

to the Atlantic in the British provinces, has been recorded in Professor Macoun's Catalogue of Canadian plants, and it shows a similar wide range in the United States, even as far south as from California to the coasts of Florida. But it does seem strange that we actually know so little about this plant in America, and that no one has, so far, attempted to illustrate the species as it occurs in the north and south, east and west, in cultivated grounds, in woods, thickets, etc., instead of being contented with the idea that it is always the same introduced "common Chickweed."

In Europe the plant is known much better. Already Linnaeus distinguished between "pentstemon" and "decastemon" as two forms of the species, both of which were then figured in *Flora Danica* by M. Vahl and O. F. Mueller (1769-70); the locality for "pentstemon" is given as everywhere in cultivated grounds, while the other is said to be frequent in springy places. A corresponding variation in the number of stamens from 3 to 10 is, furthermore, recorded by Lightfoot¹ and Rafn.² Meanwhile Father Bernardinus of Ucria³ described an apetalous *Stellaria*, which he consequently named *S. apetala*, and which in many respects looks like a depauperate or abnormal form of our Chickweed. This is the plant which Dumortier⁴ described as *Alsine pallida* and Jordan⁵ as *Stellaria boreana*, and which Piré⁶ finally figured under the name *S. pallida*. "Pentstemon," "Decastemon" and "apetala" thus signify two distinct plants of which the two first were at that time supposed to represent *Stellaria media*, while "apetala" was a species distinct from this. However, some years later we find the Linnaean form "decastemon" elevated to specific rank as *Stellaria neglecta* Whe.,⁷ a suggestion

¹ Lightfoot, John. *Flora Scotica*, 1777, p. 172.

² Rafn, C. G. *Danmarks og Holsteens Flora*, 1800, p. 381.

³ Father Bernardinus of Ucria. *Plantæ ad Linnæanum opus addendæ et secundum Linnæi systema noviter descriptæ*. "Ræmer's Archiv für die Botanik," Vol. I, 1796, p. 68.

⁴ Dumortier B. *Prodromus floræ Belgicæ*, 1827, p. 109.

⁵ Jordan, A. *Pugillus plantarum novarum*, 1852, p. 33.

⁶ Piré, Louis. *Notice sur l'Alsine pallida* Dmtr. "Bull. de la soc. Roy. de Botanique de Belgique," Vol. 2, 1863, p. 43.

⁷ Weihe in: "Bluff et Fingerhuth: Compendium floræ Germaniæ," 1825, Vol. 1, p. 560.