

ALLIES OF *STELLARIA MEDIA* (L.) Cyrillo.

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(With two plates.)

Plants as common as the "common Chickweed" are seldom collected by botanists, very seldom studied, and as a rule, but poorly represented in herbaria. Authors of manuals, especially in North-America, have usually paid very little attention to the plant, and no variety or subspecies has, so far, been recorded from Canada or the United States. Being considered as a weed infesting gardens, and being so very abundant everywhere in damp soil, it has escaped attention in this country, although other plants of similar frequent occurrence, and with much the same behaviour as weeds have been granted a good deal of attention, and have been treated quite elaborately by systematic botanists. But *Stellaria media* appears always to be the same, a single species with no characteristic forms or varieties appended, yet it is recognized as being equally common in the boreal and temperate regions of both the old and new world, and to produce its flowers from earliest spring to late autumn or sometimes even throughout the winter.

Judging from a geographical range such as this, one would naturally suspect that the species would hardly be equally uniform and constant in appearance, as it is noted to be common nearly everywhere. We all know that it may be met with in our wanderings through woods and thickets, along borders of creeks, in old river-bottoms, very often remote from inhabited places, yet it is always looked upon as an introduced plant of no interest whatever. Whether it was introduced to this country from Europe or Siberia, no one knows, but the probability is, that it has existed on the Pacific Coast a sufficient time to develop into several varieties, or perhaps even subspecies with power to spread towards more distant regions in eastern direction. It would be interesting to know something about its geographical distribution in the boreal parts of America, where it, no doubt, extends beyond the Arctic circle as it does in Siberia and Europe, Russia for instance; that it extends from the Pacific