

native species, there are no leaves such as are found in some less degenerate exotic species.

The Mistletoe plant lives in the bark of the host, or between the bark and the wood, and occasionally penetrates into the sapwood of young stems and branches. It may grow for years unnoticed except for a slight swelling of the affected twig, and only becomes conspicuous when it has accumulated sufficient food for reproduction purposes. It then sends out bunches of short branches bearing inconspicuous flowers which are followed by clusters of dark green or bluish berries. The seeds are distributed by two methods. Birds, such as thrushes devour the fruits; and the seeds, after passing through the bird's body unharmed, may be deposited on another tree of the same species. In this way new areas are infected, and this accounts for the fact that mistletoe is found in detached localities such as Capilano, Point Grey and Stanley Park.

When the berries are fully ripe, the thin elastic covering becomes distended by the internal pressure of viscid pulp which develops around the seed. This pressure becomes so great that a miniature explosion takes place, sending the berry about 50 or 60 feet into the air, the pulpy mass escapes through the base of the fruit and this, coming in contact with a suitable host, firmly cements the seed to the bark and results in a new infection. Thus the parasite spreads throughout infested areas.

Here we have a flowering plant adopting the habit of certain parasitic fungi by spending the vegetative part of its life under the bark of trees, only the reproductive parts appearing outside the host; and in seed dispersal adopting the method of other parasitic fungi whose spores—surrounded by a viscid substance—are shot into the air in the hope of finding a suitable host.

I hope that what I have said about the immorality and degeneracy of Mistletoe will not detract from the interest associated its use around Christmas time.

This is by no means the only instance of degenerate plants being elevated to a high position in the affection of man—or mankind. Many of our decorative garden plants have so degenerated that they are incapable of reproducing their kind. Left to themselves they would have died out many years ago, but man has aided and encouraged them in their degeneracy; and they are entirely dependent on him for their propagation by cuttings and other artificial methods.

In many different kinds of plants with double flowers, the reproductive organs have disappeared or have reverted to petal-like or leaf-like structures.

Such plants placed in the garden find themselves in an unnatural environment, being so well fed and cared for by the gardener, they—as it were—live a life of luxury. The garden becomes an asylum for abnormal flowers.

You will remember that Lilies, and other plants of the highest moral standard make elaborate provision for the success of their offspring, and this at considerable cost and sacrifice to the parent. The greatest success comes to the family that makes the greatest sacrifice to give its offspring a good start in life. Let me illustrate this by two plants representing two different types of human society.

Orchids are regarded by most people as the aristocracy of flowering plants. In many respects this is true; they are rare, limited in their distribution, and expensive to keep.

Orchids devote so much attention to their personal appearance and spend so much on attractive dress, that little is left for the welfare of their offspring. But they are not without exaggerated ideas of the importance and greatness of their family and what they hope to be. Each flower starts out with the intention of producing thousands of seeds, but these are so impoverished and poorly developed that not one in a thousand survives to continue the species.

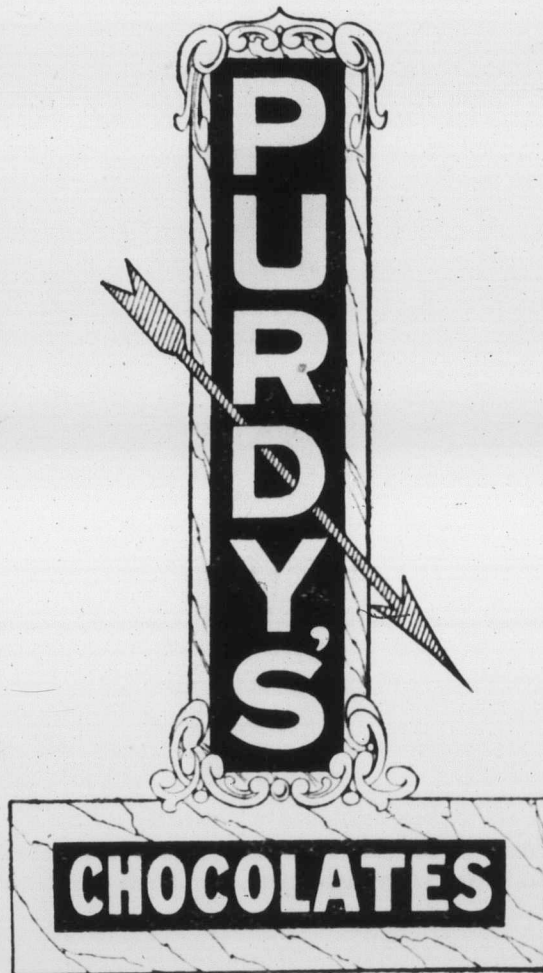
We occasionally read of an estate reverting to the Crown because there was no heir to inherit it. This may furnish another reason why orchids are regarded as aristocrats. Then you may remember that the Coral-root Orchid is one of the "idle rich." The orchid cannot attend bridge parties and dances and expect its offspring to compete successfully with the offspring of parents who have sacrificed much luxury and pleasure in the interests of their family.

Another class is represented by the Dandelion, a plant regarded by most people as a detestable weed, because it succeeds where other plants fail. The Dandelion family—the Compositae—is the most highly developed family in the plant kingdom corresponding to the position occupied by man in the animal kingdom. The members of the Dandelion family are found on nearly all parts of the globe, from the tropics to the north and south polar regions. One-tenth of the flowering plants of the world belong to the Compositae.

It would take a whole evening to describe the numerous ingenious devices and methods employed by different members to raise this family to its present position. It illustrates the most perfect organization and specialization. We find here, trades unions for economy, co-operation, and harmony between employers and employees. There are no strikes such

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