

Aurora Sporealis

Wherein are recorded the recollections, the ruminations and the raspitations of those who have drunk from the foaming fount of the Department of Plant Pathology of the University of Minnesota and who now spout forth in divers ways

Let the fount foam and never run dry
Let the spout squirt and never lose power

OLD TIMERS

ROLLAND C. LORENZ, after eight years in Guatemala with the Instituto Agropecuario Nacional, moved on July 18 to Asuncion, Paraguay, to work in the Ministerio de Agricultura. On departure, our O.T. was given a "pergamino" (recognition for his contribution to agriculture), signed and sealed by Guatemala's President Armos. The honor was the first of its kind in the agricultural field.

Amidst the hills and dales at Cornell University, cereal pathologist Dr. LEON J. TYLER acted as guide and advisor to one of Aurora's reporters in September. Tyler expressed disappointment at not seeing more Old Timers when he visited St. Paul this summer.

Old Timer from India, Dr. M. L. GATTANI, has returned to this continent to do post-graduate work at the Plant Pathology Laboratory at Lethbridge, Alberta. On September 12 he was reported to be in the hospital because of the difficulties of adjusting to American food.

Wyoming rainfall this summer almost equalled Minnesota rainfall, according to Old Timer Ed ANDREWS, newcomer to Laramie. Whether he means the normal rainfall in Minnesota or the meager amount we got in 1955, we do not know. Anyway, with or without raindrops or dew, Ed Andrews and John VAUGHN are together again: first in student days at Minnesota, later at Michigan State, and now in Wyoming.

September 19, 1955. "Greetings and Solutions! Current eruption of Aurora's foaming fount in close view on port side, and thoroughly enjoyed while fruitlessly beguiling sail catfish and sea trout with presumably gustatory morsels off dock on front lawn of new home on Paradise Island, Boca Ciega Bay, Gulf Beaches, Florida West Coast.

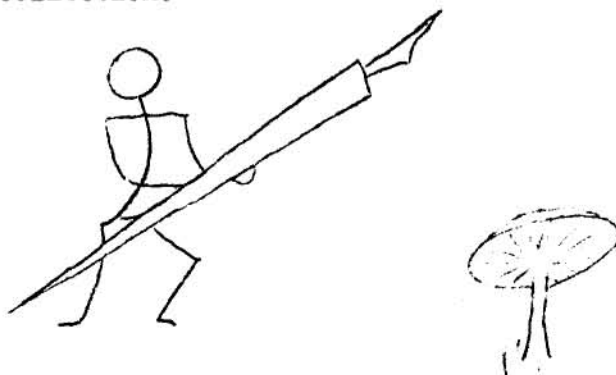
Note your comment on my notice of change of address, 'sans personal progress.' ---Am teaching courses this academic year in microbiology, botany,

and survey biology for general education at St. Petersburg, Florida, Junior College, a relatively small but rapidly growing institution with tremendous future potentials and a \$1,250,000 building program, and at Mound Park Hospital; also working (?) on the manuscript for a new college biology textbook for general education and teacher training. Any Old Timers cordially invited to drop anchor and enjoy our new home for a spell, if down Florida way.

Sincere regards to all and sundry,"
S/ B. Bernarr Vance.

SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF AURORA

Most of us consider each issue of AURORA as a conveyor of interesting news of the moment but few of us appreciate the lasting value of our permanent file. It has been used repeatedly for research purposes in studies on the history of Plant Pathology at Minnesota, for addresses and positions of various individuals at a given time (when our personnel file was lacking this information) and various and sundry other ways. Recently the AURORA came into its own on a real scientific project. One budding young scientist wanted to publish a paper on the first occurrence of a certain fungus in Minnesota. The manuscript was sent in without a specimen and no date or location for the collection. Knowing that the specimen in question was picked up by a distinguished visitor who was here for only a few days we were able to refer back to AURORA and find the date of collection.



In the good old summertime, Plant Pathologists toil and sweat under the burning sun in experimental plots or wander far afield to visit the scenes of past crimes, where they aim to exchange with the natives wit, wisdom and gripes on the horrible climate. Usually they find the halls and offices well-nigh deserted, the tables covered with a thin film of dust, many pathological specimens (plant) on the floor in a corner, and a few pathological specimens (human) who have just returned from, or about to go, somewhere. Where is everybody? In the field, or visiting other plant pathology departments, where they find the halls deserted, a thin film of dust accumulating on the tables, and so on, because those plant pathologists are either in the field or visiting --- etc. It was a fairly successful Open House this past summer, with a considerable number of Distinguished Visitors, Old Timers and otherwise. If we were not here in force to welcome each and every one of you, it was not because our hearts were cold or our memories dim. Our WELCOME mat is ALWAYS out. Those mentioned below trod across it in the past three months:

July 1.- Shosuke Goto and Jack Mitchell, of the Biological Branch, Camp Detrick, Maryland. Their work, if any, is SECRET.

July 11-14. Dr. G. A. Wiebe, top breeder of top barleys, USDA, Beltsville. Dr. J. G. Moseman, Jr., USDA barley disease specialist, Raleigh, N.C. Dr. J. G. Leach, purported to run a pretty good Dept. of Plant Pathology at Morgantown, W. Va. Claimed that the trout caught in the mountain streams of West Virginia are the size he used to use for BAIT in Minnesota. (W. Va. Tourist Bureau take notice.) W. Q. Loegering, Old Time Rust Expert, now at Beltsville, and still far from rusty.

July 20. R. S. (Dick) Davidson and co-worker Jack Kemp, from Battelle Institute in Uh-hiuh (Ohio, to you), looking into a problem of moldy flour.

July 28. Dr. Ian Tervet, who works at, or probably out of, Dugway, Utah, and spends most of his time in a plane commuting between Dugway and Washington,

D.C. for the Biological Service. Work, if any, even more secret than that of Goto and Jack Mitchell. At least they can tell him what they are doing; Tervet can't tell anybody. Dr. Dave Ward, USDA Cereologist from Beltsville.

July 29. Erwin Schwinghamer, previously Plant Pathologist at the North Dakota Station at Fargo, on his way to a new job in the Dept. of Biology, Brookhaven National Laboratories, Upton, Long Island, N.Y., where his other energy now is being supplemented by Atomic Energy. Kermit Kreitlow, Senior Plant Pathologist, USDA, pastured at Beltsville, but often escaping to greener pastures in his work on pasture diseases. Dr. Merle Michaelson, Plant Pathologist with the USDA at Brookings, S.D.

August 11. Dr. David (antibiotics) Gottlieb, University of Illinois, fresh from a camping trip in the West. Dr. and Mrs. Meyer, Chairman of the Dept. of Botany and Plant Pathology, Ohio State University, Columbus. (That is, He is Chairman).

August 12. Dr. M. J. (Mike) Boosalis, Asst. Prof., Dept. of Plant Pathology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Boo has gone underground with soil microflora and root rots and such.

September 1. Dr. and Mrs. J. Leon Tyler, Professor of Plant Pathology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. An eastern Giant among the dwarf bunts, Leon figures he may have that problem on the run, thereby reversing things.

September 2. Dr. Otto Valle, Forage Crop Breeder, Finland.

September 7. Dr. W. S. Shamma, Dept. of Agriculture, Bagdad, Iraq, studying with McFadden in Texas.

September 19. Mrs. Maurice Annexstad (Tooty) who, before being lured away by outdoor life on a farm (and also by the farmer) was our Chief Clerk. Claims the farm animals are a lot more fun, and easier, to work with (and perhaps write about?)

September 28. Janet (Mrs. Vernon) Miller, also once a power on the Office Staff,

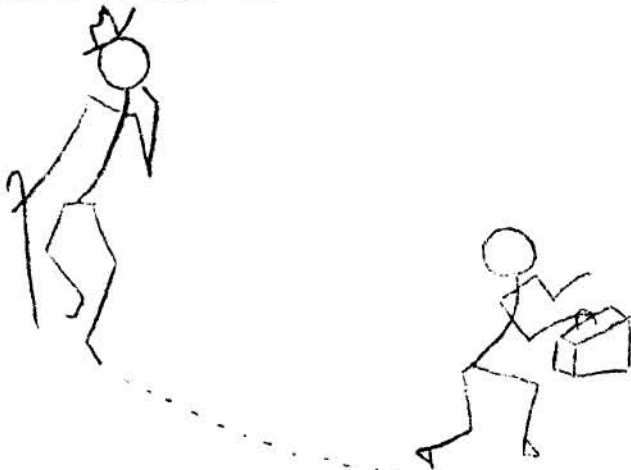
now living in McGregor, Minnesota, following a stint in the army by Mr. Miller.

Frequently found sauntering in the halls of both Phytobrickhaus tremuloides and P. erectus was O.T. Hugh Hotson (Minnesota Mining, makers of scotch tape). Also seen several times was Dr. Ernie DuCharme, of Lake Alfred, Fla., who had been canoeing in the Wilderness area of northern Minnesota with Willie Q. Loegering, a stern paddler and portager extraordinaire. Harry Heggeness, now hog farmer at Hastings, Minnesota, hustled through the Tottering Tower. Came the Green Giants, Marshall Evans, and Stu Martland, of LeSeuer to talk with King and Linck about peas in a pod: are they alike or different? (The peas, that is).

Going - - - Going - - - GONE

As usual, some members have gone out into the world, to climb other Mt. Everests, and we hope they will continue ever upward, over cols, crevasses, cliffs, and glaciers, until they finally reach the summit. Have to sharpen their own climbing irons from now on! All, we are glad to say, departed of their own free will -- none were deported. They are: Clark Livingston, photographer extraordinary, who left for home and a job teaching several courses in Botany and Plant Pathology at Colorado A & M, Fort Collins. Dr. Edward Butler, who went to the University of California, Davis, to work on disease problems in fruits and vegetables.

Stuart S. Bampton, who arrived with no fanfare a year ago, left as quietly to return to England.



"It rained 1.3 in. during the past 24 hours according to meteorologist Alfred Eagle, and 1.47 in. according to the less reliable newspaper. This is hot news, as it is the first wet rain that has fallen on the sun-burned earth for many weeks. So the Editor asked us whether we would write a piece on the hot weather.

Weather is a comprehensive topic. It goes on everywhere and all of the time, but much of the time it does not seem to know where it is going. But it did seem to know where it was going at St. Paul this summer. Ox-like it went in one direction -- from bad to worse, from hot and dry to hotter and drier, and occasionally to hotter and more humid. April, May, and June broke the record for drought at St. Paul. There was only 3.4 in. of precipitation, which is the least during the 119 years in which weather records have been kept here. June, which is usually the wettest month, was the driest since 1912, with only 1.5 in. of rain. The heat in June tied the all-time record of 1936. There were 17 days on which the temperature was 90° or higher. This is just about the usual annual quota. July was also the wettest month since 1913, with more than 7 in. of rain. But before the 1.3 in. of rain on October 5, there was a deficiency of more than 4 in. at St. Paul. In some parts of the State, on the other hand, there was superabundant rain. The rainfall was very capricious and in many cases fell when and where it did the least good and the most harm.

Because of the capriciousness of the weather, the crop estimators had a butterfly-like time in guessing what the production might be. The estimates for late crops such as corn, soybeans, and potatoes shrank, expanded, then shrank again, and again expanded. Finally, however, the State managed to break two records for total production. The production of corn was more than 279 million bushels and that of soybeans more than 45 million. The potato production stayed shrank from an estimated 17 million to a final of 15.5 million. The moral is that Minnesota can break crop-production records despite the handicap of bad and notional weather.

One of the reportorial team was south of the equator during the hot weather in Minnesota. The weather down there was upside down, as it was up here. There was record-breaking cold in Chile, Argentina, and Brazil. In fact, Chile was so chilly that even the newspapers played with this chestnut. One facetious weather analyst commented that the Chileans liked the chill so much that they took it inside of their houses with them and fraternized with it. They really took it to their bosoms. At any rate it reached their bosoms whether they wanted it to or not. At least the people south of the equator had more certainty than those north of it. Up here people did not know how to dress to keep cool. Down there the thick and the long red was clearly first choice--provided it was available. It is to the credit of many people south of the equator that they could make jokes about the weather while their teeth were chattering so hard that it was hard to say anything, especially something that was funny. Moreover, the unprecedented frosts did a lot of damage to many crop plants, including coffee. Most of the coffee in certain areas of southern Brazil was killed completely, and much more was very badly damaged. It is suggested, therefore, that if people in non-coffee-producing countries blame market manipulation entirely for the high cost of the morning cup, they might find it conducive to scientific objectivity to examine the weather records of some of the principal coffee-growing areas during July and August.

To an agriculturist, the moral of this little piece--if there is one--could well be that one of the deepest obligations of agricultural science is to change the weather as much as possible, and, if that is impossible, to minimize as much as possible the damaging effect of the weather by developing varieties of plants that can thumb their noses at it. Further improvement in agriculture must come partly from the development of varieties of crop plants that resist the weather in those areas where the weather does not know where it is going and therefore goes off on periodic binges.

LOCALS

Extra --- Extra --- Extra

R. C. Rose, who has been our Extension Plant Pathologist for some 35 years - and, we think, a Good One, cut all ties here recently and left for a new position as Plant Pathologist with the International Cooperative Administration in El Salvador, Central America. Our loss is El Salvador's gain; we will miss him greatly, and we wish him all good luck.

Dr. C. J. Eide, who spent the summer months in Colombia, South America, and in Mexico, working on potato diseases for the Rockefeller Foundation, returned in late September. He has not said too much about it yet. We aren't sure whether he still is recovering from the fright of having traveled all that distance by plane (he even trembles a little when a plane goes by overhead), or whether he is reluctant to reduce the punch that his talks will have as soon as he gets his kodachromes back. Couple of the members of the 304 luncheon club claim they will not look at any of Eide's kodachromes unless he looks at an equal number of theirs, and that looks like a Mexican standoff. Eide is at this writing out in North Dakota, probably recuperating by sitting on the seat of an old grain binder and looking at the distant horizon. He took a haze filter for his camera out to North Dakota with him. Probably be easier just to give in and agree to look at the pictures from Mexico, before we have to look at a bunch showing the stubble fields of North Dakota extending for hundreds of miles.

Last May, during a five-day centennial symposium sponsored by Michigan State College's School of Science and Arts on the subject, "The new view of man: A synthesis and forecast," Dr. Stakman received the MSC Centennial Award, according to the Lansing press, "For outstanding contributions to society....."

New Arrivals for Graduate Work - some of them New-Old arrivals who have been here before: Hoo Sup Chung, Korea; Kenneth R. Bromfield, Camp Detrick, Md.; P. K. Dutta, India; Abd El Kader El Zarka, Egypt (here by way of Berkeley, California); Fred Harries, Wisconsin; William Haglund,

Dugway, Utah; Jack Horricks, Lethbridge, Canada; A. Jean Osteraas, Minnesota. We hope they will work hard, long, and effectively, and make big discoveries, especially of the kind that endure for at least two years after their theses are published!

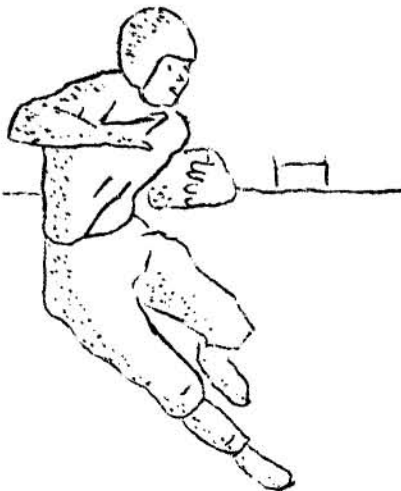
SPORULATING SPORTS NEWS

At last the Brooklyn Bums made the grade of winning the world series and becoming the \$9,718 per player winner and world baseball champions. Everybody is at least satisfied with the new champions except at least one person whom we all know????

Maybe the cheering will die away as most Minnesotans shift their interests to football and the Gophers. Who wishes they were sitting with the chosen P.P. group that pool their tickets every year? No one, because this year they have been nosed out by the Rooter Club and moved down to the 10-yard line.

Apparently the enthusiasm for sports is beginning to dwindle in this all powerful section known as Plant Path. Even with the soliciting of Dr. King it appeared to be a lost cause even in forming a suitable bowling team.

The question of the season---Will Bissonette (Pea man for King) take over the Gopher coaching or the quarterback duties, and when???????



THURSDAY NIGHT AT EIGHT

One of the hot and sultry Thursdays of this last summer session was very pleasantly spiced by a breath of fresh (but also hot) air. Yes, we mean that E. G. Sharvelle, bon vivant, raconteur and sulfur sprayer was here! He entertained with his stories of the good old days when the seminar table had holes from which, at least once, emanated the mellow smell of old lutefisk; his comparison of the parallel careers of the president of Purdue and himself was another gem. He talked of such things as gene jugglers (he is not one) cockroaches (groups that he is forced to speak to) and brain pickers (whom he is wary of). He warned the students that, upon release from Minnesota's plant path, the world would jump upon them; therefore his advice--- get them before they get you! While rich in the praise of the old alma mater he did not hesitate to insert many testimonials of Purdue. In fact so much so, that staff members stirred uneasily in their chairs as the riches and rewards awaiting graduate students at said institution were described. Needless to say at the end of seminar, he was hustled out before any of his hand bills or contracts could be circulated and get into the wrong hands.

We were doubly fortunate in having ex-Scoutmaster Bill Loegering visit us the same evening; while not as jocular as E.G.S., his talk on the International Rust Nursery was interesting and informative.

In this span of seminars, E.C.S. returned to the fold and contributed heavily (making up for lost time) to the discussions. Stake lectured long and hard on many subjects, some of which are given here.

1. The scientific meetings held in South America this spring.
2. Anwar's thesis on Fusarium and Helminthosporium in soil.
3. The increased potato yields that Tolaas and he obtained, using scientific methods (375 versus the record of 200 at that time).
4. The trouble with American literature.
5. The oldest and biggest trees in the

world. (Australia's Watson claimed the Eucalyptus, naturally.)

6. Freshmen nowadays should not be coddled and allowed to act like "members of a drunken wedding party," as he claimed they did on a visit to the St. Paul Campus during orientation week.

Another contribution to the seminar was Matt Moore's demonstration of the large number of offspring from a single swollen tick removed from the ear of his dog. Incidentally this dog has previously contributed to scientific progress by clearly demonstrating how pasmo can be disseminated.....Dr. Grasso reported on his dormitory life at Pullman, Washington where, among other things, he lost a quarter and a part of his tie in the automatic washer.....Carl J. Eide, unmarked by his trip to South America via plane and a visit to the receiving end of an army firing range, described the scenic aspects of his trip which was made for the Rockefeller Foundation. His slides were very good, with a rare poor one which he included to show that he wasn't perfect. Naturally he thoroughly acquainted the seminar with the railroad system in S.A. The high point of the trip was the finding of the old St. Paul-Minneapolis street cars operating in Mexico City.....Dr. Ed Butler (now at Davis) interestingly reported on induced heterothallism in Chaetomium globosum obtained by exposure to radioactive substances and ultra-violet light.....Turk (Pakistan) gave us some of the details on Trichothecium roseum's inhibitory effect on Endoconidiophora fagacearum in culture..... Chuck Schneider talked on Cercospora leaf spot on sugar beets which has been causing losses in Minnesota..... Jean Osteraas told of her findings where a Penicillium and an unknown fungus may work synergistically in rotting citrus fruits or be antagonistic to each other, depending on the particular citrus..... Al Linck, stimulated by his visit to the AIBS meetings at Michigan, gave a very interesting summary of the progress of studies on plant hormones.

FALL PICNIC

The fall picnic was held at, of-all-places, Como Park, and was accompanied by the usual low temperatures much to Matt Moore and Thor Kommedahl's joy. The weather, however, did not discourage Mrs. Stakman and many others from coming.

Food was, for the most part, prepared by the wives of the married students and the staff (Who else has them?--Ed.). Most of these gastronomic delights were cooked over the open fire unless one had the good fortune to use Tommy King's plaid charcoal broiler.

After "sports" and eating, the ladies were violently excised from the group and propelled forward by Chris where his cohort, the God-of-Thunder Kommedahl, introduced them.

Subsequently, songs were indulged in with varying results. The program was due in part to a floating bloc of tormentors who chose one or more persons to entertain and vociferously shouted their names until satisfaction was obtained. Chris and Thor also ably encouraged reluctant persons in volunteering. By these time-tested techniques, we heard songs in the native tongues of India (Singh, Paharia and Dutta), Japan (Oshima and Matsushima), France (Mrs. Klug), Pakistan (Turk), Mexico (Rojas, Campos and wives), the U.S. (Star Spangled Banner by Papavizas and wife). In addition, there were various selections from other groups -- the Physiology Twins, Al Linck (Ohio) and Jim DeVay sang Jingle Bells, the Watsons incl. gave us an authentic Australian version of "Waltzing Mathilda", the kiddies sang umpteen verses of Davy Crockett and various "tunes" were supplied by the gals of the office staff. Miss Hart and her stem rusters sang, "Home on the Range" and Tommy King sang about what you'll find in a pie.

Art Elliot (Minnesota!), Thor and burly Bissonnette (the latter brought a girl!!) led the group singing, which at times was not unmusical.

After all were thoroughly predisposed to respiratory diseases, goodbyes were said, and the group returned home to await development of symptoms.

SUMMER PUBLICATIONS

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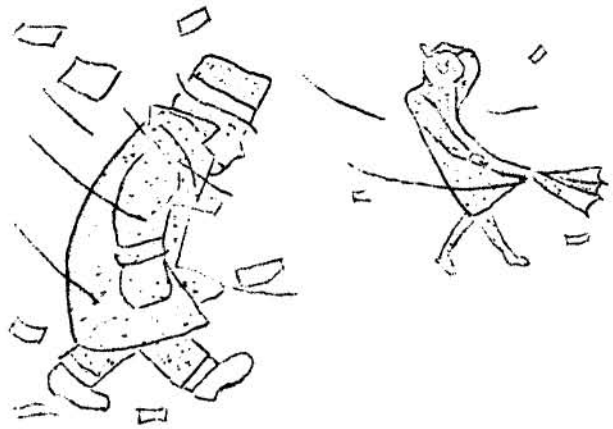
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Kommedahl, T., J. J. Christensen, J. O. Culbertson, and M. B. Moore. 1955. The prevalence and importance of damaged seed in flax. Minn. Agr. Exp. Sta. Tech. Bul. 215.

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PREPARED FOR A Change?



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