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# FLOWERS

OF THE

FIELD  
AND  
FOREST

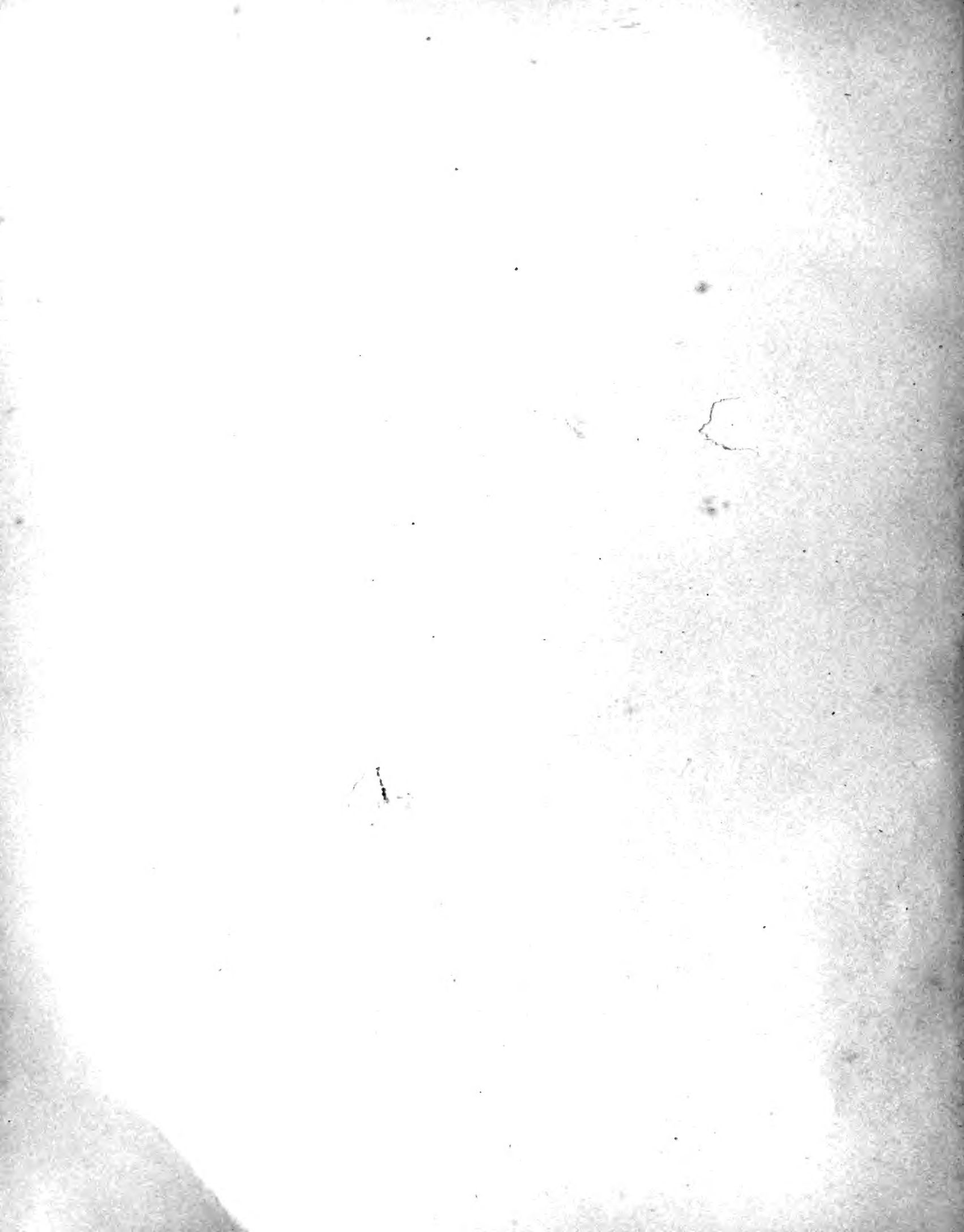
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FLOWERS  
OF THE  
FIELD AND FOREST. #

FROM  
*Original Water-Color Drawings after Nature,*  
By ISAAC SPRAGUE.

DESCRIPTIVE TEXT BY REV. A. B. HERVEY. 0

WITH EXTRACTS FROM  
*LONGFELLOW, LOWELL, BRYANT, EMERSON, AND OTHERS.*

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3) 1882.

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BOSTON STEREOTYPE FOUNDRY,  
4 PEARL STREET.

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BLOOD-ROOT.

I HAVE seen

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell.  
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
Listened intensely; and his countenance soon  
Brightened with joy; for from within were heard  
Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
Mysterious union with its native sea.

Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;  
And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;  
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;  
Devout above the meaning of your will.

*Wordsworth.*







# BLOOD-ROOT.

*SANGUINARIA CANADENSIS L.*

---

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean  
Are thy returns! even as the flowers in Spring;  
To which, besides their own demean,  
The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.  
Grief melts away  
Like snow in May,  
As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shrivelled heart  
Could have recovered greenness? It was gone  
Quite under ground; as flowers depart  
To see their mother-root, when they have blown;  
Where they together,  
All the hard weather,  
Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

And now in age, I bud again,  
After so many deaths I live and write;  
I once more smell the dew and rain,  
And relish versing: O my only light,  
It cannot be  
That I am he  
On whom thy tempests fell all night.

*Herbert.*

NATURE also is an artist and an author. She paints the flowers before we copy them, and writes their simple story for us to tell again. We have put upon the first page of our book a charming flower, which she also displays upon the opening leaves of the great floral book of the year. The story of its modest life is not a long or a startling one, but perhaps it has a cheery word of hope, which weary, wintry hearts, longing for spring, may be glad to hear.

In the very early April days, which in our New England clime are not over likely to be sunny days, before the leaves come out at all upon the trees, when the downy catkins are first showing the revival of life in the willows by the brook-side, before any green thing yet gladdens the eye in field or forest, and the brown dead grass and the brown dead leaves cover all the ground, then it is that in the edges of the moist, rich woods the *Sanguinaria*, puts up its slender stem, crowned with its circlet of petals dazzling white. It is a most beautiful flower, and, to my thoughts, a beautiful emblem of nature's Easter, its pure whiteness having something more than the earthly in its unstained loveliness. It seems almost to have lived its earthly course, and passing through the disrobing room of Death, which —

“has left on her  
Only the beautiful.”

comes now as the promise, radiant and heavenly, of that touch of the Infinite Life by which all the dead are quickened.

It is not easy to say why we see in all these beautiful forms of nature these hidden meanings, and delight to trace in them a likeness to our deeper thoughts and experiences. Are these

similitudes mere fanciful semblances, or are they indications that our clearer consciousness is but the sign of a universal life, which, after its kind, is conscious in every thing? Are the mental and material worlds after all but separate rooms in the one house of Life, divided by a thin, flexible partition, so that a moving breath in the one palpates through the other in correlations of conscious thought? Who shall say? Still it remains true that we like to see our own thoughts and feelings mirrored in the larger doings and happenings of the Kosmos. We love that poet best who best humanizes nature, and finds a present counterpart of himself in the dumb life around him; who, without seeming to exceed probability, or distort natural functions, discovers emotions in things which we have known in ourselves. We love his message most who puts his ear to the natural universe as to

“The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell,”

and then tells us of

“Authentic tidings of invisible things,  
The central peace subsisting at the heart  
Of endless agitation.”

which it murmurs to his listening soul.

So I am sure quaint George Herbert speaks to wide acceptance when he finds in the coming forth of the flowers in early spring from their abode “quite underground,” where they have gone “to see their mother-root;” and

“Dead to the world, keep house unknown  
All the hard weather,”

a deep illuminating correspondence with that most precious

spiritual experience, when the shrivelled heart, "on which tempests fell all night," has "recovered greenness," and

"Smells the dew and rain,  
And buds again."

For nature teaches no sweeter lesson than when, with floral symbols, it repeats from year to year, to a sinful and mortal world, the pictured hope of man's moral and material rebuilding. And the *Sanguinaria*, with its blood-red root under ground, and its pearly purity up in the April air, may rightly speak a word of hope to those who in obscurity and darkness have all their lives distilled only bitter tears, like drops of blood, from the griefs and defilements of their lot. For with it what a beautiful white soul has blossomed from a root-life so ensanguined and bitter! How greatly is it like those souls about the Throne "which have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

The poet's quaint fancy of flowers, "keeping house" all the winter long, underground, finds plenty of illustrations in the real life of many plants, notably in this one. The housekeeping, however, does not use up in the winter what has been garnered in the summer. It only just preserves it for the early needs of the plant at the beginning of the next season, before it shall have time to draw anew from nature's great supplies. Through the long summer its broad, roundish leaves are opened and lifted up to the sun and rain, and with patient industry gather out of the air and dew stores of invisible food. These, mingling with the nutritious elements which its fine rootlets have sucked from the moistened soil, have been slowly elaborated and laid away in the red root-stalk, lying

like a hidden storehouse underground. So when the warm spring sun melts the locks and chains of frosty winter, and sets free the whole imprisoned kingdom of plants, none are sooner ready to come forth and smile a welcome to the great Liberator than the red-footed, white-breasted *Sanguinaria*.

The flower stays not long, and the plant, after producing the early harvest of seeds, surrenders, as just now indicated, most of the growing season to the prudent accumulation of sustenance for next year's flowering and fruit bearing. So it makes to-day render tribute to to-morrow, as to-day itself is in part the product of yesterday. Thus its little life links its generations together with mutual helpfulness, and mingles the common and popular blessing of receiving with the greater blessedness of giving.

Concerning the blood-red liquid which freely exudes when the stem or root-stalk is cut or broken, and which gives the popular as well as the scientific name to *Sanguinaria*, Prof. Goodale says: "In the case of nearly all plants from which a white or colored juice exudes, there is a special system of microscopic canals, consisting either of branched cells or confluent tubes, termed the Latex system. Thus in the *Euphorbias*, Lettuce and Poppy, the milky juice is contained in communicating Latex-tubes. But in some other cases, for example blood-root, the colored juice is held in receptacles of a different character. In blood-root these special receptacles are roundish or more elongated, and possess very thin walls. While some of these sacs or cells are separated from each other, others are arranged in rows. This grouping into linear series is well marked in the more superficial parts." The colored juice of the *Sanguinaria* was used by the Indians as a dye.

Having referred to this plant as our sweetest floral emblem of nature's Easter, I cannot refrain from quoting a few stanzas from Phœbe Cary's well known lines, "Resurgam," in which she fortifies her own heart, at the approach of death, by this hope which nature in the early spring so brightly illuminates:

Nature's sepulchre is breaking,  
And the earth, her gloom forsaking,  
Into life and light is waking.

Oh, the weakness and the madness  
Of a heart that holdeth sadness  
When all else is light and gladness!

Shall not He who life supplieth  
To the dead seed, where it lieth,  
Quicken also man, who dieth?

Rise, my soul, then, from dejection,  
See in nature the reflection  
Of the dear Lord's resurrection.

Let this promise leave thee never:  
"If the might of death I sever,  
Ye shall also live forever!"

THE PASTURE THISTLE.









# THE PASTURE THISTLE.

*CNICUS PUMILUS Torrey.*

---

## THE THISTLE FLOWER.

My homely flower, that blooms along  
The dry and dusty ways,  
I have a mind to make a song,  
And make it in thy praise;  
For thou art favored of my heart,  
Humble and outcast as thou art.

Though never with the plants of grace  
In garden borders set,  
Full often have I seen thy face  
With tender tear-drops wet,  
And seen thy gray and ragged sleeves  
All wringing with them morns and eves.

Albeit thou livest in a bush  
Of such unsightly form,  
Thou hast not any need to blush—  
Thou hast thine own sweet charm;  
And for that charm I love thee so,  
And not for any outward show.

*Alice Cary.*

I NEED hardly make a point of formally introducing the Thistle to my readers. It has a faculty of pointedly introducing itself, and,

notwithstanding the humane admiration of our poet for this bristling denizen of the pastures, most people do not care for a very close or intimate acquaintance with it. I may say, however, that among botanists it is spoken of as belonging to the large tribe of composite flowers. The admirable picture by Mr. Sprague tells more of it at a single glance than could be conveyed by pages of description. It is in flower all summer, and may be found, in the latitude of New England and Pennsylvania, as far West as the Mississippi. Though so common, and so obnoxious as a weed, that few ever take any interest in it, it is not to be denied that it possesses a certain kind of attractiveness. In the artist's eye, its rich, red blossom, and its curiously cut and jagged leaves, are not without their elements of beauty. It has been made to serve ornamental if not useful ends, for it was early seized upon by the architect and designer as the basis of much fine ornamentation both in colors and in carvings.

Prof. Hulme says: "The Thistle has been largely employed in ornamental art, in some cases clearly for its own inherent beauty; in others as clearly from its heraldic and historic associations. A very beautiful example of it may be seen in a square panel in the Cathedral of Bruges, and again in the moulding on a tomb of Don Juan II., in that building; in numerous wooden panels (Gothic carvings) in the South Kensington Museum; and on the monument of Mary Queen of Scots, in Westminster Abbey."

It is best known, perhaps, as the national emblem of Scotland, but how it came to be such, or what particular species of it first furnished the sturdy Scotchmen with their symbol, is much in dispute among the antiquarians and naturalists. In

any case it was not probably the one figured in our plate. Various legends undertake to account for its becoming the national symbol, and of course throw the origin of it far back into the past. This is one story: "When the Danes invaded Scotland, it was deemed unwarlike to attack an enemy in the darkness of the night instead of a pitched battle by day; but on one occasion the invaders resolved to avail themselves of stratagem, and, in order to prevent their tramp being heard, marched barefooted. They had thus neared the Scottish camp unobserved, when a Dane unluckily stepped upon a sharp thistle, and uttered a cry of pain, which immediately aroused the Scotch, who discovered the stealthy foe, and defeated them with great slaughter. The thistle was immediately adopted as the emblem of Scotland." For as good a reason Rome might have adopted the goose as its national bird, for did not a flock of cackling geese, on a like occasion, save Rome? There is, however, no authentic record of its appearance in Scottish history in this relation earlier than 1458, when it is referred to in an inventory of the property of James III., of Scotland, as "a covering of variand purpir tarter browdin with thrissils and a unicorn," the unicorn being also an emblem of Scotland.

The Scottish knighthood, the Order of the Thistle, is of comparatively late origin. James I. of Great Britain, who was also James VI. of Scotland, on his accession to the throne of the United Kingdom, took as his badge a compound flower, half rose and half thistle, and the stalk supporting this floral monstrosity had on one side of it a rose leaf and on the other the leaf of a thistle.

If national emblems are emblematic, as I suppose, strictly

speaking they are not, I can scarcely see why the Thistle should stand for the "Cannie Scot." There are, to be sure, points of resemblance, but they are quite superficial. The national motto, *apropos* of the emblematic Thistle, "*Nemo me impune lacessit*,— No one provokes me with impunity," might indeed hint at the pugnacious quality of the Scotch, especially in the matter of metaphysical theology; and the sharp points with which the Thistle always bristles may be no inapt symbol of the natural acuteness of the Scotchman's mind, and the native keenness of his wit. But underneath all, in him there is a rich store of hearty, genial humanity and kindness, which find no adequate symbol in the burly thistle.

Like everything else associated with his native land, it was dear to the heart of Burns, who meeting it in his farm work, says,—

"The rough burr thistle spreading wide  
Among the bearded bear,  
I turned the weeder-clips aside  
And spared the symbol dear."

The early bad reputation of the Thistle among English speaking people, is obvious from its being made to figure so prominently in the "primal curse," pronounced upon the ground when Adam sinned in Eden, as related in our English Bible. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. Thorns also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." It is not known what plants are here referred to, but the use of this word shows the real opinion our translators had of this well known English weed. It hasn't many friends, that is certain, and for the best of all reasons. It is not friendly. It has a sort of touch-me-not attitude toward all the world. It

has its virtues, no doubt, but they are not of the pleasing or conciliatory kind. If people want to admire it for what it has of worth or beauty, well and good, they may stand off and admire. If they don't, it is all the same to the thistle. It is bound to stand on its own feet, defend its own rights, and occupy its own place, let the world wag as it may. There seems to be a certain sturdiness of moral character about it which is not unlike what we find in similar independent, thistly, strongly individualized, and not very agreeable human mortals. They are here, and here to stay, and to take care of their own, not without pugnacity, giving and taking thrusts. The world may be pleased or displeased, it matters little to them; and the rest of us console ourselves by thinking about them, "Oh, well, it takes all sorts of people to make a world."

While something may be said in a general way in behalf of this friendless weed, I should not expect to make it a favorite with the farmer. He is blinded by prejudice, a prejudice, however, not altogether without some good grounds; for this plant yields food neither to himself nor his beast, and it absorbs much of the vital strength of the soil which ought to go to nourish his grain or his grass. Besides, I have no doubt he carries the memory of many sharp and painful thrusts which it has given him when he has taken it up unawares with his sheaves of wheat or oats.

But the most interesting thing about the Thistle is the ingenious way by which it contrives to scatter its seed,—just as though there wouldn't be thistles enough for all practical purposes if the seeds were left to take their chances of planting by wind and weather. Nature has contrived for every one of its

myriad seeds an airy little balloon, of the finest and lightest down, and it goes sailing away upon the wings of the wind like another Montgolfier, whose famous æronautics, indeed, this flying plant antedated many ages. Who ever saw a sunny summer day in the country when there were not multitudes of these fairy globes, each with an embryo plant in its breast, sailing lazily through the sultry air! What images of lightness and grace are these airy nothings from the thistle's white crown! They will sail on and on, till the rain beats the buoyancy out of their wings, and then they will come down with the raindrop, and be planted far away from their native fields.

I suppose most seeds are left to the ordinary chances of the elements for dispersion and planting, but many of them are furnished with special appliances for it. Some of these are purely mechanical, the pod in which they grow being so contrived that as it ripens it brings its sides into a state of tension, which increases as the growth and ripening goes on, till at last it bursts open with a sudden and violent spring which scatters the seeds in every direction, sometimes many feet away.

Then, again, other seeds are provided with barbed points, or with sharp hooks which readily seize upon any passing object, as the wool and hair of animals, perhaps the feathers of birds, certainly the clothing of men, and are thus carried long distances from their native home. Others, like the seeds of the maple and trumpet-flower, have their gossamer wings, by which they "fly away to be at rest" in some distant, hospitable soil.

Many, like the thistle and dandelion, are furnished with buoyant envelopes of feathery fibre, which make them the sport of every breeze. This device, by which Nature disperses the seeds



of some of the humblest of its creatures, is of the greatest importance to man in at least one case, for the downy fibre which in the open boll covers the black seed of the cotton plant, clothes also the whole civilized race of man, and is the foundation of one of the chief and most astonishing industries of modern times.

The water-lily, which produces its seeds beneath the surface of the water, has a curious contrivance for dispersing them. It encloses them in a light, thin bag, which is filled with air, and is impervious to water. This acts as a float or life-preserver to the seed, which, directly it is released from the mother plant, rises to the surface and floats away, "driven by the winds and tossed," or carried by the currents of water. By and by the sack bursts or decays, and the seed immediately sinks and is embedded in the mud at bottom, and is ready to produce a new plant in a new place. The plant world is full of these ingenious contrivances. But it is time we permitted our poet to tell the reason why she takes the thistle to her kindly regard.

Thou hast no lovers, and for that  
I love thee all the more;  
Only the wind and the rain to be  
Thy friends, and keep thee company.

So, being left to take thine ease  
Behind thy thorny wall,  
Thy little head with vanities  
Has not been turned at all,  
And all field beauties give me grace  
To praise thee to thy very face.

## FLOWERS OF THE FIELD AND FOREST.

So thou shalt evermore belong  
To me from this sweet hour,  
And I will take thee for my song,  
And take thee for my flower,  
And by the great, and proud, and high,  
Unenvied, we will live and die.

*Alice Cary.*

THE PARTRIDGE-BERRY.







# PARTRIDGE-BERRY.

*MITCHELLA REPENS L.*

---

SPRING, with that nameless pathos in the air  
Which dwells with all things fair,  
Spring, with her golden sun and silver rain,  
Is with us once again.

In the deep heart of every forest tree  
The blood is all alee,  
And there's a look about the leafless bowers  
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand  
Of winter in the land,  
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn  
Flushed by the season's dawn.

Or where, like those strange semblances we find  
That age to childhood bind,  
The elm puts on, as if in Nature's scorn,  
The brown of autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know  
That, not a span below,  
A thousand germs are groping through the gloom  
And soon will burst their tomb.

*Henry Timrod.*

THIS is by no means a spring flower, for it opens its delicate little twin blossoms of pink in the hot days of June and July. But I suppose the plant is associated in the minds of most lovers of nature with the memory of the very earliest sunny days of the year, for amidst the universal brown of early spring, its bright evergreen leaves, and its brilliant red berries, are almost the only things which gladden the weary eyes with bits of pleasing color. Here and there a little bank or tuft of moss, or a frond of rock-fern, adds its greenness, and shares with the Partridge-Berry the gratitude of eyes hungering for the tints of summer. Especially grateful to us is this humble plant, in the time when its shining leaves and sparkling berries peep up from their nest in the dull dead leaves, sometimes just from under the edge of the retreating snow. But in the luxuriant life and color of mid-summer it would scarcely be noticed at all, as it modestly puts up its delicate pink flowers, in some dark nook, hidden away and crowded out of sight by a mob of obstreperous weeds. As red as the plump cheeks of this little berry commonly are, it has been sometimes found as white as snowdrops. A young lady sent some white ones, two or three years ago, from York, Pennsylvania, to Dr. Gray, the first he had ever heard of, it seems.

In some parts of the country the aromatic Wintergreen, or Checkerberry, is called the Partridge-Berry, Prof. Goodale states. I am sure that in some parts of New York and Pennsylvania I have heard our plant called the Checkerberry, and in those regions, the latter name is not applied to the Wintergreen, as it is in New England. The scientific name of the plant was given to it by the great Linnæus, in honor of Dr. John Mitchell of Virginia, who, during the first half of the last century, was one of our best known



botanists, and a valued correspondent of the founder of our science. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and is known in botanical science as the author of several short treatises on botany, which were issued in a collected form in London, in 1769. He certainly is among the most fortunate of men to have his name and memory embalmed in a plant at once so charming and so widely distributed as is the *Mitchella repens*. There is but one other species belonging to that genus, and that is found in Japan. Dr. Gray has shown, in a very interesting paper, that many of our North American forms are represented in the flora of that country. The Mayflower, or trailing Arbutus, so widely and deservedly popular in New England, is a case quite similar to that of the *Mitchella*. There is but one other species of the *Epigæa* known, and that is a native of Japan.

The most careless observer could scarcely fail to notice, that the bright red berry is furnished with a double "blow end," as though two flowers had assisted in its production. Such is the case. A single ovary bears twin flowers, which, indeed, sometimes come to be something more than "Siamese-twin" flowers, for they occasionally coalesce and form a single flower with an eight-lobed corolla. Commonly, however, they are quite separate, and fructify the corresponding segments of the compound ovary on which they grow. The flowers themselves have individual peculiarities. In some the pistil is long and stands out beyond the mouth of the little hairy tube of the corolla, while the stamens are short and are concealed somewhere down in its obscure depths. Other flowers will show an arrangement exactly the opposite of this, the pistil, with its four-parted stigma, will be short and hidden away in the tube while the stamens will protrude. It is evident that flowers, built

on this plan, cannot conveniently fertilize themselves. The parts involved in the act seem to be thus purposely arranged, so that they cannot come in contact. It has been observed in other flowers thus constructed, that they are very nicely arranged to utilize the help of bees and other insects in cross-fertilization, for the pollen from flowers with long stamens will be placed on the insect which comes for their honey, in exactly the right position to be most easily communicated to the stigma of a flower with a long pistil. So with the flowers having short stamens, and those having short pistils.

If one looks closely he will see beneath the rows of roundish, opposite, green leaves, just at the base of the leaf-stalk, a pair of minute scales, or stipules. They seem to be of no use to the plant, nor are they ornamental. But the trained botanist sees in them great significance. They are the unmistakable signs that our little creeping vine is the "long lost and far wandered scion of a noble house." This humble denizen of our woods has aristocratic connections, and is almost our only representative of a large and influential family in the kingdom of plants, whose native home is in a more genial clime than ours,— a family distinguished in some of its members, by the most considerable and most honorable services to mankind.

I need mention but two or three of these to show that. The Coffee plant furnishes the material for a decoction which is the most universal and most delicious drink (when rightly made and rightly served) that art has yet educes from nature. In the bark of the Cinchona tree, Peruvian Bark, is found one of the most invaluable drugs employed in the art of healing, and one which, perhaps, as a defence against the subtle poisons of malaria, has

saved more human lives than any other. In the pigment produced from the Madder plant, we have the basis and substance of some of our most useful dyes. These, and several other useful plants that might be named, are all first cousins to our bright little friend of the early spring time.

New are the leaves on the oaken spray,  
New the blades of the silky grass;  
Flowers, that were buds but yesterday,  
Peep from the ground where'er I pass.

These gay idlers, the butterflies,  
Broke, to-day, from their winter shroud;  
These light airs, that winnow the skies,  
Blow, just born, from the soft white cloud.

Gushing fresh in the little streams,  
What a prattle the waters make!  
Even the sun, with his tender beams,  
Seems as young as the flowers they wake.

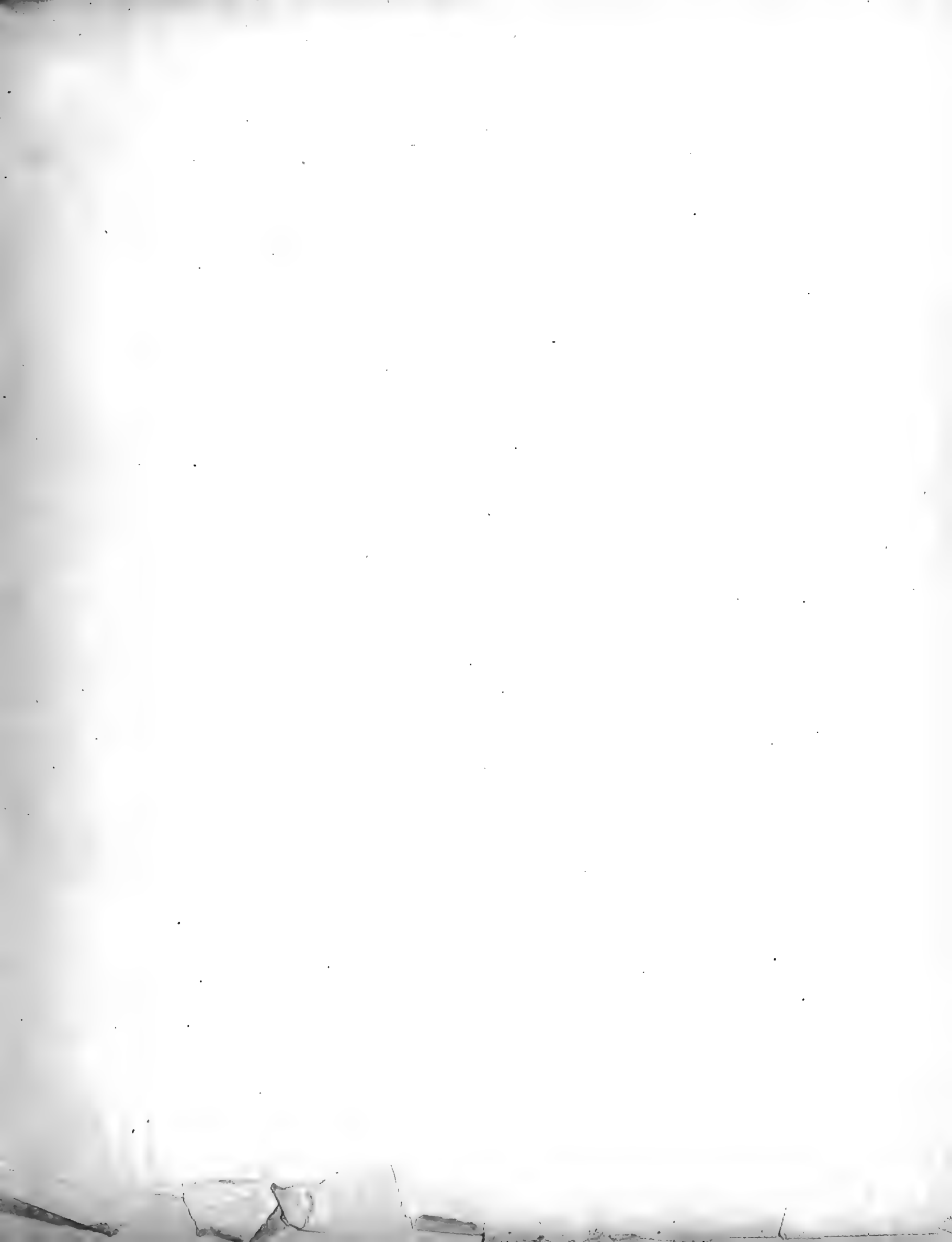
Children are wading, with cheerful cries,  
In the shoals of the sparkling brook;  
Laughing maidens, with soft young eyes,  
Walk or sit in the shady nook.

*Bryant.*



THE ARETHUSA.













# THE ARETHUSA.

*ARETHUSA BULBOSA L.*

---

Is this a time to be cloudy and sad,  
When our Mother Nature laughs around;  
When even the deep blue heavens look glad,  
And gladness breathes from the blossoming ground?

There are notes of joy from the hang-bird and wren,  
And the gossip of swallows through all the sky;  
The ground-squirrel gayly chirps by his den,  
And the wilding bee hums merrily by.

The clouds are at play in the azure space,  
And their shadows at play on the bright-green vale,  
And here they stretch to the frolic chase,  
And there they roll on the easy gale.

There's a dance of leaves in that aspen bower,  
There's a titter of winds in that beechen tree,  
There's a smile on the fruit, and a smile on the flower,  
And a laugh from the brook that runs to the sea.

*Bryant.*

THE last line of this song of gladness brings us to the side of the "laughing brook that runs to the sea" and brings us to its floral guardian, the beautiful Arethusa. This interesting and bril-

liant summer annual has a habitat limited to the region of our eastern border along the coast of New England and the middle States to Virginia, and the northern parts of Wisconsin and beyond. It is not a common plant anywhere, though I have found it by no means rare in some of the marshy districts about Taunton. It blossoms in May and June, and, as our artist makes clear to all, it is a very beautiful flower. The singular form and position of the petals, its brilliant color of pink and red, with the yellow fringe that ornaments its pendent "labellum," all contribute to the interest and charm of the flower.

It is one of the few representatives which we have in our native flora of the very interesting Orchid family. They are all very highly organized and specialized plants. In most cases they have some ingenious mechanism for soliciting and securing the help of insects in cross-pollenization. In describing the Moccasin Flower and the Calopogon in *Beautiful Wild Flowers*, I had occasion to refer to this interesting matter at some length. The *Arethusa* secures this outside help in the distribution of its pollen in much the same way as the *Calopogon*, the principal difference being that the insect carries away the pollen masses upon his head in the case of the *Arethusa*, while in the *Calopogon* they adhere to the underside of the thorax or abdomen.

If the reader will carefully notice the flowers which Mr. Sprague has reproduced with such faithfulness, he will see that the petal which overarches the yellow-headed "labellum" has a slight knob or protuberance on its under side near the end. This is the anther. It consists of a casque-shaped cup with four little masses of powdery pollen packed loosely away in it. The cup lies down upon its side in a little hollow or groove in the petal with its

bottom turned toward the end of the petal and fastened to it by a delicate hinge of vegetable tissue. This brings the open top of the cup toward the inner part of the flower. The mouth of the cup is closed up by a thin partition drawn across the little furrow in which it lies. The other or inside of this partition is the stigma of the flower.

It is not difficult to see that the two parts are so adjusted to each other as to make it in the highest degree difficult, if not altogether impossible, for the pollen unaided to come in contact with the stigma. But with the aid of a bee in search of honey it is very easily accomplished. The bee lights upon the downy hanging platform of the "labellum," and proceeds to make his way down the throat of the flower to the nectar. In doing so he might run his head against the projecting anther cup, but of course could not move it, for it is so hinged that it will turn outward and not inward.

But on his way out the bee again knocks his head against the little cup, and this time it responds to his lightest touch. It immediately swings out and opens downward, and spills its little bundles of pollen directly upon the top of the bee's head or back, and they stick fast. The very next Arethusa he visits and comes out of he will be sure to leave some of this pollen upon the stigmatic surface just where it is needed to fructify the flower. He will at the same time carry away more pollen from this flower wherewith to pollenize the next one, and so on. The service rendered by insects in cross-fertilizing plants, thus making them more prolific and more vigorous, is coming to be one of the most interesting and important fields for investigation in the natural history of the vegetable kingdom. One sees, also,

how the insect tribes in doing this service to plants also benefit themselves, for the number and vigor of nectar-producing flowers will be the measure of their food supply for the next year. Thus Nature weaves these two humble lives together in a web of mutual dependence and service.

The Arethusa was named in honor of a nymph of Diana or Artemis, as she is often called, and was represented in the Greek mythology to be the presiding genius of springs and fountains. She was the daughter of Nereus and Doris, and was changed into a fountain by her mistress Diana to deliver her from the persistent but unwelcome pursuit of her lover Alpheios, a river-god, and a son of Okeanas. The fountain was at Syracuse, in Sicily, and was famous for the abundance of its waters and the number of its fishes, though now the water is brackish and supports no finny inhabitants. Virgil invokes the inspiration of Arethusa to help him compose his tenth pastoral, addressed to his friend Gallus.

The connection of our plant with wet "springy" places, where it makes its home, suggested its name. Certainly, no one who has seen and admired its rare charms in its native haunts, can feel that it does discredit to the name or memory of the fair goddess of fountains.

Arethusa arose  
From her couch of snows  
In the Acroceraunian mountains, —  
From cloud and from crag,  
With many a jag,  
Shepherding her bright fountains,  
She leaped down the rocks  
With her rainbow locks

Streaming among the streams;—  
Her steps paved with green  
The downward ravine  
Which slopes to the western gleams  
And gliding and springing,  
She went ever singing,  
In murmurs as soft as sleep:  
The earth seemed to love her,  
And heaven smiled above her,  
As she lingered toward the deep.

*Shelley.*

INTO the sunshine,  
Full of light,  
Leaping and flashing  
From morn till night!

Into the moonlight,  
Whiter than snow,  
Waving so flower-like  
When the winds blow!

Ever in motion,  
Blithesome and cheery,  
Still climbing heavenward  
Never weary.

Full of a nature  
Nothing can tame;  
Changed every moment,  
Ever the same.

Glorious Fountain!  
Let my heart be  
Fresh, changeful, constant,  
Upward, like thee.

*James Russell Lowell.*





THE PITCHER-PLANT.



# PITCHER-PLANT.

*SARRACENIA PURPUREA L.*

---

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair;  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feathered grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.  
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more  
By reason of his fallen divinity.  
Spreading a shade. The Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Pressed her cold finger closer to her lips.  
Along the margin-sand large footmarks went,  
No further than to where his feet had strayed,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unscathed; and his realmless eyes were closed;  
While his bowed head seemed listening to the Earth,  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

*Keats.*

THIS incomparable picture of a swampy vale deep in the woods, is so exactly like the native home of our purple Pitcher-

Plant, that I could not resist the temptation to transfer it to our pages. Mr. Meehan thinks Longfellow must have had in his thought some image or memory of our southern Pitcher-Plant when, in the song of the "Slave in the Dismal Swamp," he made this life-like picture of southern vegetation,—

Where will-o'-the-wisps and glow-worms shine,  
In bulrush and in brake;  
Where waving mosses shroud the pine,  
And the cedar grows, and the poisonous vine  
Is spotted like the snake;

Where hardly a human foot could pass,  
Or a human heart would dare,  
On the quaking turf of the green morass  
He crouched in the rank and tangled grass  
Like a wild beast in his lair.

Be this as it may, our plant is common all along our eastern border from Newfoundland to Florida, growing in bogs and swampy places, and flowering in the early summer. This plant introduces us to one of the most interesting fields of biological inquiry that has been opened in many a day. I refer to that curious instance, which these and some other plants illustrate, in which the vegetable kingdom seems to reverse the ordinary course of nature and makes reprisal upon the animal kingdom for its habitual foraging. In this as in many other departments of research the interest has been greatly quickened, almost created, throughout the scientific world, by the magic touch of that one master spirit of the century, Charles Robert Darwin,—now alas, no more of earth! His monograph on Insectivorous Plants marks an era in this department of botanical science.

Insectivorous plants are a group or physiological assemblage of plants which belong to a number of distinct natural orders. "They agree in the extraordinary habit of adding to the ordinary supplies of nitrogenous material afforded them in common with other plants by the soil and atmosphere, by the capture and consumption of insects and other small animals. The curious and varied mechanical arrangements by which these supplies of animal food are obtained, the way and degrees in which they are utilized, and the remarkable chemical, biological and electrical phenomena of prehension and utilization can only be fully understood by a separate and somewhat detailed account of the leading orders and genera."

To give that would not come within the purpose of this paper, and yet I think I may be able to embody enough of this strange knowledge to give my readers some adequate idea of what happens when a plant devours "insects and other small animals."

Take for example the common Sun-dew, *Drosera rotundifolia*, of our bogs and swamps. It has a circle of long-stemmed round leaves which spring out horizontally from the bottom of the flower stalk near the ground. These leaves, which are not usually over half an inch diameter, are covered pretty thickly above with flexible hairs, or tentacles, to the number of two hundred and fifty or more, not longer than two-thirds of the diameter of the leaf. Each of these tentacles bears at top a transparent drop of viscid glistening fluid which looks very like a drop of dew in the early sunshine. This gives the plant both its popular and its scientific name.

Insects seem to be attracted to the leaves of this plant, perhaps by its glistening appearance, perhaps by its odor or color, or by all combined. But if they come too near, or dare to light upon its

brilliant leaves, they will get anything but a friendly welcome. A fly coming in contact with the viscid end of the tentacles finds itself stuck fast. He cannot get away even if but two or three of these silvery dewdrops touch him. But his struggles to do so awaken the active interest of all the neighboring tentacles, which immediately bend over toward him and fix upon him their adhesive tops. In fact an impulse seems to be spreading over the whole surface of the leaf, which sets all the parts into sympathetic activity. The leaf itself soon hollows under the victim and rolls up its edges, and thrusts down upon him more and more of its animated bead-topped hairs. Slowly he is pressed down upon the surface of the leaf, drenched in the abundant fluid which the leaf and its tentacles secrete, and in a quarter of an hour or so he is dead.

But the leaf does not stop there. It holds its dead prey in its close embrace till it has fully digested him, for its tentacles and its superficial cells and glands constitute a true stomach, which secretes digestive fluids and deals with animal substances in exactly the same way that the animal stomach does. The nutritious resultants of this digestive process are absorbed into the tissues of the plant and help to nourish it. A chemical analysis of the fluids produced in this vegetable stomach, and a careful observation of their action upon all nitrogenous substances which ordinarily constitute the food of animals, show that in almost all respects it runs in an exact parallel with the functions of that organ in the animal economy. It appears to be strictly carnivorous, as it will not digest vegetable or purely carboniferous substances, such as gum-Arabic, sugar, starch, olive oil, etc. We have then here the leaf of a plant possessing a true animal function.

The Venus Fly-trap, *Dionæa muscipula*, a native of southeastern North Carolina, is another carnivorous plant. At the extremity of its obcordate leaves, are two lobes standing at something less than a right angle to each other, hinged together at the back upon the prolonged midrib of the leaf. The edges of these lobes are armed with long spines which shut by and between each other when the lobes close. Each of the lobes has three slender, sharp, sensitive hairs placed triangularly some little distance apart upon its inner surface. The slightest touch upon either of these hairs, as the lighting upon it of the smallest insect, or brushing it with their wings, or touching it with their legs or bodies as they crawl over the surface, causes the lobes to shut together like a trap, instantly imprisoning the unwary victim. If he be not too large to pass between the closed teeth at the edge of the lobes he may escape. Otherwise he is doomed, for the leaf immediately pours out upon him from glands specially provided an abundance of digestive fluid which soon kills and dissolves him.

As with the Sundew so with the *Dionæa*, a true digestive process takes place perfectly analogous to that in the animal economy and the plant gets much nourishment from this source of food supply. It has been observed that plants provided with this special adaptation for securing food have smaller roots than other kinds of plants not so furnished. There are several other genera of plants that possess this extraordinary function, which we have heretofore considered an exclusive attribute of animal life.

But in the *Sarracenia* we have the case of plants adapted to capture and devour insects, but with no ability truly to digest them. While they entrap and destroy great numbers of them and are obviously contrived especially to do that, they make use of them

as nourishment in a way more analogous to the processes of plant life than do the *Drosera* and *Dionæa*.

We are indebted to an admirable study of *Sarracenia variegata*, published in 1874, by Dr. Mellichamp of South Carolina, for the best report yet made of the insect-capturing habit of the Pitcher-Plant. The species above-named is larger than the one so accurately represented in our plate. It has yellow flowers, and the trumpet-shaped "pitcher" is from ten to twenty inches long, and is covered at top with an overarching hood which quite effectually excludes the rain. It grows common in the South and is often transplanted into the house to serve as a domestic fly-trap. It is furnished with the necessary appliances for capturing insects in this way. Along the leaf border or wing of the pitcher quite down to the ground are secreted at regular short intervals drops of a sweet liquid which is very palatable to flies, ants, bugs, and other insects. These make a baited path, or honey-trail straight up the leaf to the open mouth of the pitcher at top. Around the margin of the mouth and well down the interior the sugary drops exude. Of course the hungry insect led up the honeyed road of danger presses on regardless of peril, over the margin, down into the open mouth of the pitcher, mindful only of the abundant sweets. But he soon comes to a place on the inner surface of the pitcher where he cannot maintain his foothold. The surface for several inches is there covered with a velvety nap of downward-pointing smooth hairs.

An ant, or any other wingless insect, directly he steps upon this treacherous surface falls into the depths, where he finds the narrowing space for several inches beset on all sides with long sharp spines pointing inward and downward. His frantic efforts



to escape only serve therefore to push him further and further toward the bottom. But before he reaches that he will find himself plunged into a watery liquid which the leaf secretes, and which acts upon him first as a powerful narcotic or anæsthetic, and when he is once dead, as a dissolvent which will quickly change his tissue into a "liquid fertilizer" wherewith to nourish the hungry plant.

Winged insects in most cases fare but little better, for if they fly directly upward when they lose their foothold, they strike their heads against the overarching hood, and are perhaps beaten back too far to recover themselves before they are engulfed, or take a zigzag course downward to their destruction. At all events, the long tube of this plant is often found a quarter or half full of dead or decaying insects. That our common Pitcher-Plant carries on the same business less perfectly, though with no different purpose, may be seen by examining any well developed leaf with its tube lined with bristling downward-pointing spines, and half filled with a watery liquid and drowned insects.

The flower of this plant is certainly a very singular one. The pistil consists of an enormous style, which resembles a parasol or a toadstool more than anything else, with the stigma in small patches under the tips of its lobes. The petals, notched in like a fiddle, pass out between the re-entrant angles of the expanded style.

The origin as well as the appropriateness of the English popular name of this plant, the "Side-saddle Flower," appears to be undiscoverable. The generic name was given in honor of Dr. Sarrazin, of Quebec, who, many years ago, first sent specimens of this plant, with some account of its habits, to European bot-

anists. This genus, which contains some six or eight exclusively American species, is closely related to the *Darlingtonia*, a curiously hooded Pitcher-Plant of the Sierra Nevada mountains, and the still more singular *Nepenthes*, from the islands of the Indian Ocean, which have tendril-like prolongations of the leaf, sometimes two feet or more long, becoming at their ends, perfectly developed pitchers.

Altogether, when we get among these plants with such strange forms and such wonderful habits and functions, we can begin to understand something of what our Longfellow meant when he wrote of that great naturalist, his well-beloved friend, Agassiz;

And Nature, the old nurse, took  
The child upon her knee,  
Saying: "Here is a story-book  
Thy Father has written for thee."

"Come wander with me," she said,  
"Into regions yet untrod;  
And read what is still unread  
In the manuscripts of God."

And he wandered away and away  
With Nature, the dear old nurse,  
Who sang to him, night and day,  
The rhymes of the universe.

And whenever the way seemed long,  
Or his heart began to fail,  
She would sing a more wonderful song,  
Or tell a more marvellous tale.

THE SHORTIA.







# GALAX-LEAVED SHORTIA.

*SHORTIA GLACIFOLIA Gray.*

---

SPAKE full well, in language quaint and olden  
One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine,  
When he called the flowers, so blue and golden,  
Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history  
As astrologers and seers of eld;  
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,  
Like the burning stars, which they beheld.

Wondrous truth, and manifold as wondrous,  
God hath written in those stars above ;  
But not less in the bright flowerets under us  
Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,  
Written all over this great world of ours:  
Making evident our own creation,  
In those stars of earth, these golden flowers.

*Longfellow.*

THERE is an interesting, almost romantic, story connected with the discovery and rediscovery of this beautiful plant. About a hundred years ago the French government sent a noted botanist of the time, Mons. André Michaux, to this country to collect useful

trees and shrubs for naturalization in France. He remained in this country from 1785 to 1797, making the most of his excellent opportunities for collecting and studying our flora. He established and conducted in the interest of his mission two extensive nurseries for arboriculture, one near New York and another near Charleston, South Carolina. Just before his death in 1802, was published one of the works for which he is principally known, a "Treatise on the Oaks of North America." Paris, 1801.

The year following his death Mons. L. Richard, a celebrated French botanist, prepared a *Flora Boreali Americana*, from Michaux's extensive collections in this country. In this work is mentioned, though not described, the plant now under notice. It was collected somewhere in the mountains of North Carolina, and was out of flower, the corolla and stamens having fallen.

"Early in the year 1839," writes Dr. Gray, "I found and examined this specimen in Michaux's herbarium, and received from the hand of Mons. Decaisne a drawing and some fragments of it. In a paper treating of the botany of these mountains published in January, 1842, I ventured to found a genus upon this plant, under the above name, trusting that diligent search prosecuted by myself and by all botanists visiting the region would duly bring it to light. The protracted failure of these endeavors has thrown an air of doubt over the minds of my associates in the search, as to the actual existence of any such plant. In 1868 I had the pleasure of announcing the discovery of this genus, not indeed where we were looking for it, but where experience had led me to expect that any or every peculiarly Atlantic States type might recur, namely in Japan."

But the Japanese plant also was found without corolla or sta-



mens, and its exact floral form could only be conjectured from that of some near relatives and from some rude Japanese pictures of it. Yet from the confidence which Dr. Gray and other eminent botanists felt with regard to its probable form and family relationship, we are reminded of that proverbial reconstruction of a whole animal from the fragments of a tooth which is accredited to Cuvier, and the building up of the form of a fish from a single scale, attributed to the skill of Agassiz.

Another ten years went by with no further light shed upon the vexed question. But at last some additional facts transpired, and in December, 1878, Dr. Gray could write, "Happily I can give the character of the plant from an actual blossom. For I have now received, at first indirectly from Mr. J. W. Congdon, and at length directly from Mr. M. E. Hyams of Statesville, North Carolina, a flowering specimen of the long sought *Shortia glacifolia*, collected on a hill-side in McDowell county, North Carolina, in the district I had indicated as the most probable locality, namely, east of the Black Mountains. It was collected in May, 1877, but as its remarkable interest was unknown it has only now been communicated to me." It had been rediscovered after almost a century, and after nearly forty years' search.

In 1879 the locality was visited by Dr. Gray and other botanists, one of whom thus speaks of the excursion: "Being now in McDowell county, the *Shortia* locality was visited under the guidance of Mr. George M. Hyams, the actual discoverer. In the secluded and well protected station, well overshadowed by Rhododendrons and Magnolias, was seen the little colony of the plant so long sought and by many so long doubted. The space over which the plant extended was perhaps ten feet by thirty, and

in all there may have been from fifty to one hundred plants. As the plant multiplies by stolons it is remarkable that its area should be thus restricted. And since in the struggle for life, of two allied plants the weakest must go, Dr. Gray has suggested the probability that its stronger cousin the *Galax* had crowded out the *Shortia*. And here, indeed, in what may be the last foothold of the rarity, *Galax* appeared to be actually doing so. Yet the plants, though comparatively few, were vigorous and healthy. In June, the fruit of this vernal plant had mainly gone by, but Dr. Gray secured a capsule or two with some seeds."

This rare and charming plant was named for Prof. Short, a noted Kentucky botanist who died in 1863. I did not see how I could do this floral rarity a greater honor than to frame its interesting story with the shining lines of our lamented poet, which now for near half a century have gone up and down the earth like a deathless strain of sweet music, awakening fine echoes in every heart that loves the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing,  
Some like stars to tell us spring is born ;  
Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing,  
Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn ;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,  
On the mountain top, and by the brink  
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,  
Where the slaves of nature stoop to drink ;

In all places, then, and in all seasons,  
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings,  
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,  
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection  
We behold their tender buds expand ;  
Emblems of our own great resurrection,  
Emblems of the bright and better land.

*Longfellow.*



THE ARROW-HEAD.









# THE ARROW-HEAD.

*SAGITTARIA VARIABILIS Engelm.*

---

HOMeward now went Hiawatha;  
Only once his pace he slackened,  
Only once he paused or halted,  
Paused to purchase heads of arrows  
Of the ancient Arrow-maker,  
In the land of the Dacotahs,  
Where the Falls of Minnehaha  
Flash and gleam among the oak-trees,  
Laugh and leap into the valley.

There the ancient Arrow-maker  
Made his arrow-heads of sandstone,  
Arrow-heads of chalcedony,  
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
Smoothed and sharpened at the edges,  
Hard and polished, keen and costly.

With him dwelt his dark-eyed daughter,  
Wayward as the Minnehaha,  
Feet as rapid as the river,  
Tresses flowing like the water,  
And as musical a laughter;  
And he named her from the river,  
From the waterfall he named her  
Minnehaha — Laughing Water.

Was it then for heads of arrows,  
Arrow-heads of chalcedony  
Arrow-heads of flint and jasper,  
That my Hiawatha halted  
In the land of the Dacotahs?

*Longfellow.*

WHAT Hiawatha certainly was not looking after "in the land of the Dacotahs," arrow-heads, we shall most certainly see, in this excellent portrait of the *Sagittaria*. If we may judge by both the scientific and popular name of the plant, that is what the observer has most distinctly seen when he has met it in nature. The elegant outline and curious veining of the leaf will attract our attention and admiration more than the pure white flower. The pronounced significance of the leaf, both in the picture and in the plant, leads me on to say something about the leaves of plants.

I suppose many readers are accustomed to think that the leaves of plants are of small account. They perhaps recall how in ancient times a certain fig-tree came under severe reproach because it bore "nothing but leaves." Then, too, "when the summer is past and the harvest is ended," how the dead leaves cumber the ground, are trodden underfoot of men, and become the sport of wild autumn winds! their greenness is faded, their beauty is gone, and none so poor as to do them reverence. Thus are we in greater things quite too prone to forget past benefits when the benefactor can no longer add new gifts to his old ones.

As much as we make the fallen and faded leaves the emblem of our frailty and nothingness, there are few, I imagine, who do not look with longing for the bare trees to put on their fresh new foliage in the spring-time. And it must be a dull soul indeed

which can behold unmoved the gorgeous-colored drapery which Autumn throws so lavishly over our American forests.

To the life of the plant the leaves are of the first importance, quite as necessary as its roots. The roots suck up great quantities of water from the soil which holds in solution various chemical elements necessary for the life and upbuilding of the plant. Most of these must be brought in contact with the air and other chemical agents, before they can be assimilated into the woody and other tissues of the plant. The leaves are the principal organs for accomplishing this. They serve indeed in the double function of organs of respiration and digestion.

They are made up of layers of minute cells containing a green substance called chlorophyl, together with bundles of woody tissue which constitute the frame-work or skeleton. Upon the underside of most leaves the microscope reveals thousands of little pores or mouths opening through the cuticle into the interior of the leaf. These openings are for breathing. The air goes freely in through these, and circulates among the interstices of the cells. The carbonic acid of the air is decomposed by contact with the green contents of the cells, the carbon being kept and wrought up into vegetable fibre and the oxygen partly breathed out again, and partly used up in making other chemical compounds with the fluids that have come up from the roots. These fluids then flow back into the body of the plant and enter into various vegetable substances and tissues. So we see that the leaf serves the plant in the double capacity of lungs and stomach.

The different forms of leaves are almost endless, varying from the simple needle of the pine to the elaborate compound leaf of the horse-chestnut, locust, or fern. Almost every conceivable shape

that can be bounded with curves and angles is seen in the foliage of plants. I often wonder why people who show such industry and perseverance in collecting and preserving business-cards, postage-stamps, and other artificial productions do not make collections of the leaves of plants. I am sure they would furnish a more pleasing variety and a vastly greater originality of design than do the favorite objects. What an excellent opportunity, too, would such a collection furnish for the study of similar but unlike forms, and of the variations, little and great, regular and irregular, which nature is so fond of playing upon her primary themes.

Then, too, the venation of the leaves would open a wide field for study and comparison. Indeed, in this we have a fundamental characteristic of the vegetable kingdom. All plants with what is called "parallel-veined" leaves, such as the present one, the lilies, the grasses, Indian corn, etc., are monocotyledonous, that is, they spring up from the seed with one primary leaf. But all leaves with netted veins like those of the maple, or oak, or bean, or pumpkin, belong to dicotyledonous plants, or plants with two primary or seed leaves. These are the two great divisions of the plant kingdom. This would be of no great moment if the one leaf or the two leaves of its initial life were all. But it is not. These are only the outward signs of great and important differences in the methods of growth, structure, habits, and life-history of the plants. The venation determines the form and size of the leaf. It is what the bones are to the animal, its skeleton.

Naturalists undertake to account for many simple things in nature on the grounds of utility. They tell us that the tawny skin of the lion, the spots of the leopard, and the stripes of the tiger

help to conceal them from their prey in the various situations where they live and hunt, and so in "the survival of the fittest" these advantages have been developed. I sometimes wonder if it ever occurred to any of them to inquire what, on this or any other grounds, is the reason for the infinite variety in the form, size, appearance and structure of the leaves of plants. Has it come about from some early advantage which attended a given form in a given situation. Or has it been developed as the necessary result of some corresponding peculiarity in the structure of the plant? Or is it a caprice, or blind force? Or shall we say that the Mind in nature is artistic and demands beauty as well as use? The aspen leaf trembles with the greatest agitation when touched with the gentlest zephyr's breath. But there is a physical, not a sentimental or aesthetic, cause for that. The leaf-stalk is flattened thin in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the leaf, so that the slightest movement of the air will set it into these unsteady oscillations. Do all the facts of nature have thus only a physical cause back of them? They probably have that. But that there is nothing beyond the physical reason I am not prepared to believe.

The better demonstration of the presence of Mind in nature which is found in a study of the position of the leaves upon the plants must be deferred to another occasion.

The *Sagittaria* grows with its feet in the "still waters" by the edges of pools and sluggish streams, a near friend and neighbor of the water-lily. It blooms all summer, and is very common. Somehow this interesting plant is associated in my memory with such summer scenes and such a sunny atmosphere as the poet has painted in these exquisite lines.

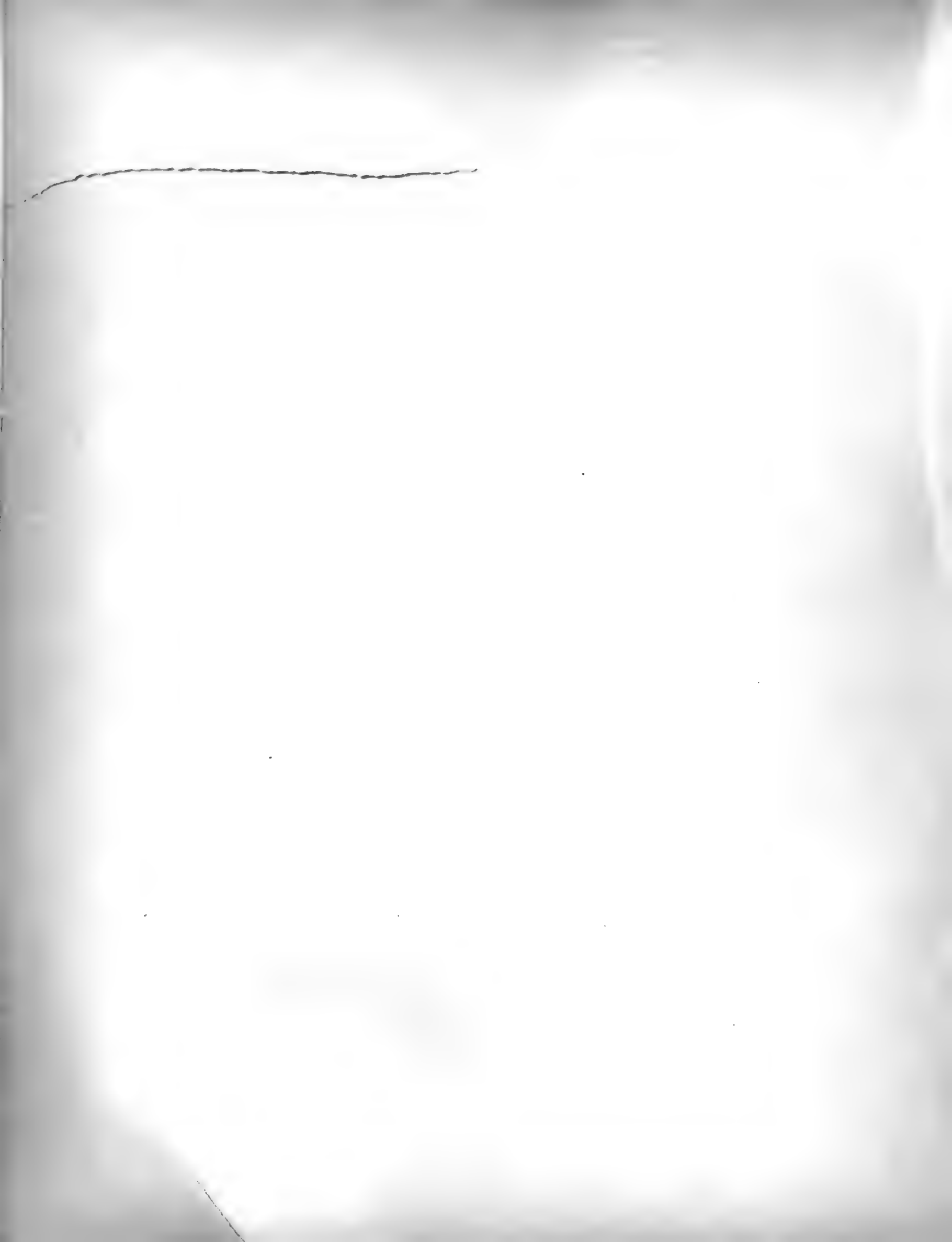
I hear the wind among the trees  
Playing celestial symphonies;  
I see the branches downward bent,  
Like keys of some great instrument.

And over me unrolls on high  
The splendid scenery of the sky,  
Where through a sapphire sea the sun  
Sails like a golden galleon,

Towards yonder cloudland in the West,  
Towards yonder Islands of the Blest,  
Whose steep sierra far uplifts  
Its craggy summits white with drifts.

*Longfellow.*

THE PALE LAUREL.









# THE PALE LAUREL.

*KALMIA GLAUCA Ait.*

---

Now swells the forest, calm and wide,  
In rippling waves of deepest green,  
And all the rugged mountain side  
Through billowy curves is seen;  
The roadsides meet in ample shade,  
With showers of light and golden glooms,  
And bubbling up the rocky ways  
The clustered Laurel blooms.

Each chalice holds the infinite air,  
Each rounded cluster grows a sphere;  
A twilight pale she grants us there,  
A rosier sunrise here;  
She broods above the happy earth,  
She dwells upon the enchanted days,—  
A thousand voices hail her birth  
In chants of love and praise!

*Elaine Goodale.*

THERE are three species of Laurel common in the United States, the most showy being the Mountain Laurel, a conspicuous upland shrub, growing from four to twenty feet high, and crowned in mid-summer with splendid corymbs of rose-colored blossoms. From

this is easily distinguished the Dwarf Laurel of the lower hills and plains, by its smaller plant and flower, and by the fact that its blossoms are produced below the ends of the branches. Our Pale Laurel grows in peat-bogs and other swampy places, and differs from both the others by flowering in the spring, and by having narrow leaves which are folded back along the edges and covered on the under side with a white bloom or dust, whence the name, Pale Laurel. The flower of the Laurel is unique, the corolla not imperfectly resembling a saucer in shape.

*Kalmia* is an American genus, though the Heath family, to which it belongs, is famous in the Old World, especially in the British Isles, where the Heather, the favorite of the poets, often forms no inconsiderable element in the beauty of otherwise barren moorlands. Its nearest relatives here are the Azalia, Rhodora, Blueberry, Cranberry, Huckleberry, etc., and some other like shrubs; though it by no means bears so good a reputation as these last-named useful plants. It has the name of being decidedly poisonous, and the Dwarf Laurel has a popular title, the Lambkill or Sheep-Laurel, which indicates this. How well it deserves its bad fame I know not.

From time out of mind the poets have spoken of the Laurel as the particular plant whose leaves make the victor's wreath.

"The Laurel, meed of mighty conquerors,  
And poets sage."

But the Laurel of our hillsides and plains was never used to crown poets or conquerors in ancient Greece and Rome. The plant whose leaves were plaited into coronal wreaths, is the Sweet Bay, or Noble Laurel, a tree-like shrub of Southern Europe.

The name is from the Celtic *laur*, green, and refers to its

evergreen foliage. The American Laurel gets its generic name *Kalmia* from Linnæus in honor of a friend and pupil, a Swedish botanist by the name of Peter Kalm, who travelled extensively in this country, in the middle of the last century, and sent specimens of the plant to him.

“Kalm,” says Prof. Meehan, “was no common man. He was born in Finland in 1715, and was destined for the church; but after attending a course of lectures by Linnæus, he determined to devote his whole life to the study of natural history. He was subsequently elected Professor of Economy in the University of Abo, which, until its destruction by fire, and removal to Helsingfors in 1827, was one of the leading centres of learning in the north of Europe. The Royal Swedish Academy desired to send some one to explore the northern parts of the American continent, believing from the similarity of the climate that much good would result to Swedish Agriculture, and the kindred arts and sciences; and on the recommendation of Linnæus, Prof. Kalm was selected and a practical gardener detailed to accompany him. He reached Philadelphia in September, 1748. He went in 1749 through New Jersey, and along the Hudson to Albany, thence across Lakes George and Champlain to Canada. Returning again to winter in Philadelphia, the next year he explored western Pennsylvania, the Blue Mountains, and the coast of New Jersey; and went again through New York to Niagara Falls, returning to Philadelphia in October.” All this was no small undertaking in a country then almost entirely an unbroken and trackless wilderness; and Kalm had many perilous adventures.

Though the genus is dedicated to Kalm it was known before his day, for we are assured by Prof. Meehan, Banister, an early

Virginia botanist, had made Ray, the celebrated English naturalist, acquainted with it. The plant was sent in a living state by Bartram to Collinson in England, in 1730. So I suppose by right this beautiful genus of American plants should have commemorated the name of one or the other of these early and enthusiastic American botanists rather than that of the foreign explorer from the far away shores of the Baltic. But no doubt the modest Quaker naturalist was quite satisfied that his friend and correspondent from over the seas should be associated with one of our most interesting flowers.

If one examines a newly-opened flower he will find that around the edge of the bottom of the saucer-shaped part of the corolla there are ten little pockets, and that into each one of these is thrust an anther, the filament arching over from it and running down into the tube of the corolla, by the side of the pistil, which runs up rather high and stiff in the centre. Now it is found that the filaments of the stamens are elastic, and that if by a little quick blow upon the corolla, or by pushing the edge of it out, the anther in the pocket is liberated, it will fly up with a quick motion. It is also found that the pollen is held in two little sacs which open by small holes at the top, and therefore that the whole stamen is not unlike a piece of whale-bone with two quills tied to the end, filled with fine shot. If the whale-bone is bent and then the end suddenly released, it will spring forward and the shot will be projected some distance. So Dr. Gray says, the stamen is a contrivance for discharging pollen at some object. "If the stigma around which the stamens are marshalled, be that object, the target is a small one; yet some one or more of the ten shot might hit the mark. But the discharges can hardly ever take place at all with-

out the aid of an insect. Bees are the insects thus far observed to frequent these flowers; and it is interesting to watch the operations of a humble-bee upon them. The bee, remaining on the wing, circles for a moment over each flower, thrusting its proboscis all round the ovary at the bottom; in doing this it jostles and lets off the springs, and receives upon the under side of its body and its legs successive charges of pollen. Flying to another blossom, it brings its yellow-dusted body against the stigma, and commonly revolving on it as on a pivot, while it sucks the nectar in the bottom of the flower-cups, liberates the ten bowed stamens, and receives fresh charges of pollen from that flower when fertilizing it with the pollen of the preceding one. This account is founded on the observations of Prof. Beal of Michigan, who also states that when a cluster of blossoms is covered with fine gauze, no stamen gets liberated of itself, while fit for action, and no seed sets." So the Laurel feeds the bee, and the bee in turn pollenizes the Laurel and makes it fruitful. The plentiful flowers of the Pale Laurel will help to make and adorn such a scene in nature as this which the poet paints, every word a pigment.

The sun of May was bright in middle heaven,  
And steeped the sprouting forests, the green hills,  
And emerald wheat-fields, in his yellow light.  
Upon the apple-tree, where rosy buds  
Stood clustered, ready to burst forth in bloom,  
The robin warbled forth his full clear note  
For hours, and wearied not. Within the woods,  
Whose young and half transparent leaves scarce cast  
A shade, gay circles of anemones  
Danced on their stalks; the shad-bush, white with flowers,  
Brightened the glens; the new-leaved butternut

And quivering poplar to the roving breeze  
Gave a balsamic fragrance. In the fields  
I saw the pulses of the gentle wind  
On the young grass. My heart was touched with joy  
At so much beauty, flushing every hour  
Into a fuller beauty.

*Bryant.*



THE MEADOW BEAUTY.







# THE MEADOW BEAUTY.

*RHEXIA VIRGINICA L.*

---

A THING of beauty is a joy forever :  
Its loveliness increases; it will never  
Pass into nothingness; but will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing.  
Therefore, on every morrow are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways  
Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves above the pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in; the clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:  
And such, too, is the grandeur of the dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring into us from the heavens' brink.

*Keats.*

NOBODY seems to know why so beautiful a flower has so barbarous a name. Though some, curious in these things, have traced the name all the way back to Pliny, who knew a plant of that name, they are still driven to the conclusion so sententiously expressed by Dr. Gray, that "Rhexia has been applied to this genus without obvious reason." It is thought to have some value as a "vulnerary," or, in other words, to be useful in the cure of wounds. Whatever may be said about its scientific, nobody will call in question the peculiar fitness of its popular name. It surely is "a thing of beauty," and so, by the poet's logic, "a joy forever."

It affects swamps and damp meadows as its favorite haunts, and has a pretty wide distribution throughout the eastern United States. A singular fact about it is that it is the only representative in our northern regions of an enormously large order of plants native in tropical America. The order contains a thousand species or more; and out of them all, only this solitary one has had the courage to emigrate north or undertake to live beyond the thirtieth parallel.

A striking peculiarity of the order is the strongly ribbed leaves, the ribs varying from three, in the *Rhexia*, to as many as nine in other genera. Another noticeable peculiarity of this order is the long curved anther which is attached to the filament at the middle. It usually has also an additional process like a spur appearing near the point of attachment, as may be seen in this species. Prof. Goodale says, "the pollen consists of extremely minute grains which escape through a pore at the apex of the tapering anther." I have recently seen the statement made by some observer, that the larger end of the anther is a

kind of inflated air sac, with thin walls, which when pressed upon or struck, as when an insect lights upon it or touches it with his rapidly moving wings, it acts like a bellows and blows little puffs or jets of pollen dust out of the small pore at the end. Thus the stigma of the flower or the insect himself gets abundantly besprinkled with the fertilizing powder, which we can easily see he might convey to other *Rhexia* blooms.

We can scarcely look upon so beautiful a wild-flower as this without asking ourselves how came these colors and these strange forms of beauty? Are they for themselves alone? Or are they to please the æsthetic taste of the beholder, for

“Since eyes were made for seeing  
Beauty is its own excuse for being.”

Still, it must be remembered if we think we will make that answer, that,—

“Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.”

And, ages and ages after the flowers began to bloom, there was upon the earth no beauty-drinking eye to quaff ethereal sweetness from their tinted petals. Did they serve no good end in all those vast periods?

The naturalist, who thinks he must find a reason for everything he sees in nature, has undertaken to show how plants came to have flowers at all; that is, of course, petals, or colored sepals, the showy parts of the flower, for all kinds of plants except the very lowest have the essential parts of a flower, the staminate and pistillate elements and mechanism. To state the naturalist's conclusion broadly I should say, the floral envelope has been evolved,

by means of insects, and for the purpose of further securing their help in the act of pollenization. That insects have something important to do with the showy dress of the flower may be inferred on general grounds from the fact that such plants as depend upon the wind to carry their pollen from anther to stigma, like the pines and other cone-bearing trees, the grasses, and notably our Indian corn, have no colored flower at all; while the plants that manifestly seek, or at all events are benefited by, the help of insects in pollenization are furnished by nature with floral appendages more or less showy and attractive.

I do not want to be understood to say that the insect comes to the flower because he admires the brilliant colors of its petals, but because he finds a toothsome drop of nectar in its cup or in its tender surface-cells. The color of the flower is but a sign to advertise him where a good dinner may be had for the taking. It may be assumed that even in apetalous flowers he has already got a taste of nature's sweets. Then any change, however slight, of stamens into petaloid shapes, with ever so little addition of color, would be an advantage in the struggle for existence, to any flower possessing it, an advantage likely to be transmitted and to be improved upon as the generations went by.

At first, the flowers would be yellow, the petals being only slightly modified stamens, which are usually of that color. A still further development would produce white, red or pink, and last of all, purple, blue, and violet flowers. We infer that this was the order of the evolution of color in flowers, for two reasons: The first is, because we find a correlation between the flowers of certain colors, and insects of certain degrees of development in respect to their honey-gathering function. Mr. Grant Allen, an English



writer, says, "Thus, to take a few examples out of hundreds that might be cited, the flowers which lay themselves out for fertilization by miscellaneous small flies, are almost always white; those which depend upon the beetles are generally yellow; while those which bid for the favor of bees and butterflies are usually red, purple, lilac or blue. Down to the minutest distinctions between species, this correlation of flowers to the tastes of their particular guests seems to hold good. Herman Müller notes that the common galium of our heaths and hedges is white, and is visited by small flies, while its near relative, the lady's bedstraw, is yellow, and owes its fertilization to little beetles. Fritz Müller noticed a lantana in South America, which changes color as its flowering advances; and he observed that each kind of butterfly which visited it, stuck rigidly to its own favorite color, waiting to pay its addresses until that color appeared."

We thus see how the special tastes of insects may have become the selective agency for developing white, pink, red, purple and blue petals, from the original yellow ones. But, before they could exercise such a selective action, the petals must themselves have shown some tendency to vary in certain fixed directions. An investigator, who has given much study to the coloring matter of plants and its chemical nature and action, gives us a point here, which will, perhaps, solve this part of our problem. He assures us that the pigments for all of these colors are laid up in all plants, and only need to be slightly modified in chemical constitution, in order to make them into the blues, pinks, and purples, with which we are familiar.

Another reason for supposing that the evolution of color in flowers has been along the line indicated above, is, that we see

many flowers follow that track in their individual development. A common English forget-me-not is pale yellow when it first opens, then changes to pink, and ends by being blue. A wall-flower is first whitish, then yellow, and finally red or blue. An evening primrose has white flowers at first, but at a later period of development, red ones. *Cobæa scandens*, which has been flowering luxuriantly and blossoming perfectly in my study all winter, has constantly shown this kind of evolution of color. It is first green, then lightens much into a very pale-green, or white, and then begins to develop toward purple, passing in some cases as I noticed, through a pronounced pink. Its final color is a strong purple. The garden convolvulus opens, a blushing white, and passes into a full purple. When changes in the color of flowers take place during the process of growth, they are, so far as has been observed, all in this, and never in the opposite direction.

There can scarcely be good reason to question, I suppose, that the evolution of flowers and of honey-eating insects has gone on side by side, each helping the other. In given cases, the color and form of the floral envelope, the nature of the honey sack, together with the position of the stamens and pistil, are all correlated with the specialized organs and particular habits of the insect tribe whose help is depended upon in the act of pollenization. Owing something, then, to the agency of insects for the possession of all the exquisite beauty and sweetness of flowers, I can make no more appropriate ending for this paper, than by quoting a few lines from Emerson's "Humble-bee."

Hot mid-summer's petted crone,  
Sweet to me thy drowsy tone,

Tells of countless sunny hours,  
Long days, and solid banks of flowers.  
Aught unsavory or unclean  
Hath my insect never seen;  
But violets and bilberry bells,  
Maple-sap and daffodels,  
Grass with green flag half-mast high,  
Succory to match the sky,  
Columbine with horn of honey,  
Scented fern and agrimony,  
Clover, catch-fly, adder's-tongue,  
And brier roses dwelt among;  
All beside was unknown waste,  
All was picture as he passed.  
Wiser far than human seer,  
Yellow-breeched philosopher!  
Seeing only what is fair,  
Sipping only what is sweet.  
Thou dost mock at fate and care  
Leave the chaff and take the wheat.



THE BUR-MARIGOLD.









# THE BUR-MARIGOLD.

*BIDENS CHRYSANTHEMOIDES Michaux.*

---

THE quiet August noon has come;  
A slumbrous silence fills the sky,  
The fields are still, the woods are dumb,  
In glassy sleep the waters lie.

And mark yon soft white clouds that rest  
Above our vale, a moveless throng;  
The cattle on the mountain's breast  
Enjoy the grateful shadow long.

Oh, how unlike the merry hours,  
In early June, when earth laughs out,  
When the fresh winds make love to flowers  
And woodlands sing, and waters shout.

But now a joy too deep for sound,  
A peace no other season knows,  
Hushes the heavens and wraps the ground,  
The blessing of supreme repose.

Beneath the open sky abroad,  
Among the plants and breathing things,  
The sinless, peaceful works of God,  
I'll share the calm the season brings.

*Bryant.*

It is in the midst of a scene like this, in the full-orbed summer, in the peaceful quiet of a season which has got through the hurry and bustle of life, has finished mainly the intense business of growth, the making of flowers and foliage, and just now pauses, a little drowsy with the heat, that the Bur-Marigold may be seen dotting the lowland meadows and swamps with its brilliant flowers. It is a plant of much beauty and interest, and will well repay a close acquaintance. It is a stout herb, from one to three feet high, with smooth, lanceolate, toothed, opposite leaves, bearing a few large, showy flowers, as seen in the plate.

It belongs to a genus which has some fifty or more species scattered over the tropical and temperate zones, some even being found in the arctic regions. It is a member of that largest order of flowering plants known as the *Compositæ*, plants which have a large number of flowers crowded together in a common receptacle or head, like the *Dahlia*, *Dandelion*, *Marigold*, etc. In the other plants each fertile flower produces a seed-vessel containing from a few to a very great number of seeds. In this order there is but one seed to each flower, and no proper seed-vessel at all.

In the *Compositæ* the individual flowers are necessarily very small, being packed together so closely in the head. But they usually contain all the parts of the true flower. The corolla is contracted into a narrow tube toothed at the top, the stamens adhering together by their anthers from another tube inside of this. The pistil, forked at top, pushes up through the inner tube of anthers, and, having its stigmatic surface covered with teeth-like processes, combs off much of the pollen and so is sure to be fertilized.

The calyx does not usually develop till after the rest of the

flower has withered and fallen away, when it takes its chance for development, and grows into bristles, hairs, scales, awns, teeth, etc., upon the top of the seed. The thistle-down is a good example of this; likewise, the two barbed teeth which crown the top of the flat seeds in our present plant. The curious and interesting arrangement of these seeds in the head, I may have occasion to speak of in another place.

The great family of the Composite flowers, which numbers about 12,000 species, or one-tenth of all flowering plants, is divided into three groups, according as each separate flower in the head has a strap-shaped floral appendage, as in the dandelion, or these floral parts occur only around the margin of the head, like rays, as in the Marigold and Sunflower, or are absent altogether, as in the Thistle. These groups are still farther divided and subdivided on other points of difference. The plants of this great order are mostly characterized by an acrid or stringent juice, which makes many of them serviceable in medicine, while some are very poisonous.

The scientific name of the genus *Bidens*, means two teeth, and is given in recognition of the two awns before referred to, with which the seeds are provided. These barbed teeth serve an excellent purpose, as minute grappling-hooks to attach the seeds to the fleece or hair of animals, the plumage of birds, and the clothing of men, thereby widely distributing them from the neighborhood of the mother plant.

In the usage of sentiment Mr. Hulme says, "The Pansy and Marigold are associated together as emblems of sorrow, and cards having wreaths of these two flowers painted on them and such mottoes as, 'May you ever escape them,' 'May they be far removed from thee,' are presented to each other by friends as an

offering and expression of kindly feeling. The French word for the Marigold and for care and anxiety is the same, *souci*, and the flower is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, *Mater dolorosa*. It would, however, appear to have been originally but an undesigned corruption, or else play upon words, its old name being *soucicle*, a word derived from the Latin *solis cyclus*, the circle of the sun, either on account of the brilliant yellow disk and rays of the flower, not unlike the heraldic representation of the sun, or the habit of the flowers turning with the sun toward the light — two theories for the origin of a name that would equally well suit the Sunflower of our gardens, a flower that Gerarde, writing in 1596, calls the 'Flower of the Sunne, or Marigold of Peru.' The English name, when analyzed, means literally the 'golden flower of Mary,' and points to a time when the monks held sway both in religious thought and botanical nomenclature, and not unfrequently tried to combine the two."

The garden Marigold is reckoned a good barometer, having the habit of closing up its petals at the approach of rain. Whether our present plant does this I cannot say. But many flowers certainly do, or at least they shut up upon the obscuration of the sun. Whether they think the clouding in of that luminary is premonitory of rain I know not. But I have seen a field brilliant with the blossoms of the Dandelion, almost literally a "cloth of gold" shining in the morning sun, and in an hour not a single trace of a flower could be seen anywhere. The sun had gone into retirement behind thick clouds, and the Dandelions had every one folded up their yellow rays and wrapped their green mantle around them, and gone to sleep, indistinguishable in the universal green of the meadows.

Into the story of this sun-loving and sun-worshipping flower I must be permitted to frame Emerson's picture of the poet naturalist, Thoreau:

And such I knew, a forest seer,  
A minstrel of the natural year,  
Foreteller of the vernal ides,  
A lover true who knew by heart  
Each joy the mountain dales impart;  
It seemed that Nature could not raise  
A plant in any secret place,  
In quaking bog, on snowy hill,  
Beneath the grass that shades the rill,  
Under the snow, between the rocks,  
In damp fields known to bird and fox,  
But he would come in the very hour  
It opened in its virgin bower,  
As if a sunbeam showed the place,  
And tell its long-descended race.  
It seemed as if the breezes brought him;  
It seemed as if the sparrows taught him;  
As if by secret sight he knew  
Where in far fields the orchis grew.  
Many haps fall in the field  
Seldom seen by wishful eyes,  
But all her shows did Nature yield,  
To please and win this pilgrim wise.

He trod the unplanted forest floor, whereon  
The alluring sun for ages hath not shone;  
He saw beneath dim aisles, in odorous beds,  
The slight *Linnæa* hang its twin-born heads,  
And blessed the monument of the man of flowers,  
Which breathes his sweet fame through the northern bowers.

He found the tawny thrush's broods:  
And the shy hawk did wait for him;  
What others did at distance hear,  
And guessed within the thicket's gloom,  
Was showed to this philosopher,  
And at his bidding seemed to come.

THE CLIMBING HEMP-WEED.









# CLIMBING HEMP-WEED.

*MIKANIA SCANDENS Willd.*

---

I COME from haunts of coot and hern,  
I make a sudden sally,  
And sparkle out among the fern,  
To bicker down a valley.

I chatter over stony ways,  
In little sharps and trebles,  
I bubble into eddying bays,  
And babble on the pebbles.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go  
But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling;

And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever.

*Tennyson.*

IN the sound of babbling brooks and singing birds, our graceful climber lives out the shining months of its summer life. It makes its home upon the shady banks and interlacing with the limbs of overarching trees, it curtains the bed of the sleepless streamlet with its festoons of leaves and clustering flowers. In such situations it may be looked for anywhere in the United States east of the Mississippi. The genus, which was named for Professor Joseph Mikan, of Prague, includes some sixty species found mostly in the warmer parts of America, Asia, and Africa.

It belongs to the order *Compositæ*, described in the last paper, though the heads of white and pink blossoms are unusually small, containing but four flowerets each. Several of these small heads are gathered into the flower-clusters represented in the plate. The fact that this vine belongs to the same order with the Thistle and Dandelion indicates the remarkable variety in the form and habit of plants so closely related in their flowering as are the members of this order. For we find in it not only such plants as the Marigold and Aster, and this vine, but many woody shrubs and several forest trees.

The blossoms of the Hemp-Weed open in midsummer and form a fine contrast with the bright-green, strongly-veined leaves. I doubt not the foliage with its graceful outline and rich color will form as attractive a part of the picture both in the book and in nature, as the flowers themselves. Indeed, I think we only need to have our attention called to the matter, to find more and more that is peculiarly attractive and charming in the foliage of plants. I can conceive of nothing in the plant world more admirable than some Horse-Chestnut trees which I have seen, the memory of which as a picture of great pleasantness will always

remain with me. To be sure, they had the grace of a well-rounded form, bounded by lines of beauty on every side. But their foliage was their glory, a solid mass of it, every leaf and leaflet perfect, and perfectly arranged and displayed, the terminal ones overlying each other from the bottom to the top of the tree like the feathers upon the breast of a bird. They were indeed master-pieces of Nature's art; pictures of the most exquisite beauty painted in one pigment. How simple are nature's methods, but how manifold the results.

In a former paper in this book I have recommended making collections of leaves of plants for studies of artistic forms. Since writing that paper I have chanced upon the same suggestion by Starr King in his "White Hills." I am only too glad to be convinced by eloquence so fine that my hint had not even the merit of novelty. The idea is all the more valuable to me, now that I find it commended by a lover of nature, whose fine sense of her various and matchless beauties is only equalled by the incomparable skill with which he makes them live and shine in his glowing words. He says:

"While we are shut in by the forest, we may turn our attention to the symmetry and variety of the leaves, and try to learn something of Nature's wealth of resources as to graceful form, within narrow boundaries. An eye that is sensitive to the grace of curves and parabolas and oval swells will marvel at the feast which a day's walk in the woods will supply from the trees, the grasses, and the weeds, in the varying outlines, the notchings, veinings, and edgings of the leaves. They stand for the art of sculpture in Botany, representing the intellectual delight of Nature in form, as the flowers express the companion art of painting.

Leaves are the Greek, flowers the Italian phase of the spirit of beauty that reveals itself through the Flora of the globe.

“An exhaustive collection of leaves would form one of the most attractive museums that could be gathered. It would be a privilege that could not but unseal in some measure the dullest eye, to look in one day over the whole scale of Nature’s foliage-art, from the feathery spray of the moss, to the tough texture of the Amazon lily’s stem that will float a burden of a hundred weight; from the bristles of the pine-tree to the Ceylon palm-leaf that will shelter a family with its shade.

“Would it not astonish us with something like reverent admiration, if we could sweep the gradation of Nature’s green as it is distilled from arctic and temperate and tropic light, and varied by some shade on every leaf that grows; if we could scan all the textures of the drapery woven out of salts and water in botanic looms, from the softest silk of the corn to the broad tissues of the banana’s stock; if we could see displayed in wide masses all the hues in which Autumn dyes the leaves of our own forests, as though every square mile had been drenched in the aerial juices of a gorgeous sunset? And then when we should see how the general geometry of the verdure is broken into countless patterns, we should find our museum of leaves as engaging a school for the education of the intellect as a collection of all vertebræ, or a representative conservatory of the globe.

“A careful and eloquent observer of Nature describes the leaf as the sudden expansion of the stem that bore it; an uncontrollable expression of delight, on the part of the twig that Spring has come, shown in a fountain-like expatiation of its tender green heart into the air. And to hold this joy, Nature moulds the leaves as

vases into the most diverse and fantastic shapes,—of eggs, and hearts, and circles, of lances, and wedges, and arrows, and shields. She cleaves and parts and notches them in the most cunning ways, combines their blades into the most subtle and complicated varieties, and scallops their edges and points into patterns that involve, seemingly, every possible angle and every line of grace.”

The grace of this airy vine and the delicious summer rest and the peaceful calm of the blue air which it calls to mind, brings with it the memory of Lowell's lines :

This willow is as old to me as life;  
And under it full often have I stretched,  
Feeling the warm earth like a thing alive,  
And gathering virtue in at every pore,  
Till it possessed me wholly and thought ceased,  
Or was transfused in something to which thought  
Is coarse and dull of sense. Myself was lost,  
Gone from me like an ache, and what remained  
Became a part of the universal joy.  
My soul went forth, and, mingling with the tree,  
Danced in the leaves; or floating in the cloud,  
Saw its white double in the stream below;  
Or else sublimed to purer ecstasy,  
Dilated in the broad blue over all.  
I was the wind that dappled the lush grass,  
The thin-winged swallow skating on the air;  
The life that gladdened everything was mine.  
Was I thus truly all that I beheld?  
Or is this stream of being but a glass  
Where the mind sees its visionary self,  
As, when the kingfisher flits o'er his bay,  
Across the river's hollow heaven below  
His picture flits;—another, yet the same?





THE WHITE BAY.



# THE WHITE BAY.

*GORDONIA PUBESCENS.*

---

OH, ye who love to overhang the springs,  
And stand by living waters, ye whose boughs  
Make beautiful the rocks o'er which they play,  
Who pile with foliage the great hills, and rear  
A paradise upon the lonely plain,  
Trees of the forest and the open field!  
Have ye no sense of being? Does the air,  
The pure air, which I breathe with gladness, pass  
In gushes o'er your delicate lungs, your leaves,  
All unenjoyed? When on your winter's sleep  
The sun shines warm, have ye no dreams of spring?  
And when the glorious spring-time comes at last,  
Have ye no joy of all your bursting buds,  
And fragrant blooms, and melody of birds,  
To which your young leaves shiver? Do ye strive  
And wrestle with the winds, yet know it not?  
Feel ye no glory in your strength when he,  
The exhausted Blusterer, flies beyond the hills  
And leaves you stronger yet?

Nay, doubt we not that under the rough rind,  
In the green veins of these fair growths of earth,  
There dwells a nature that receives delight  
From all the gentle processes of life,  
And shrinks from loss of being. Dim and faint  
May be the sense of pleasure and of pain,  
As in our dreams; but, haply, real still.

*Bryant.*

THE only representative of our peculiarly rich Southern flora which adorns our pages is the White Bay, represented so finely in our plate. It is a large shrub, blooming resplendent in the everglades of Florida and the rich semi-tropical forests of Georgia. Mr. Sprague has reproduced the beauty and elegance of the flower so faithfully that I need not attempt a further description of it in words.

The genus was named for Dr. Gordon, an old-time botanist of Aberdeen, Scotland. It belongs to the order of the Camellias, and is first cousin to the tea plant whose fragrant decoction daily "cheers but does not inebriate" the whole civilized world.

If my readers will look with a little care at the leaves on the plant, as the artist has pictured them, they will see that they are not arranged one directly above the other, nor one opposite the other, but, in what appears at first sight, a disorderly fashion about the stem. It will be worth while, I trust, to look a little into what is suggested by this fact, and see if there be a law or system in the arrangement of the leaves of plants. This matter has been the subject of no little study on the part of botanists and other scientific people, and here, as elsewhere in nature it has been found that the rule is not accident or chaos, but law and order.

"All nature is but art unknown to thee,  
All chance, direction which thou canst not see,  
All discord, harmony not understood."

But we are learning to know nature's art, and to understand the deeper harmonies hidden in her apparent discords.

Dr. Gray says the leaves are symmetrically arranged upon the stem, and that their position determines that of the buds and

branches. "A plant no less than an animal is symmetrical. Leaves are either single, or else there is a pair or more than a pair upon each joint. When a pair only, they stand always upon exactly opposite sides of the stem; when three, four, or any other number, they divide the circumference of the stem equally, that is, they stand as far apart from each other as possible in the circle. A circle of three or more leaves is called a whorl. The pairs or whorls of leaves follow each other in a fixed order; each pair stands over the intervals of the pair next below, and the leaves of the whorl of three or other number correspond to the intervals of those next below and above.

"In the alternate arrangement, that is when bud and leaf is produced upon each joint, the single leaves succeed each other in a definite order maintaining a complete symmetry. Each leaf projects from the stem at a fixed angle with that which precedes it, which is uniform for the species, but is different in the different species. In the simplest case the second leaf is on exactly the opposite side of the stem from the first, of course higher up; the third leaf on the opposite side from the second, and therefore vertically over the first. So the leaves are in two vertical ranks; the angular divergence, that is, the angle which successive leaves make is one half the circumference of the stem.

"Other plants have the angular divergence one-third, that is, the second leaf is placed one-third round the stem; the third is one-third round from that, and the fourth of course comes directly over the first, the fifth over the second, and so on, the leaves being hence disposed in three vertical ranks." Alders and sedges form an example of this. "A line traced on the stem through the place of attachment of the successive leaves forms a spiral:

each turn from one leaf round to the one directly over it is called a cycle. Alternate leaves are never in four ranks, but they are very commonly — most commonly — in five. In that case the angular divergence or portion of the circle between two successive leaves is two-fifths of the circumference, and the spiral line ascends through two whole turns round the stem before it touches a leaf exactly over the one at the point of starting, and that is the sixth leaf in the series. These several modes of arrangement may be designated by the fractions  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{2}{5}$ , which measure the angle of divergence of the successive leaves in the spiral. The denominators likewise express the number of vertical ranks, and the numerators the number of turns round the stem which the spiral makes in completing the cycle." But leaves are arranged in 8 vertical ranks, and in 13, and 21, and 34, and even a greater number. In such cases the spiral makes respectively 3, 5, 8 and 13 turns in completing the cycle.

It will be found that these fractions form a series,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{3}$ ,  $\frac{2}{5}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{3}{7}$ ,  $\frac{2}{6}$ ,  $\frac{5}{11}$ , etc., each numerator from the third being formed by adding together the two preceding numerators, and the denominators are formed in the same way. The subject comes therefore within the field of mathematics, and has furnished matter for much interesting mathematical discussion. Among other points deduced from the mathematical treatment of the question is this, that however high the series runs, and it is quite complex in some developments of it, as in the pine cone and the arrangement of seeds in the heads of composite flowers, no successive leaves are ever more than one-half the circumference apart or ever less than one-third.

Prof. Benjamin Peirce pointed out that there was also a

correspondence between this law of position of the leaves and other parts of plants on the stem, and the law of the motion of the planets about the sun, so that if the time of the revolution of any planet be divided by the time of the planet next outside it, the quotient would be one of the fractions which express the position of the leaves, nearly, as given above.

If we inquire the reason for such an arrangement of the leaves as here set forth, we are told that we shall find at least one reason in the fact that by placing the leaves in these positions they are thus best arranged to receive light, the force by which they perform their double function of lungs and stomach; that when so placed the leaves above cut off less of the light from those below than by any other arrangement. There is also another reason suggested in the fact that this arrangement gives symmetry and beauty to the plants not otherwise attainable. But I suppose we may look for other reasons and more profound, for building plants and planets on this one plan, in the mind of Him who is the Architect of both.

This law of the position of the leaves of plants was first noticed about a century ago by Bonnet, a French botanist, who wound a thread about a twig of plum or peach, touching the points of attachment of the successive leaves. He observed the resulting spiral, and the fact that the successive leaves made a uniform angle with each other about the stem. Other botanists made the observation with respect to a large number of plants and noted the various applications of the law in the different species and the different parts of the plant, as in the leaf-buds, flower-buds, petals, sepals, seeds, etc. But it was left to our great mathematician Prof. Peirce, in 1849, to announce the mathemati-

cal law by which all these observations are to be explained and classified,—the law of extreme and mean ratio, as it is called; that is, the dividing a thing into two parts, in such a way that the smaller part shall be to the larger as the larger is to the whole.

In dismissing our lovely flower and the lesson of celestial mechanics to which it has led us, we will pause a moment to catch the song of another poet who has heard the voice of the forest trees.

Pine in the distance,  
Patient through sun and rain,  
Meeting with graceful persistence,  
The north wind's wrench and strain,  
No memory of past existence  
    Brings thee pain;  
Right for the zenith heading,  
Friendly with heat and cold,  
Thine arms to the infinite spreading  
Of the heavens, just from of old,  
Thou only aspirest the more,  
Unregretful the old leaves shedding  
That fringed thee with music before,  
And deeper thy roots embedding  
In the grace and the beauty of yore;  
    Thou sighest not "Alas, I am older,  
The green of last summer is sear!"  
But loftier, hopefuller, bolder,  
Wins broader horizons each year.

*Lowell.*



THE CARDINAL-FLOWER.



# THE CARDINAL-FLOWER.

*LOBELIA CARDINALIS L.*

---

THEN think I of deep shadows on the grass,—  
Of meadows where in sun the cattle graze,  
    Where, as the breezes pass,  
The gleaming rushes lean a thousand ways,—  
Of leaves that slumber in a cloudy mass,  
    Or whiten in the wind,— of waters blue  
    That from the distance sparkle through  
Some woodland gap,— and of a sky above,  
Where one white cloud like a stray lamb doth move.

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked with thee;  
The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,  
    Who, from the dark old tree  
Beside the door sung clearly all day long,  
And I, secure in childish piety,  
    Listened as if I heard an angel sing  
    With news from heaven, which he could bring  
Fresh every day to my untainted ears,  
When birds, and flowers, and I were happy peers.

*Lowell.*

WE have before us one of our most brilliant wild-flowers. Nature may almost defy art to reproduce the color with which she dyes its flaming petals. Nothing comparable to it is seen

in our native floral domain, and nature does not repeat it in even the brilliant colors of the autumn woods. As splendid and as characteristic as this color is in the Cardinal-flower, it is said to be not quite constant, but occasionally "sports" pink, white, and even yellow.

It is very common in New England, and is indeed distributed throughout the country east of the Rocky Mountains. It always grows on low ground in marshes and by the side of water-courses. It lines the banks of Taunton Great-River for long distances, standing up to its middle in water at high tide, and bending low and swaying heavily as the whelming waves go over its head from the puffing, hurrying little steamers passing by.

The splendid display and contrast of colors which a mass of these flowers make by the side of a clear stream is very striking. The green leaves of the trees are massed behind and above, the grass below, and in the midst this blood-red flower, like tongues of flame, reaching up, the blue sky overhead, and all repeated in the glassy water beneath, make a picture not to be forgotten.

The lines of Dr. Holmes give us a poetical interpretation of some such scene.

The Cardinal, and the blood-red spots,  
Its double in the stream;  
As if some wounded eagle's breast,  
Slow throbbing o'er the plain,  
Had left its airy path impressed  
In drops of scarlet rain.

The Cardinal-flower grows from two to five feet high, and remains in bloom from July to October, thus both by its size

and season of flowering, contributing its full share to the beauty of our summer and autumn landscape. It comes in with the heat, and goes out with the frost.

It is said to be easy of cultivation in gardens where moist places may be found into which to transplant it. It seems to be capable of crossing in a wild state with a large blue-flowered species of the *Lobelia*, common in our woods. Examples of hybrids produced in nature which show marked characteristics of both species are not unknown. Whether the hybrids propagate any other way than by shoots I know not.

The genus *Lobelia* comprises some two hundred species scattered over the world, about twenty of which are natives of this country, though strange to say none have ever yet been found on the Pacific coast. Botanically considered, the genus is related to such compositæ as the Asters on the one side and to the Campanulas or Bell-flowers on the other. A comparison of the parts, as for example, of the pistil and stamens with those of the Aster, and the corolla with that of the Bell-flower, would make the relationship apparent to any observer.

Botanists have noticed that many species of *Lobelia* are fertilized by help of insects, as I have had occasion to show is true of several other flowers, whose natural history has been given in this book and in "Beautiful Wild Flowers." But in the Cardinal-flower we have an example of a plant depending upon birds for help in the act of pollenization. As will easily be seen by an inspection of the flower or of the plate, the anthers and partly the filaments of the stamens are glued together at their sides forming a close tube. The pollen is produced on the inside of this and discharged from the open bearded mouth at the end.

Now the pistil grows up through this narrow tube, and at last protrudes beyond it. At first glance it would seem impossible that the flower should not be self-fertilized. But by looking closer it will be found that the pollen all ripens and falls out of the anther before the pistil grows up to the end of the tube where the pollen is produced. Moreover, the stigmatic surface is on the inside of the two lobes which are made by splitting the end of the pistil down. As the pistil pushes up through the tube, by the anthers, these surfaces are shut close together, face to face, so that the pollen could not possibly reach them. These lobes open and expose their stigmatic surface only when they have protruded quite beyond the end of the pollen-bearing anther tube.

The plate shows not only the position of this organ, but also in the newer flowers at the top the anther tube with no pistil, and, lower down, flowers where the pistil has completed its growth and expanded its yellow-lobed stigma ready for pollenization. Now it is evident that any particular flower must be fertilized by pollen from a flower younger than itself. Associated with this arrangement of parts of which I have spoken are adaptations for securing help in transferring the pollen from the younger to the older flowers, such as a supply of nectar secreted at the bottom of the tubular corolla, and advertised by the brilliant color of the flower. As has been shown by Mr. Darwin, Prof. J. E. Todd and others, in the case of other species of *Lobelia*, bees visit the flowers in search of the nectar, and getting their backs dusted with pollen from the end of the anther-tube which arches out over them, carry it to older flowers where the pistil is ready to receive it.

According to Prof. Goodale, however, "the Cardinal-flower has so long and narrow a corolla-tube that bees are unable to reach its nectar, which is, moreover, so watery that they do not in this case resort to their frequent expedient of biting through the corolla to get at it. They are replaced by our beautiful ruby-throated humming-bird, which may be seen when the plants are plentiful, gracefully posing itself before one flower after another, while its tongue deftly explores them and removes their sugared stores; but in doing this the bird is continually receiving pollen from the anthers of young flowers and leaving it on the expanded stigmas of those which are older. This is one of the very few cases in which our native flowers are adapted to fertilization by humming-birds; but in tropical America, where these birds are abundant, many flowers are exclusively cross-fertilized by them. Such flowers are sometimes spoken of as ornithophilous, or bird-loving.

For most of the following facts concerning the origin of the popular and scientific names of the Cardinal-flower and its history, I am indebted to Prof. Meehan's "Native Flowers and Ferns of the United States." The generic name was given to it more than a century and a half ago by Plumier, who was an ingenious Frenchman, noted for his discoveries among American plants, in honor of Mathias de l'Obel, a famous Flemish botanist of the sixteenth century. Lobel, according to all accounts, was a remarkable man. He was born in Lisle, Flanders, in 1538, and died in London in 1616; was graduated in medicine in Montpellier, practised at Antwerp, became physician to the Prince of Orange, settled in England about 1570, though it appears that he had lived there for a time during early life, and served as gardener to the Earl of

Zouch, at Hackney, near London. He was subsequently appointed botanist and physician to King James the First. He was the author of several voluminous works on botany, all of which were profusely illustrated. He projected a vast botanical cyclopædia and prepared a portion of it, which was edited and published half a century after his death by Parkinson. It is said that the idea of natural families among plants may be found in Lobel's works.

"The illustrations of Lobel's works can scarcely be recognized now as belonging to the plants for which they were intended." And, in the light of this fact, "it is amusing," says Prof. Meehan, "to find Lobel complaining that the cuts illustrating the work of his predecessor, Mathioli, are so unlike nature, that he thinks this early author must have drawn his pictures in many cases from his imagination."

One may judge of the estimation in which he and his works were held by later botanists, by the fact that it was nearly a century after his death that Plumier named for him this important and interesting genus of plants. We first hear of the Cardinal-flower in Parkinson's "Herbel," published in England about 1630. He says that he had the root of the plant from France, it having been sent over from the New World by the French who had settled in Canada. It is therefore probable that our Cardinal-flower was among the earliest of our native plants to be sent to the Old World, and to receive the admiring attention of botanists there. It no doubt got its popular name in France, as Parkinson seems to say, a name which we can easily suppose was suggested by the resemblance of its brilliant color to the scarlet hat and cassock of a cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. Parkinson calls it "a very brave" plant, referring,



of course, to its gaudy or showy dress of scarlet blossoms. And Mrs. Sigourney shows her appreciation of its regal splendor and dignity by picturing the

“Lobelia attired like a queen in her pride.”

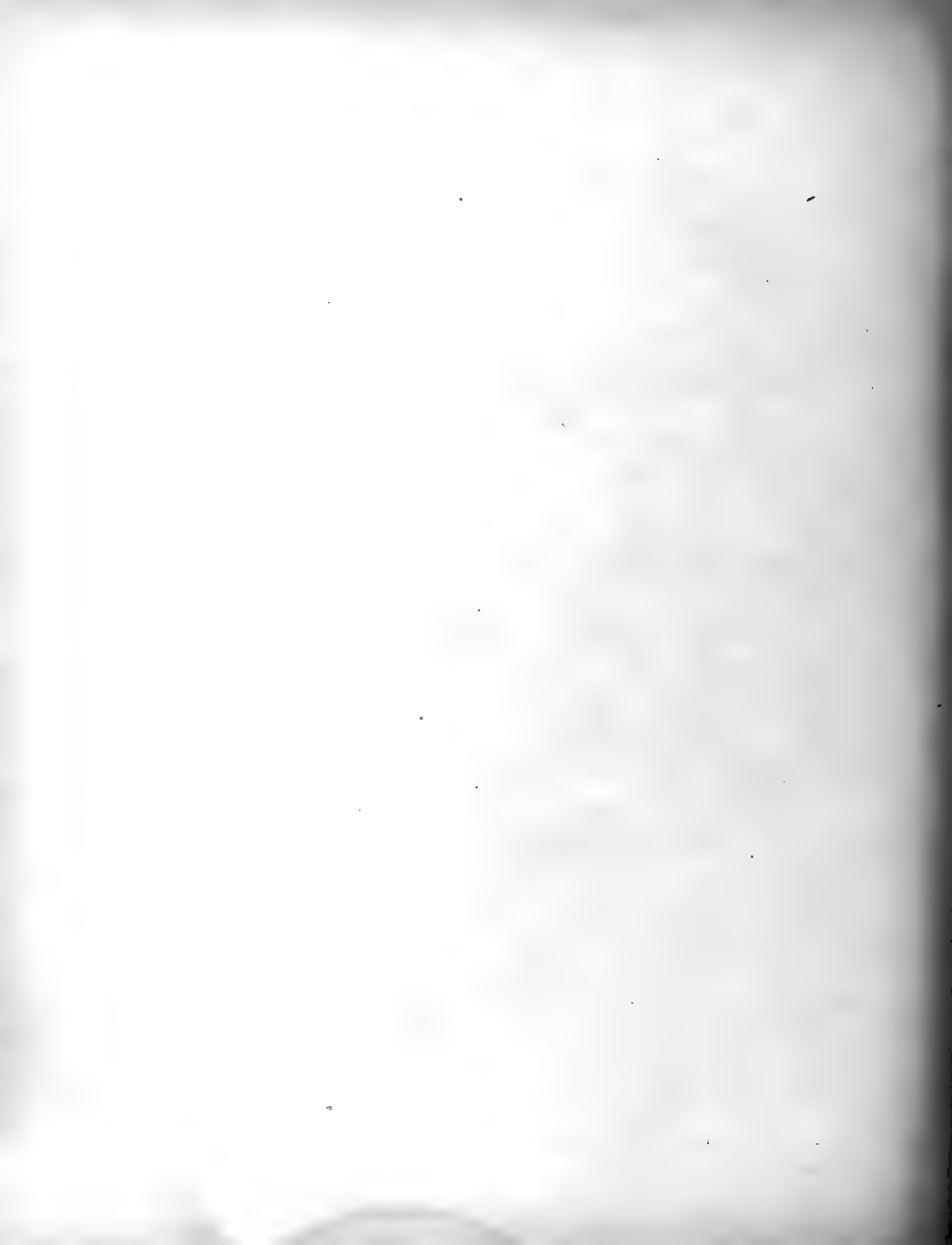
There are frequent references to this “flower of the scarlet hat” in American poets, and always with recognition of its noble and striking qualities. The floral emblematisers have not been unmindful of its highborn name and nature and have dedicated it to “Distinction.” In “Berkshire Wild-flowers” Miss Dora Read Goodale thus sweetly sings its praise :

To the westward burns the smouldering day,  
 Still and solemn in the sunset sky;  
 In the purple hollows far away  
 Shadowy veils of early evening lie,  
 And the misty mountain tops are gray.

In the stagnant pool, stirred by a breath,  
 All the shifting light and color lies,  
 In its shallows, dim with brooding death,  
 All the sweeping splendors of the skies  
 Glass themselves, and scatter light beneath.

Whence is yonder flower, so strangely bright?  
 Would the sunset's last reflected shine  
 Flame so red from that dead flush of light?  
 Dark with passion is its lifted line,  
 Hot, alive, amid the falling night.

Still it burns intenser as I gaze,  
 Till its heart-fire quickens with my own,  
 And when night shuts in the dusky ways  
 Red and strange shine out the lights of home,  
 Where my flower its parting sign delays.



BLUE-STEMMED GOLDEN-ROD.







# BLUE-STEMMED GOLDEN-ROD.

*SOLIDAGO CAESIA L.*

---

WHEN the wayside tangles blaze,  
In the low September sun,  
When the flowers of summer days  
Droop and wither, one by one,  
Reaching up through bush and briar,  
Sumptuous brow and heart of fire,  
Flaunting high its wind-rocked plume,  
Brave with wealth of native bloom,—  
Golden-Rod!

In the pasture's rude embrace,  
All o'errun with tangled vines,  
Where the thistle claims its place,  
And the stragglng hedge confines,  
Bearing still its sweet impress  
Of unfettered loveliness,  
In the field and by the wall,  
Binding, crowning, clasping all,—  
Golden-Rod!

*Elaine Goodale.*

"THE eighty or more species of the genus *Solidago*," says Prof. Goodale, "are nearly all North American. Like their near of kin, the Asters, the Golden-Rod presents so many intermediate and puzzling forms that the species are difficult to identify. The

points upon which chief reliance is placed for their discrimination, are, for the most part, minute; such as the character of the scales of the involucre, the shape and veining of the leaves, and the relative length of the outer or ray flowers."

This species is common, growing in rich moist thickets and woodlands, flowers from August to October, and is certainly one of the prettiest of the genus. It is easily distinguished from the two other common species, *S. bicolor* and *S. latifolia*, which like this, bear their flowers in the axils of the leaves, by the stem, which is round and smooth, while the stem of the first-named is covered with grayish hairs, and that of the other is distinctly angled.

Though there are upwards of fifty species of Golden-Rod in this country alone, only one may be found native in all Europe, the *S. Virga-aurea*, or the Golden-Rod Solidago of the old herbalists, a native also of our northern regions. All reference to the Golden-Rod in English literature must be applied to that species. This common name of the familiar home plant, which in the old times was found in every cottage door-yard,—

" And golden-rods and tansy running high,  
That o'er the pale-tops smiled on passers-by;  
Flowers in my time which every one would praise,  
Though thrown like weeds from gardens nowadays,"—

would naturally be brought by the English emigrants and applied to the old favorites whose pleasant greetings in the forests of the New World would remind them of the old home across the seas.

I learn from Prof. Meehan that the name of the genus *Solidago* is usually referred to Linnæus, though he credits it to



Vaillant, one of the great botanists of the generation which immediately preceded his. It is said to have been derived from *solidus*, a Latin word meaning to make whole or solid, and originally given to the *Virga-aurea*, for its medicinal reputation. Salmon, an herbalist of the beginning of the seventeenth century, says; "It is one of the most noble wound-herbs; cures wounds and ulcers." It appears, also, to have been famous as a dye. Another old herbalist, Culpeper, says: "Venus rules this herb. It is a balsamic, vulnerary herb, long famous against inward hurts and bruises. No preparation is better than a tea of this herb for this service, and the young leaves, green or dry, have the most virtue." Though Linnæus admits it into his "Materia Medica," and though it was named from its medicinal virtue, yet it is now wholly discarded from medicinal use. The name of our species, *cæsia*, means bluish gray, and refers to the color of the stalk.

The Golden-Rod is a principal element in every picture of an American autumn. It is a chief floral ornament in our truly splendid autumnal landscapes. It matches well with the gorgeous hues which clothe our forests in that season of the year. It is among the last of Nature's bright things to fade out into the sad universal gray of the dead season.

"But on the hills the golden-rod and the aster in the wood,  
And the yellow sunflower by the brook in autumn beauty stood,  
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls the plague on men,  
And the brightness of their smile was gone from upland, glade, and glen."

With flowers as with men, "the time to die" comes at last to all. But the Golden-Rod and the Aster are the crown and

the glory of the season's old age. They wait upon his slow, lingering footsteps in the lengthening shadows, and most gloriously strew his pathway with the brightest floral gems of earth. The poet makes old Autumn sad that he must part with so much that is beautiful.

“There comes, from yonder height,  
A soft repining sound,  
Where forest-leaves are bright,  
And fall like flakes of light,  
To the ground.

It is the Autumn breeze,  
That, lightly floating on,  
Just skims the reedy leas,  
Just stirs the glowing trees,  
And is gone.

He moans by sedgy brook,  
And visits with a sigh,  
The last pale flowers that look,  
From out their sunny nook  
At the sky.”

But it seems to me he ought rather to be glad that the flowers so fill the earth and stay so long, that they bravely face cold, and winds, and sleet, that they may stay to cheer the world with their presence, and that they blossom even by his new made grave, till the wintry winding-sheet of snow covers all. Do not these beautiful creatures of the sun teach us to look on the sunny side of things, on the sunny side even of autumn and of Death? But there are a thousand pleasant scenes of autumn time with which the Golden-Rod is most closely asso-

ciated. The full maturing of Nature's yearly cycle of life, the shortening days, the yellow light, the blue haze in all the air, as though the sky had fallen down close upon the ground, the shorn meadows, the golden harvests of grain, the ripened fruit loading the bending trees, or heaped in dazzling pyramids of color upon the green turf beneath, the leaves of the forest falling one by one silently through the still sunny air till they cover the earth as with sunset clouds,—how are such scenes as these conjured up by the waving of this golden-tipped wand!

The Golden-Rod comes at the end of Nature's floral season. So should it fitly come at the end of our floral book, and I know of none who has more lovingly sung its praises than the author whose lines shall make my good-by to my readers and the Golden-Rod together.

This flower is fuller of the sun  
Than any our pale North can show;  
It has the heart of August won,  
And scatters wide the warmth and glow  
Kindled at summer's mid-noon blaze,  
Where gentians of September bloom  
Along October's leaf-strewn ways,  
And through November's paths of gloom.

Herald of Autumn's reign, it sets  
Gay bonfires blazing round the fields:  
Rich Autumn pays in gold his debts  
For tenancy that summer yields.  
Beauty's slow harvest now comes in;  
New promise with fulfilment won:  
The heart's vast hope does but begin,  
Filled with ripe seeds of sweetness gone.

Because its myriad glimmering plumes  
Like a great army's stir and wave;  
Because its gold in billows blooms,  
The poor man's barren walks to lave;  
Because its sun-shaped blossoms show  
How souls receive the light of God,  
And unto earth give back that glow—  
I thank Him for the Golden-Rod.

*Lucy Larcom.*











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