

each belonged. One would expect that at least the thistle and burdock would be given under the heading, but if I mistake not the mayflower, the violet, and the twin-flower were quite as frequently in the list. Occasionally the lilac and the apple were mentioned, and once the potato. One candidate, presumably the daughter of a smoker, had prominently in the list opium and tobacco. I trust that candidates will soon come to realize that practically a weed is a plant that we wish to keep out of our fields and gardens, and that usually we have some difficulty in getting rid of. The fact that there is this difficulty means that the plants are common, and being common they should be observed.

I have suggested one method of starting to teach the subject. I do not say it is the best method. I do not say that I should recommend it to the teacher who starts out with a good knowledge of the subject. I shall not feel at all aggrieved if some teacher of botany who has had success in teaching the subject writes an article setting forth another method, claiming for it great superiority over the one I suggest. But I wish it to be noted that I write for the teacher who finds himself required to teach botany and feels that he is ignorant of the subject and at a loss how to begin to study and to teach. Any method is better than no method, and though I do not contend that the method I have suggested above is the best method, I think it a good one, and if this article should prove an incentive to others to write on the subject, I feel sure that the educational department will be pleased, and I shall be glad that I have been useful even if it should turn out that my only merit is that I have aroused some one else to help forward the teachers and students of botany.

STUDIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

BY ELEANOR ROBINSON.

SANTA FILOMENA, N. B. READER III. P. 114.

Florence Nightingale was born at Florence in 1820. She was well fitted for the great work she undertook for the soldiers during the Crimean war, as she had studied the workings of hospitals in England and abroad, and especially at the Institution for the Training of Deaconesses at Kaisersweith.

In the great hospital for the soldiers at Scutari, opposite Constantinople, she had the most dangerous cases placed in a room next her own, so that she might care for them herself. It is said that the story of the sick men kissing her shadow as she went the rounds of the wards at night is no poet's fancy, but literally true. The public recognized her services by a testimonial of £50,000, which she used to establish a training school for nurses.

Longfellow's poem was printed in the first number of the *Atlantic Monthly*. The poet writes in his diary not long afterwards, that he has received a

letter from Miss Nightingale's sister thanking him for his tribute and enclosing a photograph of her sister, and two drawings, one of "the lady with a lamp," and the other of the "symbolic lily." The last verse of the poem, which is not given in the reader, runs thus:—

"Nor ever shall be wanting here
The palm, the lily and the spear,
The symbols that of yore,
Santa Filomena bore."

But who was Santa Filomena? And why does Longfellow connect her with Florence Nightingale? These questions are often asked, and very naturally, for very little is known of Santa Filomena. She seems never to have been heard of until the 19th century, and no story is told of her having anything to do with healing or helping the sick. But in a church at Pisa, in Italy, there is a chapel dedicated to her, and a picture which represents her floating down from heaven, attended by two angels who bear a palm, a lily and a spear. In the foreground of the picture are sick and maimed people who are healed by the saint's intercession. The palm and the spear are the symbols of martyrdom, and the lily always stands for purity. It seems probable that Longfellow was thinking chiefly of the name "Filomena," which is the Italian word for "Nightingale."

With the first three verses of the poem may be compared the following lines from Lowell:—

"As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,
So nobleness enkindleth nobleness."

"Be noble, and the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own."

The last two verses offer material for discussion of the different types of heroism that we find in England's annals. Especially they suggest a comparison with the other well known poem inspired by the Crimean war, "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

THE SOLITUDE OF ALEXANDER SELKIRK. P. 109.

The full title of the poem is "Verses supposed to be written by Alexander Selkirk during his solitary abode on the Island of Juan Fernandez." The island of Juan Fernandez lies in the South Pacific, west of the coast of Chili.

Alexander Selkirk was a Scottish sailor, who, on account of a quarrel with his captain, was put ashore on this desert island. A few useful articles, such as a gun, a hatchet and a knife were left with him, and he managed to exist alone on the island from