon to be on the market) are both "sports." And Burbank pats Nature on the back. His genius consists in infinite patience, in endless pains, in the ability to aid

Nature at the right moment. He plants seeds by the millions; he destroys plants wholesale. He once made an estimate that during a fifteen-year period of experiment more than a million specimens were destroyed in the making of 150 new creations. It took 65,000 hybrid vines to produce his white blackberry. He says:

The materials to be combined in cross-fertilization must be carefully analyzed and selected. Sometimes the right combinations are very difficult to obtain. I have waited years, in many instances, to secure a plant with one needed quality lacking in any of the forms I had available. Sometimes a friend, or one of my collectors in another country, has found the element I needed for this purpose, usually in a plant growing wild. With it I succeeded in making a finer plant than had ever before existed.

To summarize the results of Burbank's work would take many volumes. In fruits he has produced prolific and precocious varieties; has lengthened the season three months; has made important structural changes; has secured entirely new varieties. For example, he has made a stoneless plum. He has hastened the bearing age of the chestnut and walnut by several years. He has produced the white blackberry and the plum-cot, a cross between the plum and apricot.

In flowers he has given perfume to those which lacked it and enlarged and beautified many. From the yellow California poppy he created a flower of magnificent crimson. He made the Shasta daisy from the common field daisy of the East and daisies from Europe and Asia. He has created a new calla, amaryllis, clematis, gladiolus and columbine.

Possibly the most valuable product of Burbank's long years of work is the cactus without spines or bristles. He began work on the prickly pear (opuntia tuna) in 1896. He had cactus specimens sent him from all over the world. He raised thousands of seedlings. It was not until 1907 that he won success and gave the world a new forage plant.

Luther Burbank is much more than a horticulturist of genius. He is a forceful personality, with his own ideas and philosophies. His latest portrait, here reproduced, shows a strong face. And he has given the lie to the old saying that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. For Santa Rosa greatly honors its "Plant Wizard," as shown by the pictures taken at the Burbank Jubilee of 1923, when the municipally owned Burbank park was dedicated. This park will contain a collection of his products.

Long years ago the Bard of Avon declared it "wasteful and ridiculous excess . . . to paint the lily, to throw perfume on the violet." But Luther Burbank has done just this and done it better than anyone else. So the world has beaten a pathway to his door and Emerson has the laugh on Shakespeare.

The KITCHEN CABINET

(© 1923, Western Newspaper Union.)
 Puddings, my friend, do a mission fulfill;
 They add to the dinner and also the bill;
 They cause men to wish, with what ardor they may,
 That the meal which foretells them came three times a day.

FOR DESSERT.

Desserts are an important feature in every dinner, in most families. For those who enjoy and never prepare them, it will be hard to understand the amount of time it takes to prepare even simple desserts.

Banana Lemon Whip.—Roll together two cups of sugar, two cups of water and the grated yellow rind of a lemon; when it has softened in cold water. Stir until dissolved, then add the sifted pulp of four ripe bananas mixed with the juice of two lemons. Pour all into a large bowl to cool, and when the edges begin to harden beat the mixture with a large-sized egg beater, continuing to beat until the whole is creamy, then it may be poured into a mold and chilled.

Lemon Raisin Pie.—Take one cup of large raisins, add one cup of sugar, one large lemon, juice and grated rind, a tablespoonful of flour, one cup of water, and two cups of butter. Bake with two crusts.

Filled Sponge Cake.—Scoop the center from a deep sponge cake and fill with mashed and sweetened fruit, either peaches, bananas or strawberries—any fruit in season. Cover with sweetened whipped cream and serve at once.

Spiced Tea Cakes.—Mix and sift one and one-half cups of flour, two teaspoonfuls of baking powder, one-eighth of a teaspoonful of nutmeg and one-quarter teaspoonful of mace. Cream one-fourth cup of shortening, add one cup of sugar, two well-beaten eggs; add one-half cup of milk alternately with the flour. Add a few raisins and bake in well-greased muffin pans. Cover with maple frosting and sprinkle with nuts.

SPECIAL GOOD THINGS

A salad which is good at any season and on any occasion is the following:

Fruit Salad.—Pour a cupful of boiling water over half a pound of dates, drain and cut into eighths, removing the stones. Add to the dates one cupful of finely cubed, good-flavored apples, two slices of minced pineapple—the apple and pineapple may be cut into strips for variety—sprinkle with salt, two tablespoonfuls of French dressing and one-half cupful of finely cut celery. Let stand an hour then serve with mayonnaise. Serve in apple cups on lettuce for a change.

Florida Orange Sticks.—Cream one-fourth of a cupful of butter; add three-fourths cupful of sugar; beat until smooth. Add two egg yolks, one-fourth of a cupful of orange juice and the grated rind of an orange. Mix and sift three-fourths of a cupful of flour, one-fourth cupful of cornstarch and two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Add to the first mixture, and when well blended fold in the well-beaten whites of two eggs. Grease a shallow pan, sprinkle with powdered sugar and chopped walnut meats. Pour in the cake batter and bake in a moderate oven twenty-five minutes. Remove from the pan, cut in half crosswise and put together with orange filling. Cover with orange icing and cut into narrow strips for serving.

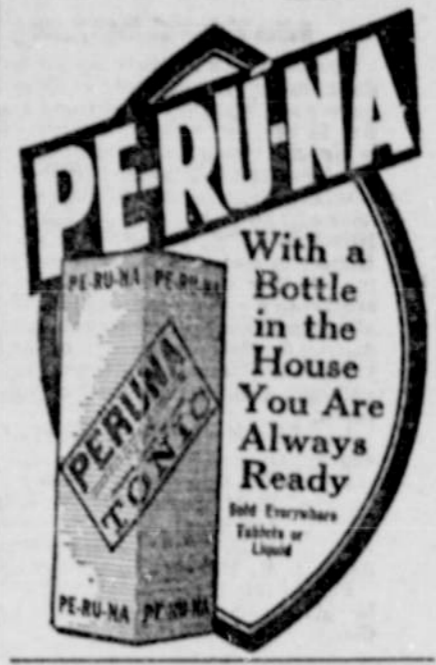
Orange Filling.—Cream together one tablespoonful of butter and three tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar. Mix two tablespoonfuls of flour, one-third of a cupful of sugar and one egg yolk until smooth. Add one-fourth cupful of orange juice, one teaspoonful of lemon juice and one teaspoonful of grated orange peel. Cook over hot water, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Add the butter mixture and cool before spreading.

Citrus fruits are invaluable in the diet of young and old. They supply the salts which help to keep the body functioning properly.

Quick Dessert.—Whip a pint of cream, add a cupful and a half of cream cheese, a cupful of walnut meats and one cupful of dates, cut into small pieces. Serve in sherbet cups garnished with a cherry.

An ear of two of cooked green corn is an addition to any potato salad. Cut the corn from the ear and mix well with the potato.

Nellie Maxwell



Time's Change
 During the last few years the Norwegian state railways have reduced the number of their employees by from 5,000 to 6,000. This reduction has been due to keen competition from motor busses, and as a result it has been decided to confine new construction and improvements to the main lines, leaving the busses to take care of the traffic in sparsely populated country districts. Further reductions in personnel are planned.

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