



UPPER — ORIGINAL DESERT THORNY CACTUS
LOWER — A DESERT CACTUS IN BLOSSOM

The Burbank Thornless

IT WAS Luther Burbank's theory, at the outset, that the original cactus of the desert was smooth, and that the spines were an acquired characteristic.

In fact, he has gone so far as to say that practically every desert plant is either spiny, or bitter, or poisonous—an acquired armor against destruction by wild animals.

As proof of this theory, Mr. Burbank discovered that the baby cactus seedling as it first shows its thorny head above the soil possesses, for a few days, two perfectly smooth flat leaves—with no suggestion of a spine.

These smooth leaves are rudimentary, dropping off in a few days or a few weeks—the re-

minder of ages ago before the cactus was forced to grow spines.

Sixteen years or more ago, while testing the availability of a great number of proposed forage plants, Luther Burbank was greatly impressed with the apparent possibilities of the cactus—which from its well-known vigor and rapidity of growth, easy multiplication, and universal adaptability to desert and other conditions, to drought, flood, heat, cold, rich or arid soil—placed the cactus in a sphere by itself not only as a forage plant, but as a fruit-bearing plant.

As a forage plant the cactus is now being fed successfully to cows, hogs and poultry, showing a wonderful improvement over even alfalfa feeding.

In fact, in a recent test, cows which on alfalfa produce 38 pounds of milk a day, when fed on cactus, averaged 22 pounds per day.

The fruit of the cactus, a berry and the pulp delicious served raw, without cream, also is being used for producing the ideal possible jellies, preserves.

Thus the improved cactus surpasses other forage plants in feeding qualities, a best of small fruits, and an appetizing food for all beings.

But where the yield of milk has increased from five to ten, the