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CANADIAN SPECIES OF THALICTRUM.—III.*

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A most difficult chapter in the past history of Canadian meadow-rues is that relating to the summer-blooming white-flowered kinds; tall plants, usually inhabiting wet meadows or banks, and not coming into flower until early summer, their panicles often ample and of a plummy whiteness, making their fine display at a time when the early kinds, always green-flowered and inconspicuous, have passed to the fruiting stage.

The whiteness of the panicles of these white-flowered kinds is due to the fact that the numerous filaments that make up the bulk of the flowers are flattened, or at least thickened above, and are of a pure white, thus resembling in some degree narrow petals; and they even stand upright, after the manner of petals, whereas the filaments of the vernal green-flowered sorts are finely capillary and altogether pendulous.

Some member of this white-stamened group appears to have been the first among American meadow-rues to gain a place in European gardens. As early as the year 1635 there grew and flowered in Paris a Canadian meadow-rue with upright white stamens, and the name of it as *Thalictrum Canadense* was published in that year, at Paris, in a book on Canadian plants with the Latin title: *Canadensium Plantarum Historia*. If the printing of the name had been accompanied by an adequate description of the plant, we should have had here the beginning of the written history of some one of the several white-stamened meadow-rues of Canada; for, by such description the competent botanist of to-day might have identified some one or another of them as the *T. Canadense* of Cornut. That early description is not, however, of the least help to us in that direction, and all for the reason that said author, at least as to the fruit, describes precisely that of a familiar white-stamened European species

* C. Ott. Nat. xxiii. 17. 37.