

OUR WILD FLOWERS.

I. ALLEN JACK.

The following papers are not written for botanicals, nor are they intended for those disposed to enter upon a systematic study of plants. With a strong suspicion that his ignorance may readily be detected by the learned, and with the sincere desire not to be mistaken for a pretender, the writer readily admits at the outset that his knowledge of the subject selected for treatment is limited. He is however led to believe that this need not necessarily interfere with the comparatively successful accomplishment of his present purpose. Having always entertained and nourished an affection for the beauties of nature, and having become convinced that they could not be appreciated without methodical consideration, he has sought to acquire and utilize some knowledge of that branch of science which relates to vegetable life. A few years largely devoted to searching for and identifying wild flowers, and a lifetime passed during which they never failed to interest him, have enabled him to learn something of the aspect, names and places of many of them.

In the earnest hope that, through the use of his little knowledge, he may enable those who know less than himself to share the pleasure which he has derived from the consideration of an extremely captivating subject, he ventures to place before the public the partial result of his investigations. Almost all the flowers described and mentioned may be seen in the vicinity of Saint John, for whose inhabitants the papers are primarily though not exclusively written, but many of them, with others not mentioned, flourish in other places in the province.

In the treatment of the subject, although the Latin names are used they are almost invariably accompanied by the common English appellations, except in cases where none exist. Subject to this exception scientific language has been carefully avoided from the conviction that, although more accurate and better adapted for the scientific reader, it would not be so well suited for those who have made no effort to master proper technical terms. With the solitary exception of the orchids, no one of the families into which plants are divided has been selected for special consideration. The exception has been made, partly because of the extreme singularity of almost all and the great beauty of many of the orchids; partly because the writer has made a special search with fairly successful results for these attractive flowers. In the arrangement of the papers, the general intention, from which there is an occasional departure, has been to group plants in accordance with the seasons when they bloom and the kinds of place in which they grow. In selecting flowers for description or notice the writer has been influenced by the following amongst other considerations:

1. To compel the admission of doubters in our midst that they are surrounded by floral beauty.
 2. To dispel some errors with reference to the qualities of our flowers.
 3. To make the general public better acquainted with flowers which they have seen but never known.
 4. To indicate the seasons when and the places where rare or comparatively rare flowers may be found.
- It is not claimed that the selection is even approximately complete, nor could it be so unless these papers were as extended in number and volume as to repel or perhaps appal those for whom they are intended.

It is indeed more than probable that there are important omissions from the number of flowers mentioned, partly from the lack of knowledge and partly from defect in judgment on the part of the writer. Fortunately, however, such omissions cannot impair the value of the information furnished, and can only suggest regret that such information is not more extensive.

Before concluding this introduction it may not be inopportune to make a few remarks, even though they be in a measure trite, upon the benefits to be derived from the consideration of the subject of these papers. Bacon, in the *Advancement of Learning*, observes: "Let no man, out of a weak conceit of sobriety, or an ill-applied moderation, think or maintain that a man can search too far, or be too well studied in the books of God's Word or in the book of God's Works." Now plants or their remains occur in almost the earliest pages of the book of God's works, after unseen forces and invisible powers, but before living, breathing, moving things. It is to plant life, therefore, as one of His early revelations, that he who seeks to know whether there is a Creator, naturally primarily directs his attention. There is something more comprised in the words, "Consider the lilies," than a mere suggestion that they should receive a momentary glance. It is perhaps a mixing of tropes, but it may be truly said that plants should present themselves to him who yearns for truth as a portion of God's primer, and as one of the first rungs in a ladder whereby faith may climb from earth to Heaven. And it is not merely the existence of a Creator which can be learned from plants, but very much of His nature, capacity and attributes. What profound wisdom, what incomprehensible ingenuity are manifested in the infinitely varied structural arrangements for the performance of their functions. What an interest in their welfare and perpetuation, what astounding forethought appear in the preparation of soils for their production and growth and in the sequence of the seasons of each year. And lastly, what a sublime appreciation of beauty on the part of their Creator is demonstrated from the simple fact that they are so beautiful. Truly indeed may it be said of the man who neglects to consider the lilies that he is depriving himself of great assistance in intellectual and spiritual growth. It is generally conceded that some knowledge of the concrete must precede a perception of the abstract, and that the recognized powers of sense must be exercised before

the mysterious inner consciousness can become an active agent. And so, it may be fairly claimed that the man upon whom a visibly beautiful flower makes no impression is but poorly qualified to form a conception of an angel, or to grasp even the shadow of a spiritual idea.

Again, man can learn from plants something of the benefit of obedience to law, and although, unlike them, free to think and act for himself, may be so much less volitionally with himself to regulations best adapted for his well-being. And yet again, the valuable lesson may be learned from their contemplation, that beauty and utility may and should be combined. A score of treatises might be written under the foregoing heads, but here they are merely suggested for thought and to indicate the variety and magnitude of topics presented for consideration to the lover of flowers.

In this and in the following papers the writer makes no attempt to do more than follow in the paths which he has specifically indicated. It is not so much as aids to intellectual development, but as ministers to the emotions and handmaids to happiness, that flowers are considered in these papers. Unable to perceive the necessity for suffering reason, the writer has, of course, declined to testify that flowers are like "the man that hath no music in himself," and with the latter must share the condemnation of the great bard.

If men and women would only exercise their ordinary faculties they would discover countless sources of pleasure, at the same time innocent, and also, a matter of no small importance to many, inexpensive. How few there are who avail themselves of delicious summer days to ramble through the woods. How many there are who dread long journeys by rail or stage, because they have never learned to enjoy the most interesting objects of which the loveliness, if perceived, would help to shorten time and space.

And what may not be said of the possible ministrations of our sweet wild flowers? The mere memory of them is a valuable possession. When the eyes fail, or the limbs, through age or perhaps disease, are no longer equal to the tramp through moss and fern, the remembrance of hands sown and much prized blossoms of days gone by is a precious source of consolation. Even when the shadow of death was falling on him, the beauty-loving Greek found some satisfaction in his memory of the asphodel in the herbarium.

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Day-stars! that open your eyes with man, to the twinkling
From dew-drops on her holy altars sprinkle
As a libation.

To matin worshippers who bending lowly
Before the urns, and the flowers, and
Throw from your chalice a sweet and holy
Incense on high.

These stanzas from Horace Smith's *Hymns to the Flowers* form a fitting prelude to the subject of these papers, and the whole poem should be familiar to every gardener, every botanist, and every lover of nature.

How much there is in connection with the flower world to which, unseen, for theologian, philosopher, artist and man of science to consider. Only read the description of the myriad of wonderful and beautiful plants in the jungles of Africa, by the accomplished Schweinfurth, or what is told by other travellers of the blossoms blooming amid the Brazilian forests, and you begin to question: Why are they there? What are their uses? What was and is the reason for their being so extended in number and volume as to repel or perhaps appal those for whom they are intended.

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NEAR

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suckle, the blue berry and its many
cousins, the RHODORA CANA
DENSIS, the KALAMIA ANGUSTI
FOLIA, the raspberry, the currant,
the gooseberry and countless other
shrubs; violets in many shades
of blue and white, the COPTIS TRI
FOLIA or gold-thread, with its white
stems, the CLINTONIA BOREALIS, a
yellow lily, the strawberry, the COR
NUS CANADENSIS or pigeon or
bunch berry and a host of other herbs
are all in bloom and generally bloom
ing in abundance. Special mention
of many flowers is purposely omitted
lest a profusion of citations should lead
to a confused perception of the attempt
ed picture. Only let my readers go
and see for themselves or, if that is
difficult or impossible, let them add
to my description tassels covered with
golden pollen, ferns and sedges, and
green and red and yellow buds each
seeking in friendly rivalry, to display
its swathed loveliness before the
others.

HOPE WAS ABANDONED.

THE PECULIAR CASE OF MRS. HILL,
OF WINCHESTER.

The Doctor Told Her That Her Trouble was
Consumption of the Bowels—There was no
Hope of Recovery—But Health was Almost
Miraculously Restored.

(From the Morrisburg Herald.)

Mrs. Hill, wife of Mr. Robert Hill,
of Winchester, not many months ago
was looked upon as one whose days
were numbered. Today she is a hand
some, healthy woman, showing no
traces of her former desperate condi
tion, and it is therefore little wonder
that her case has created a profound
sensation in the neighborhood. To a
reporter who called upon her, Mrs.
Hill expressed a willingness to give
the story of her illness and recovery
for publication, and she told it with
ep earnestness that conveyed to the
listener better than mere words could
do, her deep gratitude to the medi
cine which had brought her restora
tion to health and strength. "I feel,"
she said, "almost like one raised from
the dead, and my case seems to be a
little short of miraculous. About a
year ago I was confined, and shortly
after I was taken with cancer in the
mouth, and suffered terribly. Although
I had good medical attendance I did
not seem to get better. In fact, the
complications set in which seemed fast
hurrying me to the grave. I grew
weaker and weaker until at last I was
confined to bed, where I lay for three
months. My health was in a terrible
condition, and at last the doctor said
he could do no more for me, as with
other complications I had consump
tion of the bowels. My limbs and
face became terribly swollen, my heart
became weak and my blood was
have turned to water. I became sim
ply an emaciated living skeleton. At
last the doctor told me that I was
beyond the aid of human skill, and
that further attendance on his part
would do no good. One day some
time later my friends stood around
my bedside thinking every moment to
saves the name from that pupil of Lin
naeus, Peter Kalm, who said that the
most prominent characters in Kirby's Gold
en Dog, the leading Canadian romance,
the Kalmia, also known as Lamb-Kill
and Sheep Laurel, has a striking re
semblance to the color of the eye of
one of his characters. It must be
not be supposed, however, that wild
flowers, even of a common order, can
be seen without some effort. They
are not borne by the winds through
the streets of a town, nor are they al
ways in sight from the country high
way. For some you have to search to
some extent, while others can only be
discovered after a diligent tramp
through places but ill adapted for good
clothes and thin leather.

Again, Europeans, on coming to
America, forget to make allowances
for the conditions in a new country,
which differ so essentially from those
to which they have been accustomed.
Land is never unclaimed and but rarely
uncultivated in Europe, and it is
there the exception rather than the
rule for plants to spring from the vir
ginal soil. In the greater part of Can
ada the differences in these respects
are very marked, and while the
sportsman can, within a few miles of
a populous centre, find game which
has never been under the eye of the
keeper, the ranger of the woods may
pluck flowers which have drawn their
sustenance from earth that has never
known a plough or spade.

But is not the real reason for mis
apprehension and misunderstanding
due to the fact that the Englishman
and Irishman pine for the dear pri
mrose and daisy of their childhood; that
the Scotchman misses the heather of
his native land, that he dreads "see the
broom 'n' its tassels on the lee?" And
if this is the reason, should not the
offence be pardoned?

As a matter of fact, a very pretty
primrose, not identical in size and
color with that of the British Isles,
but much the same in form, has been
gathered, though not in large quanti
ties, in fields near St. John; daisies
of many kinds are sufficiently com
mon throughout the province, and al
though the broom may not grow here,
the heather has many near relations
in our comprehensive flora.

It has been indicated that our wild
flowers generally cannot be discovered
without some effort, but it should not
be understood that a really serious ef
fort is required to enable one to be
hold such of them as are most abun
dant.

Spring with us is fairly liberal in
promises, but somewhat stingy in re
sults, and usually it is not till after
the middle of May that blossoms ap
pear in profusion. Indeed it might al
most be claimed that the "spirit of
loyalty" which prevails in Canada
among her people, extends to her
herbs, shrubs and trees, and induces
them to reserve their energies till the
birthday of Britain's Queen. Then
truly there is a rare feast for the eyes
which find delight in beauty.

My remarks apply especially to this
province and the vicinity of our own
city, but need not necessarily be so
restricted, and what may be seen on
the outskirts of St. John is typical of
what is visible in the same season
elsewhere.

Wherever there has been a non-in
terference with nature flowers appear
in profusion.

The robin pear, the ash, the elder,
the choke and wild cherry, the dog
wood, and many other trees; the

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