

pairs, or alternately, the one object is to have exposed as much leaf surface as possible.

Leaf arrangement is especially noticeable in golden St. John's wort, whose branches are so arranged that not one of the small leaves with its transparent dots is overshadowed by those above. When August brings out its attractive flowers, the botanist passes the humble tangle of plants, with "Its yellow colour and primitive structure show that it is not highly evolved". Its very name, too, is often unknown to us, and, yet, to the folk-lorist the golden St. John's wort is an historic plant. It, too, comes from Europe, and its generic name (*hypericum*) is an old Greek word. A name once given it (*fuga daemonium*) indicates the protection it gave against enemies in the unseen world. Gathered on the Eve of St. John's Day (the 24th of June) and hung at doors and windows, it was a safeguard against thunder and evil spirits. "Balm of the Warrior's Wound," a graceful and poetic name for it, tells of another quality. By St. John's wort, too, a maiden of old could discover whether the year held her wedding-day. Common little yellow St. John's wort, growing by a Canadian wayside, unknown now, once a magic plant—we smile, and our smiling measures the distance between us and the Middle Ages to which the St. John's wort properly belongs.

If on a walk in the country you see a new flower and ask its name of someone by the way, you need not be surprised if you cannot so learn it. In Europe, however, to which most of these summer flowers are native, the many folk names for each plant are quaint, accurate, descriptive terms. When you see nestled low in the grass the bluish-purple spikes of *brunella vulgaris*, *L.* you will recognize the poetry in its common name, "Heart of the Earth"; and if you cannot identify it by the description in the text, you will know it by

another folk name, "Blue Curls". Its ordinary name, "Heal-all", is intelligible only when you learn that the genus name, *brunella*, comes from the German, word for quinsy, for which the plant was considered a cure.

But to the connoisseur in the music of language, the real joy of botanical nomenclature is in the scientific names, which combine the rippling vowels of an opera in Italian with the sonorous dignity of a Latin oration. Think, for instance, of *maruta cotula*—yes, you do know it, but probably only as the mayweed which covers damp roadsides and barnyards. With its fringe-like leaves, and small, white-rayed, yellow-disked flowers, *maruta cotula*, too, is a member of the *compositæ* family, and not a new soprano. Consider, for another instance, the guttural tragopogon, the generic name of salsify, which comes also from the Greek, and gives, in English, another name for the plant, goat's-beard.

The souls of plants are put in words, their seeds measured, themselves classified, labelled, described, bearing then a relation to reality like that, I fancy, the Almanac de Gotha bears to living members of noble families. They are there, and yet, they are not there. But isn't that the essence of literature? There is a book; in it is all its subject; look again, and life has escaped from its pages. So that Gray's Manual, with its plants, is, indeed, surely like literature and life.

If you try to identify unknown flowering plants by the unassisted ingenuity of your own wit and a manual, there is added—not to speak it frivolously—the keen interest of an original detective story. But will you not confess, if you are brave and frank enough to own a scientific crime so heinous, will you not in the secret recesses of your own botanical memory admit that there have been times when, forsaking the hard and honest road of the examination of