



THE HOME WORLD



Just as it Used to Be

I wish I were a boy again,
That age were but a dream,
That things would change from what
they are

To what they used to seem;
That I were but a little boy
And from my mother's knee
Could find that dear old Fairyland,
Just as it used to be.

If wishes only were a horse,
How fast away I'd ride
Across the plains of yesterday,
Bold comrades by my side;
Once more I'd rescue captive maids;
Ah! doughty deeds you'd see,
If I were but a hero bold,
Just as I used to be.

With Bean-Stalk Jack I'd sally forth
To giants kill galore;
In seven-leagued boots I'd stride away
To that enchanted shore
Where ogres dwell, in castles huge,
And mermaids swarm the sea;
Oh, how I'd love to find them all
Just as they used to be!

My little boy says I'm all wrong—
That nothing's changed at all;
That he can show me ogres fierce
And giants more than tall;
Then, clasping his dear hand in mine
He leads me forth to see—
Years' drop as leaves; I'm young
again
Just as I used to be.

A Farmer Magician

The man who invents plants and flowers is the way Luther Burbank is spoken of nowadays. He always had a fondness for gardening and when he was still a boy he invented the Burbank potato, which has since been worth twenty million dollars to the United States. At his experimental farm in California he has during the past twenty years accomplished what may well be described as modern miracles.

Without scientific education, with no finely equipped laboratory, without large conservatories even, he

takes a flower or fruit and shapes it at his will. Plant life, he asserts—and proves—"is as plastic as clay in the hands of the potter." The walnut, for example, as he has shown, can be made as thin-shelled as a paper almond, while its meat can be freed from the tannin which now colors it, and made as white as a kernel of rice. He put the chestnut to school, and taught it how to bear nuts eighteen months after planting from the seed; he showed the oxe-eye daisy how to bloom into a gorgeous flower five inches across, naming it after Mount Shasta; he took the yellow Eschscholtzia and induced it to bloom in silver, ruby and amethyst; he changed the blackberry to snowy whiteness; he gave the plum the flavor of a Bartlett pear, and made it stoneless; he joined plum and apricot to make the "plumcot," a totally new fruit; he enlarged the French prune fivefold, and made it sweeter; he produced two new species of edible berries, the "phenomenal," from the union of the native California dewberry and the Siberian raspberry, and the "primus," from a union of the raspberry and the blackberry.

As for side issues, such as the pineapple quince, the tomato-potato, or "pomato," the banana plum, the fragrant dahlia, the gladiolus, which blooms all round its stem, instead of on one side only, the improvement of blubs, the bestowal of hardness upon various hothouse flowers and fruits, the giving of long keeping qualities to fruits for shipment, the prolonging by months of early and late bearing varieties, and so forth, the list is too long to mention fully.

"There seems to be hardly a plant," said one visitor to the farm, "which he has not had for a time in his school, and given the benefit of his liberal education to some extent."

The secret of his magic is, in some essentials, incommunicable. Only genius can do what he has done. But genius has been defined as "an infinite capacity for taking pains," and this side of it is prominent at Santa Rosa. The patience of it is marvelous. From fifty to five hundred varieties of fruit, for example, are grafted on to one tree for test. In producing the primus berry, five thousand seedlings, of various crosses, were experimented with. In one berry campaign nine hundred thousand bushes were torn up and burned in a single season, as not having proved their right to live. It took eight years of hybridization and selection to evolve the Shasta daisy.

Cloth made from Wood

The success which has attended the manufacture, in Germany, Spain, and Holland, of textile goods from wood, will probably result in the extension of these products into France and other countries. The process consists in making the wood pulp pass directly through a metallic plate with a number of slits, resulting in the formation of thin ribbons, which pass from the slitted plate to a machine which twists them, transforming them into very regular threads of any desired size. The wood fibre

threads thus produced go by the names of xylolene, silvaline, and licella, and they are classified by number like other threads in use. Mixed with hemp threads they have been used to make towels. These mixed fabrics are said readily to admit of washing, dyeing, and printing. The wood pulp thread, which grows weak when wet, regains its resistance when dry.

A Song for Mothers

All the fair created world,
Sea and sky and flower upcurled,
Nesting bird and springing sod,
Is a great book penned by God.

Pages full of love, and yet
Tender messages we get
And the babies at our breast
Are his letters, east and west.
So, hush and rest,
My baby blest,
God's dear letter on my breast.

Meaning of Surnames

Nearly all surnames originally had a meaning. They were descriptive of their owners. In a word, they were nicknames, like "Skinny," or "Shorty," or "Pud."

Peel is a surname that shows the original Peel to have been bald. Grace means fat—from the French "gras," Grant from "grand" means big.

An Oliphant should be a clumsy and unwieldy person. This surname was "elephant" originally.

The Parkers were keepers of noblemen's parks. The Warners were warreners or rabbit tenders. The Barkers prepared bark for tanning. The Laboucheres were butchers.

Bell meant handsome. Cammeron meant crook-nosed. Curtis meant polite. And Forster meant a forester; Napier, a servant in charge of the table linen; Palmer, a pilgrim; Wainwright, a wagon-builder; Walter, a wall-builder; Webster, a weaver; Wright, a carpenter.

There was one class of men who were made to cower under the withering indignation of the Saviour, and that was the hypocrites. A hypocrite is, literally, one who plays a part, such as an evil man does when he masquerades as a saint. Any kind of pretense at being better than we are leads to hypocrisy.

Liquor and Tobacco Habits

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References as to Dr. McTaggart's professional standing and personal integrity permitted by: Sir W. E. Meredith, Chief Justice; Hon. G. W. Ross, ex-Premier of Ontario; Rev. John Potts, D.D., Victoria College; Rev. Father Teery, President of St. Michael's College, Toronto.

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