

an adaptation to reduced transpiration, is really due to the curling of a leaf in times of drought, so as to present the edge to the rays of the sun. Several curious expressions are common. A man, from fear or ague, may "shake like a popple-leaf," a calm person is "as cool as a cucumber," and a wealthy man is "worth a plum," while a valueless object or person "is not worth shucks." As in New England,<sup>1</sup> "shucks" for nut-shells, the "tossell and silk" of the corn and "corn-cob" are common terms.

In regard to plant names, there is a lack of interesting matter. Little discrimination is shown, and, to the majority, all small, pale, spring-flowers are "mayflowers." Popular English plant names are sometimes misapplied, for instance, the marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*) is called "the cowslip," periwinkle (*Vinca minor*) is known as "myrtle," and the jewel-weed (*Impatiens fulva*) is often styled "smart-weed." Another popular name for the jewel-weed, "touch-me-not," referring to the sudden bursting of the pods when touched, may account for a curious idea that the plant is poisonous to the touch and will cause blindness.

A favourite amusement, transplanted from England, is to pluck the rays of a daisy one by one, at the same time repeating the formula, "Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief, doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief." The term used with the last ray indicates the status of the future spouse of the experimenter. As elsewhere, four-leaved clovers exercise their magic spell, dandelion curls and whistling grasses rejoice the hearts of successive generations of boys and girls, and practical jokes owing to the confusion of lady's thumb knotweed (*Polygonum persicaria*) and the smartweed (*P. hydropiper*) have a perennial freshness. Thus the fancies and games of childhood prolong the fading romance of the past, and furnish connecting links which prove the whole world kin.

<sup>1</sup>The Century Magazine, April, 1894.