

SECTION OF  
PLANT PATHOLOGY

AURORA SPORIALIS

Vol. I, No. 3

January 1, 1925

A Journal

Wherein are recorded the recollections, the ruminations, and the respirations of those who have drunk from the foaming fount in 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 lost power.

WISHING YOU A SUCCESSFUL AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

Published by the Seminar Committee, aided and abetted by many others.

The Committee: Helen Hart

H. A. Rodenhiser

A. W. Henry (chairman)

### Gleanings from Some of the Outposts

Since the last issue went to press several very welcome letters have arrived. We regret that we have not room to print them in full. Extracts, however, are given below, so that those who have not had the opportunity of reading them will at least get some of the high spots. They are given in order of date of writing.

On October 10, Dr. H. D. Barker wrote as follows from Port au Prince, Haiti where he is now stationed as Botanist and Plant Pathologist in the Service Technique du Departement de l'Agriculture:

"On May 20th we left Starkville (Miss.) with the little Buick loaded with odds and ends that we did not express to New York. The appearance of the car indicated that we had expressed the odds and ends--. We had ~~four~~ days in New York--. On the morning of June 5th we drove the car on the dock and breathed a sigh of farewell to 'My own my native land'--. Neither Mrs. Barker nor myself realized our expectations of 'mal de mer'.

We landed in Haiti on the morning of June 10th. Port au Prince has quite a nice natural harbor. The picture that was presented to us that first morning will be hard to forget--very picturesque, very strange, very disappointing, quite surprising--.

Haiti has been noted for her revolutions. Each new 'Liberator' would get into office and run the government for himself and friends as long as the people would permit. Finally things got so bad that America had to come in or else let one of the European countries take her over. Consequently in 1916 the American Army of Occupation came in and by treaty, arrangements continue until 1936.

Le francais est facile a lire, mais il n'est pas aussi facile de comprendre le francais quand on le parle et de penser et d'enseigner en cette langue--. La majeure partie des gens du pays, les domestiques et toute la classe illetree parlent le creole qui est une langue par lui-meme. Les Haitian instruits parlent aussi deux langues le francais entre eux, et le creole avec leurs domestiques.

Editor's Note--French evidently is the language requirement

In many ways it is a country of extremes. The topography ranges from swamps, deserts, fertile plains to very steep mountains. In general it is quite mountainous. The rainfall naturally varies greatly.

The principal crops for export purposes are coffee, cotton, and sugar cane. They also export considerable honey and forest products, including logwood (Hametoxylon), mahogany and lignum vitae. The principal food crops are corn, petit mil (a grain sorghum), sweet potato, yam, cassava, and various fruits. The fruits are practically all seedlings. Most of the grapefruit and oranges scarcely resemble the luscious fruits we know by these names. They appear to grow wild in yards and waste places with absolutely no attention. The cotton which is in the form of perennial trees, is

cultivated little or in some cases not at all. In the food crops no attention is paid to varieties, disease, or insect pests. The climate here, judging from the past summer is really quite delightful, I think. It is warm, of course, in the daytime, but there is usually a breeze. And every night without exception since we have been here, it has been too cool to sleep without cover.

The population of Haiti is about two and a half millions probably. There has never been a census. Haiti as you know is called the Black Republic. In a great many elemental respects they are not different from the same race in the South. There is, in general, the same lack of initiative, of executive ability, the same love for pomp and authority, etc. The national religion is the Catholic, but secretly many of the natives are 'voodooists'. In the hills and in the remote districts human sacrifices are perhaps not rare. A person soon gets over being shocked at a great many native customs and costumes. I have not been able to find out how many different castes there are here. The lines, however, are very sharply drawn. Each one of them will do certain things that the people in the same station of life will do, but there always seems to be something that is beneath his dignity that he doesn't want his friends to see him do. He will even pay, out of his own meagre wages, some poor devil in the next class below to do it. The chauffeur will not wash the car, because that is the yard boy's job. The white man of the South treats the negro princely compared with the way they treat each other here, when they are of a higher class.

Really I must admit that I rather like it here. From the standpoint of Botany and Plant Pathology it is a very interesting place to work. I think that we have the nucleus of a fine organization. I frequently think of you people and I am constantly looking forward to the time when I can be with you again and enjoy your hearty comradeship and friendship."

Most sincerely yours,

Hank Barker

Dr. C. R. Hursh, under date of October 20 broadcasted the following sentiments from the Pasteur Institute, Paris for the special benefit of the "Blue-room" although others were permitted to listen in. Acknowledgment is also made of some "very worldly" French literature which we hope did not emanate from the Pasteur Institute also.

"Just like Stak put it after his first trip over here, you fellows don't know what a wonderful opportunity you have there at Minnesota for turning out work when you compare what the pathologists over here have to work with--sans space, sans equipment, sans everything.

In Dr. Foex's laboratory there are now about fifteen persons trying to work and the whole floor space isn't much larger than Minnesota's graduate laboratory and that has to find room for specimens and everything. All sterilization goes through a tiny upright

autoclave that won't hold two 2 liter Erlenmeyer flasks. And yet, Drs. Foex, Dufrenoy, and Arnaud are turning out good work and training a lot of pathologists. I'm sure I never realized while at Minnesota what a good chance I was letting go to waste for doing something worth while in Pathology.

There are some really nice woods and forests within an hour or so of Paris, but they are always so jammed full of French families playing drop the handkerchief or baby-bat-the-ball, tennis, etc. that you couldn't even change your socks without being conspicuous.

The French people dine out at the restaurants more than we do, and they are always jammed full, and it seems that everybody spends most of the time in the streets or at the cafes half way in the streets--drinking coffee or beer, sometimes playing games or gossiping, but generally just sitting. They really drink too much wine over here, and the laboring class has a tendency to get pretty well liquored up.

I am surely learning a lot of new methods and ideas to apply to Plant Pathological Technique. Am working in Dr. Margoa's laboratory. Dr. Margoa is the logical successor to Noel Bernard whose work with the orchids and Rhizocys you know.

In the scientific institutions here one wears always his best clothes--spats, cane, everything, and never, never! takes off a collar--shakes hands with everybody coming and going and always tips the hat to superiors and equals and garcons.

With best wishes for a successful year and regards to all."

Sincerely,

C. R. Hursh

A letter dated October 23 from Miss Betty Bushnell from Colfax, California is next in order.

"How you all find time in the midst of classes, football, and the insidious rust to issue -----the 'Aurora Sporealis' is beyond me. Surrounded as we are, out in these 'great open spaces where men is men', by the pernicious Hearst publications it is a pleasure to see that in accordance with the customs of every earnest plant pathologist, you have eliminated all smut and rust and allowed only the tiniest bit of gall to enter in. If the gentleman from Virginia continues his diligent research among the still life of that state, he should very soon acquire his Ph.D. though Phenomenal Drunkenness is not as easily achieved there as in the chaste land of Volstead".

Betty Bushnell

Our Mississippi correspondent contributes his bit under date of October 26.

"As this is Sunday I have decided to cut church (?) just for the sake of writing this letter.

"Since July 1st I have been stationed here at the college and after about a couple of months of hard labor I was given the title of Assistant Plant Pathologist. I do Ento- and Patho- as well as any other logical work. Since I've been here, I have done everything from calibrating microscopes to crossing tomato plants (I'm sure Dr. Hayes would be proud to hear that.) When I develop that 'PeeWee's Pride' tomato, I'll send you a crate of them.

If any of you people intend to come to Mississippi I guess this year would be a good time to come down. Indications point toward a good year. The Lord has already given us a good crop of 'possums, and, if the stem rot doesn't get all the 'taters we are going to have plenty to eat. We'll be glad to have you all down any time.

I forgot to tell you while mentioning the 'activities' of this place that we have a Biological Club here. I am to be taken in this week. Dr. Barker organized the Club when he was here.

I believe that the fount has about squirted itself dry--

If at any time I can serve any of you in the way of sending specimens, information, etc. do not hesitate to call on me.

With very best wishes and kindest personal regards to each and every one of you, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

PeeWee Wallace  
P.O. Box 95 A. & M. College, Miss.

As evidence that our Oregon correspondents are on the job we submit the following--

From Hoerner dated November 4.

"A slight error in sex when referring to my offspring causes me to elucidate that one was a male and the other of female and to add that since my last letter that we have added a new member to our staff (domestic) in the person of another daughter.

On a recent journey through Willamette Valley I encountered no less than H. C. Gilbert who contemplates tilling parental acres in the vicinity of Salem.

G. R. Hoerner  
Portland, Oregon

From Gilbert dated November 17.

"So far we have enjoyed life on the ranch here very much. The ranch is in the 'red hill' district three miles south of Salem and is 33 feet above Salem. We have a fine view of the Willamette Valley and Mt. Hood. From the hill in the orchard five mountain peaks are visible, viz. Mts. Ranier, St. Helens, Adams, Hood, and Jefferson.

As commercial crops we have prunes, cherries, and loganberries. Then we have for our own use apples, pears, quince, peaches, and plums and walnuts. Perhaps I should also mention raspberries, blackberries and strawberries, although they are in the garden and not the orchard.

This is a delightful, quiet, restful place to live (I am resting now by grubbing and pruning trees.)

Regards to all the old bunch,

Sincerely,

Henry Gilbert  
Route 3, Salem, Oregon

#### V I S I T O R S

Dr. V. H. Blackman, professor of Botany in the Imperial College of Technology, London, England visited the University the latter part of October. While here he gave two lectures, one on the main campus on "The Effect of Electric Currents on the Growth of Plants" October 17, and one at University Farm, October 18 on "The Physiological Basis of Parasitism". Dean Freeman gave a smoker for him on Friday evening, and a plant science field trip in his honor to the St. Croix river was made Sunday, October 19.

None less than the author of "Ye old Virginia Vintage" paid us a visit recently. He gave us the inside dope on the apple scab situation in Virginia at Literature Seminar on October 13.

Reiner Bonde spent his vacation in the Twin Cities during the early part of November. His time was pretty well occupied, but we saw him occasionally.

Dr. Valleau was seen in these parts about October 20.

Dr. H. B. Humphrey gave an interesting talk before the Section on "Agriculture Among the French Canadians in eastern Canada, Nov. 8.

Dr. D. L. Bailey made a flying visit to University Farm on his return from eastern Canada. Bailey seems to find it necessary to make rather frequent trips East.

Harold Flor returned from Ames to spend Christmas week in the Twin Cities.

#### I T E M S O F I N T E R E S T

Vaccinations are in order! Yes, we've all been and done it! We now have some splendid data on biologic specialization with respect to smallpox vaccine. The following table gives a hint of our results.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reaction</u>
Stakman	--
Rodenhiser	+
Miss Wetzell	++
Leach	-
Miss Dodsall	-
Freeman	+
Al Larson	+

The Minnesota Horticultural Society held its annual meeting in St. Paul November 18-21. Several members of the Plant Pathology Staff gave addresses at the meetings, including Dr. Freeman, Dr. Stakman, Dr. Leach, Dr. Dodsall, and Mr. Rodenhiser.

The wandering sheep has returned to the fold. Miss Laura Hamilton is on the job again after a five months trip to Hawaii, New Zealand and Australia.

Mr. I. L. Connors has returned to Minnesota for research during the winter.

Mr. E. H. Ostrom is back after covering the Montana fair circuit in the interests of Barberry Eradication.

Dr. Stakman addressed the Forestry Seminar November 26 on the "Soil Flora". Everyone including the speaker had a good time.

Body decided that he had seen enough Minnesota football defeats this year, so he failed to use his ticket to the Illinois game. Oh, wasn't he sorry when we stopped "Red" Grange and the rest of his gang!

There are rumors that Schall was to receive a very special Christmas present from Santa Claus this year. He was to be married Christmas eve.

"Order out of chaos"--that's our prep room now that Mr. Eagle is on the job. Everything is clean and neat as a pin.

Dr. Rydell who cooperated with the University for the past three years in providing five acres of peat at Purgatory Swamp for experimental purposes was killed November 11. A new concrete garage under construction on his farm collapsed and crushed his skull.

Jimmie Seal and family are leaving us the first of the New Year. He has accepted a research position in Florida and expects to work chiefly on the cocconut bud-rot problem. Our best wishes go with him and our congratulations to Jimmie on the successful completion of his preliminary before leaving.

A note in Science on October 17 informs us that Dr. J. V. Hoffmann for eleven years director of the Wind River Forest Experiment Station of the U. S. Forest Service has resigned to accept the professorship of silviculture and forest management at the Pennsylvania State Forest School at Mont Alto, Pennsylvania.

Dean Freeman attended the meeting of the Land Grant colleges held in Washington during the week ending November 15. The Dean was made Chairman of the Resident Teaching Section for next year.

The following from Plant Pathology are attending the meetings of the American Phytopathological Society at Washington: Miss Hart, Messrs. Craigie, Hynes, Sanford, and Stakman.

A clipping from the Minnesota Daily indicates that the Aurora Sporealis is getting some publicity. The circulation manager reports no increase in subscriptions to date, however. If any of the grads are not receiving copies, drop us a line. There are a few still to be had.

From the Minnesota Daily: "New Plant Pathology Journal is Published". A journal devoted to the promotion of a spirit of co-operation among graduate students and faculty of the plant pathology department made its first appearance on the campus this fall, under the name of Aurora Sporealis. Aurora Sporealis is published by the seminar committee of the plant pathology department, composed of A. F. Henry, chairman, H. A. Rodenhiser, and Miss Helen Hart. The first number contained a well proportioned mixture of humor and scientific information together with alumni news and general news of the department. As yet the Journal has no regular dates for publication but will be issued as often as material accumulates which is of interest.'

### S O C I A L

A hard times Christmas party was participated in on Monday evening December 22 by all who did not succumb to la grippe epidemic. The ballroom and dining room were tastefully decorated with evergreens. The prize winners for the worst costumes were Miss Loftus and Mr. Eagle. Many others were deserving of recognition, but owing to the hard times and the excellence of the two gifts given, it was decided to curtail further expenditures. Everything from merry widows and nose bands to overalls were displayed by the ladies, while some of the male guests even reverted to the suspender stage. Old fashioned games, a country school concert, a meeting of the American Phytopathological Society (Cotter had the best paper, but Bolley ran a close second), the South Saint Paul Flonzaley Quartet, a Christmas tree with a real Santa Claus and mushroom refreshments were the devices instrumental in keeping the guests awake until nearly 12 p.m.

### P O E T ' S C O R N E R

#### REFLECTIONS AFTER DRINKING

(From the foaming fount)

Listen, my friends, and I'll relate  
How Plant Pathology struck its gait  
On the U. Farm campus in nineteen eight,  
And how through the years the department has grown,  
Its purpose to solve the great unknown  
Problems of plant disease our own.



In nineteen hundred and eight you see,  
There came to the campus a man full of glee  
At the prospect of teaching his subject which then  
Was unknown to the college and its staff of men,  
They gave him an office and lecture room,  
And soon his business began to boom.  
The students first listened in blank dismay  
At the names of diseases which he did relay.

T'was in the old Hort. building where he held sway  
On the topmost floor, where he planned to lay  
The foundations of what has come to be  
A boon to the farming industry.  
His quarters were cramped and far too small,  
He had no laboratory at all.  
However, a physics lab. close by  
Would suit his purpose and it caught his eye!

Old Sanny Green, who then ran affairs,  
Promised this Lab at the head of the stairs  
To "Doc", who promptly without delay  
Proceeded to ruin the physics outlay.  
On a Sunday morn the stairs he climbed,  
With trusty Oswald not far behind,  
With hammer, chisel, as, and saw  
They broke the Sabbath and defied the law.  
They tugged and toiled with all their might  
The fate of a department was settled by night!

In a day or two the Lab was changed,  
And fungi over the tables ranged  
Where in days gone by all physio's laws  
Had been demonstrated, for the good of the cause.

As the years rolled by, the department grew.  
Again "Doc" was cramped, but he knew what to do,  
The old gymnasium across the way  
With the growth of the college became vacant one day.  
And "Doc" with his plotting and planning and skill,  
Captured the wreck; Oh! Boys, what a thrill!  
Books and fungi and microscopes  
With other equipment and all our hopes,  
Were soon transplanted within these walls  
Where the service of science beckons and calls.

Ten years have passed since that fateful year  
When "Doc" and his cohorts settled here,  
To solve the problems of plant disease.  
No one can tell when their efforts will cease.  
The grand old structure now quivers with age,  
And throws the workers into fits of rage  
As they gaze into the microscopic field,  
At the jumping spores which will not yield.  
The helpless spores are not to blame.  
It's the darned old building that is hard to tame.

As we pass with fear through its dingy halls  
The plaster falls from the aged walls.  
The painters and plasterers with might and main  
Plaster and paint, but its all in vain!  
For day by day the tottering shell  
Is nearing the doom of a sad farewell!

However, the future is not so dark,  
For haven't we heard some rumors; hark!  
A science building we understand,  
With brand new equipment is being planned.  
Where the Plant Pathologists in unbounded glee  
May cope with their problems successfully,  
A building of which we will all be proud,  
And proudest of all will be "Doc" with his crowd!

A. G. T.

#### T O T T E R I N G T O W E R D R I P P I N G S

Hereafter seminar papers will be short. Pete's last paper cost \$.18 per head and nearly started a riot. Sanford showed rare judgment in writing a \$.6 paper the next week.

Schaal isn't the only one who has something on his mind at present. Craigie appeared at the breakfast table in Hynes' suit, thinking it was his own. Wonder what makes Sanford so restless these days.

Blessed singleness seems to be a thing of the past. Billy Barrett has just accepted a new rock, Schaal has taken on the ball and chain, and Miss Wetzell and Miss Hamilton have only to move their rings over one finger.

Chris recently returned a kitten ball borrowed from Miss Knuth last year. Considerable ceremony was attached to the ordeal.

Cotter says the shiek game is on a firmer basis in a Chevrolet sedan than it was in a Ford.

Johnson forgot and took his hat and coat off while doing a bit of research the other day.

Rumor has it that Mr. Melander and his private secretary both enjoyed pleasant vacations this summer--separately, of course.

# AS OTHERS SEE US WHOOSIT?

