

The blue violet is a very common plant. It grows best in damp ground, but it is found in dry ground also. It may be found from the first of May till on into June. The leaves are long-petioled, heart-shaped, and have a wavy margin. The flowers are borne on long petioles. Each plant has two or three flowers. The corolla is made up of five petals. They are different shaped. The petals are bearded. One of them has a spur. They are colored a deep blue, but sometimes they may be found in a faded-out blue color that is almost white. They have very prominent blue veins. The plant has a short, fibrous rootstock.

THOMAS H. DICKSON.

Pictou, N. S.

FROM A FLOWER LOVER.
(Bessie won a garden prize last year, you remember.)

Dear Puck and Beavers,—I am a great lover of flowers, and have a "wild-flower" garden at my home. I have also a large collection of wild flowers, pressed and mounted, with the common and botanical names, the habitat, and my name.

The "spring beauty" (*Claytonia virginica*) has a white flower, veined with pink, or all pink. Several of these are borne in a terminal loose raceme, the blossoms mostly turned one way. The calyx has two sepals. The corolla has five petals, slightly united at the base. It has five stamens, one inserted at the base of each petal. It has a weak stem, erect, or sometimes reclining, which springs from a deep, tuberous root. It has two stem leaves that are opposite; the linear stem leaves, which are about three-sevenths of an inch long, are shorter than the basal leaves.

From March till May, this tender spring comer may be found in moist woods, open groves, and low meadows. A great number of these flowers cluster together, where eager hands come to pull them. The flower closes its petals when being carried off, to show its bashfulness.

The "wake-robin" (*Trillium*) has three different colors. Some are pure white, some are dull purple, and odd ones are found white, striped with green. The calyx has three spreading sepals. The corolla has three oval petals. It has six stamens. The flower grows on an erect or slightly-inclined footstalk. The leaves are in a whorl of three broad, ovate parts. It blooms from April until June, in rich, moist woods. On pulling a trillium, I kept it fresh for two weeks.

The "false Solomon's seal" (*Smilacina racemosa*) has a white or greenish, small, slightly-fragrant flower, in a densely-flowered terminal panicle. It has a perianth of six separate, spreading segments. It also has six stamens and one pistil. The stem ascends two to three feet in height. The leaves are alternate, and seated on the stem. They are oblong, pointed at both ends, and parallel-veined. The plant has a cluster of aromatic, round, pale red, speckled berries. From May until July it blooms in moist woods, thickets, and hillsides.

Wishing "The Farmer's Advocate" every success.

BESSIE R. DEANS

(Age 13, Sr. IV.)

Galt, Ont., May 21, 1912.

[One species of False Solomon's Seal is also called False Spikenard. Gray gives three species in all.—Ed.]

Dear Puck,—You asked us all to try hard for a prize, and for one, I am. I tried twice before, and am on the Honor Roll. Now, here are my essays:

Shepherd's Purse.—I found this troublesome weed in the pasture field amongst the grass and clover, which it tried hard to crowd out. At the base, there is a large tuft of leaves, or sometimes none at all. The leaves are deeply cut with little hairs on them. The flowers are small and white, with no odor. The pod is flat, and notched at the top. This plant can easily be destroyed by constant cultivation, or hoeing, which will soon clear infested farms.

Cowbell.—I found this weed on the roadside, although it will grow in waste places. It has deep-running roots, sending up bare rootlets and flowering stems. The leaves are pale green, and smooth. The flowers are white, and nearly an inch across. The petals are deeply divided. Deep plowing and short rotation

of crops, or frequent cultivation, will either destroy or keep it in check.

Treacle Mustard.—The stems are straight, about eight inches to two feet high. The leaves are lance-shaped. The flowers are a bright yellow. Sheep are fond of the seed. Found in waste places, although I found mine in cultivated land. To destroy it, plow land in spring and fall. A disk harrow after harvest may be used to good advantage before too many roots appear.

Hoping to win a prize, I remain, "A True Beaver." NELLIE I. WYATT
(Age 9, Class III.)

Ballymote, Ont.

Dear Puck,—As I am interested in wild flowers, I thought I would write to your competition, too.

The Solomon's seal is so called because the root looks as if a seal upon wax was on it. There is a seal for each year, and so we can see how old it is. The flowers come in pairs under the leaves. They are a whitish yellow, and bell-shaped. They look very pretty. The leaves are alternate, and nearly oval. They usually grow in thickets, or shaded places, near the Jack-in-the-pulpit. The flowering season is during May and June. In the fall their stems are hung with blue-black berries.

The May apple grows in rich and moist soil. It grows about one foot high. If they have flowers, they have two leaves, but if they have no flowers they have only one leaf. The flower has six petals, which are white, and come between the two leaves. It has an unpleasant fragrance. It has six sepals. The fruit ripens in July. It is edible, but I don't like it. On account of its shape, it has been called the "wild lemon." The big, umbrella-shaped leaves seem to be protecting the pretty white flower.

The Crinkle-root grows in rich leaf-mould. It has three-lobed leaves, which are opposite. The flowers are white, and clustered at the top of stem. The root is good to eat, and ten inches long. It blooms mostly in May, but there are some flowers left yet. The stem is leafless below, bearing only two leaves at the top. I will close now.

BARBARA MARTIN (age 11, Jr. IV.)
Care J. L. Martin, Waterloo, Ont., R. R. 1.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—Plantain.—The plantain weeds belong to the family of plants which have their seeds scattered by birds. They grow in meadows, gardens, and lawns. The leaves spread out in a circle, and often lie flat. In this way they keep the grass from growing up and smothering out the plant. The flowers are on a long, slender stalk, and they start on the middle of it. They are small, round, bell-shaped things, with no particular color about them. The seeds are oval, somewhat larger than a clover seed. They get brown when ripe, and get loose. The birds fly down and get the seeds, and carry them in their mouths to a tree or a tuft of grass and begin eating them. They let some of them fall, and they roll into some hole or piece of earth, where they lie till the next spring, when they take root and grow into plants. The plantain is a very harmful and destructive plant to lawns, because it spreads out its leaves so widely that they smother out the grass and make large, ugly, bare spots.

Burdock.—The burdock is a large, harmful plant, and belongs to the family of plants that "steal their rides." It comes up early in the spring, and grows very quickly. It grows to a height of two to three or more feet if in long grass. It does not have seeds the first year, but comes up again the next year, and then has flowers and seeds. The roots are thick and tough, and grow down to a depth of one foot or more. The roots may be cut off half-way down, but they send up more shoots. The stalk, or stem, is a long, tapering, thick and wooden-like stick, with leaves growing out at regular intervals. The stalk, when full grown, is hollow, but the outside is as hard as wood, and it takes quite a knock to break it. The leaves are about one foot long and six inches wide at the bottom, but they taper and come to a point. They are veined, and are a dark green on the top and a whitish green on the bottom. If a leaf or stem is pulled off, a juice comes out,

which is very bitter if taken in the mouth. The flowers are a bundle of greenish-colored things, with points on them. They grow on the end of the stalks, and turn brown when ripe. They get loose, and if a dog or a sheep or anything touches them, they stick to it and are carried away. After a while they fall off and lie on the ground till the next spring. The main use of the burdock is the root, which is good, and is used extensively as a medicine. Sheep are the only animals that will eat them, and they won't do it if there is anything else to eat.

Violets (Canada).—There are many different kinds of violets, but there are five common kinds around this part of Ontario. They are, Canada, white, purple, longspur, and yellow. The Canada and the purple are the most common. The Canada violets grow in single bunches, with the stem growing to a height of three or four inches. The color of the leaves is a light green, a little lighter on the bottom than the top. The flowers are white inside, with the outside of the petals marked with blue. The seeds are in an oval pod, which gets brittle and hard when ripe, and the seeds all fly out and take root in some crevice or hole. There are flowers on most of the year, and they have a very sweet odor.

HOMER FITZGERALD (Class V.)

St. Ives, Ont.

Keep on spudding out the burdocks, Homer, and I think you will conquer them. By the way, have you never noticed the purple of the flowers when they are fully "out"? Keep watch, and see if you can't find it.

Dear Puck and Beavers,—Again I try to enter your precious corner, and again I am trying to escape that horrible w.-p. b. that has swallowed my letters. I am sending my drawing. I do not know the name of the plant, but it grows in a corner of our back yard. I thought it would be a good one to draw, so I drew it. I got it to-night, June 4th, 1912. It is a weed of a very disagreeable smell. The flowers are small and numerous, also part of them hairy and prickly. The weed grew in heavy clay land, which had been used as a chip-yard for a few years. The height could be described as one and a half feet. Many leaves grow on the plant and make it bushy. In shape, the leaves look like maple leaves, but have a rougher and coarser look, and are deeply veined. They are of a deep green color. The stems are hollow in the center. This is all I can say about the plant, but I hope it will win a prize, as I want a Nature Study Book. We have taken "The Farmer's Advocate" for a number of years, and we all like it fine. I am an English girl. I came to Canada five years ago, but I intend to go back to England. Wishing the Circle every success, I remain your friend.

ETHEL A. M. CAISLEY

(Age 13, Class Sr. IV.)

You see I have rescued you from that "horrible w.-p. b." even though you did not win a prize, Ethel. Now, do you see why you had no chance of winning one? Each Beaver was asked to draw and describe three plants; you attempted one only. It was a Jimson weed, an abominably ill-smelling plant. I believe you'll win a prize some day, Ethel, if you read the directions carefully, and try very hard to write an interesting sketch.

Beaver Circle Notes.

Not all of those whose drawings are published won prizes. In some cases the drawings were good and the compositions poor; in others the compositions were fine and the drawings lacking. The prizewinners were those whose descriptions and drawings were both good.

A well-known novelist editor was talking about criticism.

"I like pointed criticism," he said—"criticism such as I heard in the lounge of a theater the other night at the end of a play."

"The critic was an old gentleman. His criticism, which was for his wife's ears alone, consisted of these words: 'Well, you would come!'"

How To Act—Deportment

SOME GENERAL HINTS.

In passing others, one should always go behind them, if possible. If absolutely necessary to go before, one should excuse one's self. Children should be taught to say "excuse me," or "I beg your pardon," if they inconvenience others in the slightest degree.

In a public place, one should always act very quietly. Only people who are not ladies and gentlemen, talk or laugh loudly or attract attention in any way. It is not polite to look directly at strangers when passing them on the street; a glance before they come up is always sufficient to indicate whether they be acquaintances or not.

At a concert, applause should be expressed by clapping the hands, never by stamping with the feet nor shouting "encore!" If necessary to pass before others in going to one's place in church or concert-hall, one should always face those whom one is passing, and ask to be pardoned if the inconvenience is noticeable. It is very bad form to whisper during a lecture, play, or while a musical selection is being rendered. This last, of course, does not apply to music rendered by the orchestra between acts at a theater; people are expected to talk then if they choose. It is rude to point or toss articles in a public place.

One should never enter a private room without knocking and awaiting permission to enter.

Ostentation is always vulgar. To make a very great show is never in good form, and is all the worse if people have to undergo an evident strain to attain it. Daintiness can be secured without going to great expense, and simplicity is always safe. Clothes should never be over-elaborate; else one runs the risk of being over-dressed, which is much worse than being too plainly dressed; equipages for driving out should never be flashy; over-ornateness in architecture or house-furnishings should be avoided as the plague; tables should never be overloaded even with choicest viands; over-effusiveness in manner, especially in public places, should be checked.

Occasionally one hears people speak of "gentleman friends," "lady friends." This is not considered "nice," as it is taken for granted that all one's friends should be ladies and gentlemen. It is better to say, "A friend, Mr. J.," "A friend, Mrs. C." If necessary that the name be omitted, say "man friend," "woman" or "girl friend."

One should almost never dare to ask the loan of a book. If, for any reason, one is borrowed, it should be returned promptly. Usually, books are dearer to those who care for them than any other personal property, and it is very exasperating to have them scattered far and near among thoughtless folk, who may not, perhaps, even know how to take care of them.

A woman should not recognize a man who may chance to be one of a group of men standing in a public place. She is not supposed to look closely enough at the group to see one whom she may know.

On entering a house, one should always approach to shake hands with the hostess before speaking to anyone else present.

If the hostess opens the door for a man, she should precede him in going to the drawing-room or wherever he is to be taken.

It is always necessary to express pleasure to a hostess who has asked one to dinner or given entertainment in any other way.

One should never forget to thank anyone who may render one even the slightest service.

It is very rude to pry into the affairs of others, and it is considered in very bad form to ridicule others or to spread unkind gossip.

A woman who stares or chews gum, runs the risk of being thought no lady.

When passing from place to place, the younger women should always permit the older ones to precede. The old should always be given first place everywhere.

If a woman finds it necessary to go to a hotel while travelling alone, she need not go to the clerk's desk to register, but should go at once to the reception-room, signalling to one of the attendants (who may always be distinguished by