

The Station News

DR. WHITMAN HOWARD JORDAN

It becomes our sad duty to record here the passing of Dr. Jordan, for twenty-five years the Director of this Station and for thirty-five years the strongest advocate and friend the Station has ever had, for with his retirement from the direction of the Station's activities he never relinquished in the least his keen interest in all that concerned the institution.

Prior to his long period of service here, from 1896 to 1921, Dr. Jordan had already held positions of importance and trust which, in the case of many men, would have marked the peak of their careers. For eleven years, for example, he had been Director of the Maine Experiment Station. Also, for four years preceding that, 1881 to 1885, he was professor of agricultural chemistry at Pennsylvania State College, where he laid out the famous soil fertility plats, the fiftieth anniversary of which is to be celebrated next month at State College where he was to have been the guest of honor.

His academic training was received at the University of Maine where he received the B. S. degree in 1875 and the M. S. degree in 1878. Maine also gave him the honorary degree of D.Sc. in 1896, while the Michigan Agricultural College conferred upon him in 1907 the degree of LL.D., as did Hobart College in 1911.

The author of several books, including The Feeding of Animals and Principles of Human Nutrition, and of numerous experiment station publications and special articles, Dr. Jordan was also an effective and much-sought-after speaker, and his appearances on the platform undoubtedly contributed much to the building up of the prestige of agricultural research in general and the work of this Station in particular.

There are many of Dr. Jordan's colleagues and admirers much better equipped by training and experience than we are to evaluate his scientific contributions and administrative accomplishments. Hence, we would leave such testimonials in their able hands and confine ourselves here to a word of appreciation of the man and friend whom we were privileged to know.

To those who had the pleasure of knowing Dr. Jordan in the intimate day to day contacts of Experiment Station life, three things will stand out in sharp relief among the many charming characteristics that made up the man's personality. These were his forceful and unswerving defense of research for its own sake, with the insistence that there must be maintained at this Station an atmosphere favorable to the fullest development of the research spirit without the endless distractions that beset the research worker in many similar organizations; his intense loyalty to the institution and to his Staff--"hand-picked" he called them; and his seemingly unlimited capacity, in spite of a busy life, for sympathetic participation in the joys and sorrows of each member of the Station group. It is not surprising, therefore, that altho living some four hundred miles away and altho broken in health, Dr. Jordan's every thought and interest during the years of his retirement centered about the welfare and advancement of this Station and its Staff, and that the affection and esteem in which he was held by all who knew him was in no wise dimmed by his withdrawal from active participation in our life here in Geneva.

We like to think that this Station, to which he gave the most productive years of his life, will always remain a monument to Dr. Jordan's energy and initiative.

Doubtless other monuments will be erected in the years to come, but none will bear more earnest testimony of the qualities of the man than the silent tributes that will always abide in the hearts of his friends.

----- May 8, 1931