

the very North wind. Shall I venture to add, — to the flowers succeed the fruit ! And at the beginning of January a small berry appears, attached to a long peduncle in the midst of the withered and odd-colored petals, which soon shrivels and dries up. This singular growth of flowers is almost unknown, although it has been repeated every year from time immemorial. The oldest inhabitants of S. Patrice have always seen it take place at a fixed period of the year, no matter how severe the season ; and such has always been the ancient tradition of their forefathers, while the legend we are about to relate appears to attribute a very remote origin to the fact ; but as the shrub itself appears quite young, it is probable that it is renewed from the roots annually. However, this phenomenon is limited to the locality and to the shrub in question. Cuttings transplanted elsewhere have only blossomed in the spring, and the hawthorns which grow among the sloes do not manifest any circulation of sap. The incredulous will object that, after all, this circumstance is not more extraordinary than the flowering of the lilac in November, when the buds, by an unwary mistake, suppose that in the still mild temperature they have found the soft breath of spring. Our readers must not be deceived ; the blackthorn of St. Patrick grows, develops and bears fruits in the midst of the rigors of winter in the most icy temperature. This year the flowers were in bloom from Christmas to the 1st of January ; that is at the time when the thermometer was almost below freezing point. Although growing on the slope of a hill, this shrub is in no way sheltered from the north wind ; its branches are encrusted with hoar frost, the icy north wind blows violently amongst them, and it often happens that the shrub is loaded at one and the same time with the snow of winter. Nor can the hypothesis of a thermal spring be put forward, for the ground remains covered with snow and the other shrubs do not blossom. The inhabitants of S. Patrice record an ancient tradition, which, in its simplicity, is full of freshness and poetry. St. Patrick, it is said, being on his way from Ireland to join St. Martin, in Gaul, attracted by the fame of that saint's sanctity and miracles, and having arrived at the bank of the Loire, near the spot where the church now bearing his name has been built, rested under a shrub. It was Christmas-time, when the cold was intense. In honor of the saint, the shrub expanded its branches, and shaking off the snow which rested upon them, by an unheard-of prodigy arrayed itself in flowers white as the snow itself. St. Patrick crossed the Loire on his cloak, and on reaching the opposite bank another blackthorn under which he rested at once burst into flowers. Since that time, says the chronicle, the two shrubs have never ceased to blossom at Christmas, in honor of St. Patrick. »

The above is taken by Father Morris from a French source. When he visited S. Patrice in August, 1881, he was struck by the extraordinary beauty and luxuriance of the foliage on the tree. It was so dense from the ground upwards that it was impossible to distinguish the