

old man, returned, bearing in her hand some sort of wild rose-bush, with long, straggling, red shoots, and but symptoms of leaf-buds. This much we could tell from its general appearance, but, of course, it was no use in a botanical point of view.

I wonder what the old man thought we were searching for, and where and why he took the trouble of digging it up. By way of thanks I took off my hat, and waved it once or twice round my head, to which he responded. What he was—whether a duke in disguise, or merely a humble dabbler in science like ourselves—remains a mystery to this day; for when we returned over the fence on our homeward way, he and his peaceful cows had disappeared from the scene.

The sun had now become very hot, and we were glad to yield up our burdens to our errant knight, whom we met on the road returning to our aid. It being Saturday, we were obliged to finish our work in spite of tiredness, so after a short rest we proceeded to analyze and arrange each specimen according to its "family," "species," and "variety."

For this purpose, we use the "Manual of Botany of the Northern United States," by Asa Gray, Professor of Natural History in Harvard. This manual is very complete, and includes most of the plants native to this part of the Dominion.

Each plant, after being "prepared"—that is, having superfluous roots and leaves trimmed off—was laid upon a sheet of paper, and another sheet was carefully pressed down upon it with the finger, smoothing leaf by leaf to position. When the root or stem is too thick, the inner side must be sliced away, or it will not press nicely.

Having arrived at this point all the difficulty was over. We now placed a drier between every two specimens, and when a goodly pile had arisen we laid them in the copying-press between two calf-bound books, and screwed it down.

The driers, manufactured during previous evenings, are made of several sheets of the poorest blotting paper,—soft, old newspapers will do as well,—lightly stitched together. The botanist should be provided with quite a number of these useful articles, for while the specimens are under pressure, it is necessary to remove the driers often and substitute fresh ones.

As for the copying-press, we were certainly very lucky in possessing that admirable invention. It had been in the house a long time, and its discovery in the lumber-room was hailed with unconcealed joy. Mangle-weights, irons, and other heavy articles, answer the purpose equally well, though not so easy to manage.

A week or so spent in careful watching, changing driers, and so forth, and we had the satisfaction of seeing our specimens turn out remarkably well.

And now we had come to the last stage, which we managed as neatly as possible, sticking each specimen on a separate sheet with narrow strips of gummed paper, and having written in the lower right-hand corner the "family," "generic," and "common" names, along with the date, place of growth, and colour of the flower, we consigned all the sheets containing plants of one family to a dark-blue wrapper, labelled, and now we bring forth our *hortus siccus*, to be seen of men with pride and joy—but only when some kindred spirit crosses our path.

Many were the trips we made after that, in divers places and at various times, but never too often to find something new and something beautiful. The wild-wood has a hundred seasons to which we, in our higher intelligence, pay little heed, for the time of the wide-eyed *Blood-root* is not that of the *Violet*, nor are the honey laden *Columbine* and the *Trillium* exact contemporaries of the *Ox-eyed daisy*. So we still go about, noticing here a little and there a little of the Great Creator's

plan, as all must do who not only *see but observe*, until it is easy to say with Elizabeth Barrett Browning:—

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God."

ALL FOOLS' DAY.

A BATCH OF FIRST OF APRIL PRANKS.

When the day comes we all know it. There is no day like it. It stands out by itself in the Calendar,—in the Canadian Calendar as well as in others. There's the whispering the night before; then the muffled tripping of mischievous little feet in the morning; the giggling on the way down stairs,—the laughter that, in spite of everything, will out; the sombre smile of mater and pater; and the choking chuckling of the urchins.

Dear Old Canadian, had you ever a piece of paper pinned to your coat tail? Did you ever walk into the parlour expecting an important visitor after a fearful pull of the door bell, to find an empty salon, and even Bridget in her apron strings suffocating from her propriety? Were you ever sent to the nearest booksellers to oblige a friend by bringing home *The History of Eve's Grandmother*? Have you never asked, in the corner Fancy Store, for ten cents worth of "strap oil," and found when it was too late, a brigade of boisterous nephews on the alert to "give it" hard? Have you never supplied a fund of merriment for days after, by your one thoughtless moment on entering the breakfast room?

* * * * *

IN ENGLAND

a number of years ago, a card of invitation with a mysteriously official look, was issued, as follows:—

TOWER OF LONDON.

Admit the Bearer and Friend to view the Annual Ceremony of Washing the White Lion on April 1st. Admitted only by the White Gate. It is particularly requested that no gratuities be given to the Warden or his Assistants.

All day long cabs rattled and rushed with self-satisfied April Fools in quest of the White Gate.

* * * * *

IN FRANCE

a lady had stolen a watch from a friend's house on April 1st. Unfortunately for herself she was detected, but, keeping her wits about her, she tried to pass off the affair as an April joke. The magistrate, however, kept *his* wits about him too, and sentenced the would-be practical joker to imprisonment till the next Fool's Day.

* * * * *

While Francis, Duke of Lorraine, and his lady were imprisoned in Nantes, they effected a very clever escape under shelter of the day and its jokes. They both disguised themselves as peasants, his lordship with a hod on his shoulder, and her ladyship carrying a basket on her back. At an early hour of the day they passed through the gates of the city.

Suspicion was aroused, however, in the mind of a peasant who recognized the figures, and ran to the guard to warn the sentry.

"April Fool" cried the soldier, and the cry was echoed around from sergeant to captain.

During the day the story,—the good joke, was told to the Governor, who did not see quite so much fun in it as had been expected. Causing an examination to be made, he had the mortification to find that the joke had been but too well played. The duke and his lady had escaped.