

Luther Burbank

He is not dead! How could he die who hand in hand with Life lived! His every work was life and lives anon! How could he die?

He is not dead! The good that he did, his love for others, his tender care remains, though in our memories, though in our minds, though in our hearts, still remains. How could such a one die? His work was Life, not Death, an ever revolving, ever progressing Life!

The radiance from his eyes was as the solar beams, his glance the ray that lights all in its path. And even as the sun, day by day he rose to give life and strength and love to the offspring of Nature. Nature was his God, his father and his mother—yea! He was Nature, the very best of her children, an Antaeus in human form, a giant not in body nor in bodily strength, but in heart, in mind, in virtue and in love, in sincerity and earnest endeavor. And ever as he returned to Nature he strengthened in all that counts as good.

The love that sprang from his heart, it nurtured his plants, it watered his trees, it gave birth to new species, spun new garments for his flowers; the very earth was the canvas on which he painted new colors, and here was Art indeed. He was the sun in human form. To bask in his shadow was to feel that joy and rest which can only be felt in the light of day, in the comfort of solar warmth, and like the sun each year at Spring he returned, counting not the years, nor the hours, but only the Springs. In Spring he came, in Spring he went, nor seventy seven Winters, but seventy seven Springs did he live and strove to make each season, each day, each hour a Springtime.

Twin of the Golden State, her best beloved. When Marshall's gold is gone, thy golden flowers will remain, thy golden honey will be ours, and the gold from thy heart—purified by thine Alchemy, it was, it is gold indeed.

He is not dead! That life that gave the flowering peach, improved the almond, walnut and the plum, how can it pass away! Lo, even as from the blood of Narcissus sprang the plant that bears his name, from Luther's blood, his life itself, sprang anew in forms manifold, ever useful and more useful to mankind, ever beautifying and more beautiful to the artist, to Nature, to the world of Science—there is his life, it ever will be life and no longer manifesting in one form, but in forms myriadal, until, yea, even until time is no more!

The rose! How simple, yet how exquisite! Its praises sung by poets long forgot! Each rose a poem, yet never wearied came these poems from his garden, from his hothouse, from his fields. Each rose was Luther, ever giving, ever brightening, ever blessing all about.

What matter be he Christian, Jew or Infidel, Atheist, Pantheist or even Polytheist. He lived and loved, and by his life and love all Humanity has gained, a gain not to be measured in dollars, or even in pages written about him. Yea, a man whom we shall remember not only in our minds and hearts, but even our very stomach and livers shall sing forth his praise. Selah!

The spineless cactus. Strong, hardy, firm, withstanding the fiercest desert storms, not easily overcome by danger or by enemies, yet offering food and drink to the tired sojourner in the desert—the desert becomes a garden. So he lived that deserts might be gardens, and the deserts of the earth, the deserts of our hearts, the deserts of our minds might bloom and ever live as he did live and pass from hence in Spring. He is not dead.

The spineless cactus. From frightful foe to fraternal friend. A miracle of Alchemy, the dawn of Peace. Where others strove to win, he strove to gain and gain whereby all men might gain. The dawn of Peace! That was his life, to bring us Peace—and as he passed, the message of his brow, the message for us all was Peace and Love and Truth. He is not dead!