

The wood of the elm is hard, strong, tough, compact. The difficulty of working it prevents its general use as timber. Its fibres hold tenaciously together; and as the wood has no special beauty compared with the maple, cherry or some others, it has no special value for furniture. It was formerly used in ship building; and the tough wood is useful for ox yokes, wagon supports, hubs of wheels and similar purposes where there is a cross strain. A cubic foot weighs 45 pounds. The bark is tough and strong, and has been used for making ropes and chair bottoms. The wood makes good fuel and yields an abundance of ash.

THE BEECH.

The trim, neat appearance of the beech (*Fagus americana*) when growing in the forest has given it the reputation of being the "best dressed" tree of the woods. It has a tall graceful trunk, with thin, smooth, close-knit bark, ash-grey in colour, with darker and lighter shades, but becoming paler in winter. Its green leaves turn to a rich reddish-brown or amber colour, and in autumn remain longer on the branches than those of other deciduous trees. Frequently trees in the deep woods retain their withered leaves throughout the winter. Its green leaves are not liable to attack from any insect. The smooth shining appearance of its twigs and the polish of its shapely, conical winter buds add to its trim appearance.

The beech frequently attains a height of from 75 to 100 feet, with a trunk diameter of from two to four feet. When growing in open fields it is much less in height, but often attains a considerable circumference. Its spreading branches help to give it the dense shade for which beech forests are remarkable. While there is an abundance of flowering plants to be found on the ground in oak woods, few are to be met with under beeches. This is perhaps due to the dense shade. A curious brownish-yellow plant, from six to twelve inches in height, is sometimes found in great abundance under beech trees in late summer and autumn. This is a parasite, called beech-drops, which draws its nourishment from the roots of beech trees to which it is attached.

The beech is one of the most widely distributed trees in north-eastern America, and many of our so-called hardwood ridges are clothed principally with this tree, along with birches and maples. The flowers which appear at the same time with the leaves are of two kinds, staminate and pistillate. The

former are yellowish green, growing in tassels or heads; the latter usually in pairs on a short stalk. The fruit is the well-known triangular nut which is enclosed in a bur. The burs open and the nuts fall soon after the first frosts of autumn. There is a saying that beech-nuts are abundant only once in seven years. This would be an interesting question for some one to follow up, to find out whether there is any foundation for the saying, and if there is, to ascertain, if possible, the cause. Another saying about the beech tree that requires to be investigated is that it has never been known to be struck by lightning.

The wood of the beech is hard, tough, and close-grained. A cubic foot weighs 43 pounds. In colour it is light or red, giving rise to the belief among country people that there are two kinds, the white and red. There is but one species known in these provinces. The difference in colour in those noted above may arise from the more or less rapid growth of the wood. The texture also of the white beech is tougher and less liable to warp; that of the red is more brittle.

The wood of the beech makes the best of flooring. It is used also in chair-making and turning, for saw-handles, bench planes, and for many other purposes. Its wood makes excellent fuel.

It is difficult to transplant beeches, because they usually grow attached to one another under ground. But to cultivate a young tree from a beech-nut is an interesting experiment, if only to notice the two wide and thick first leaves (cotyledons) that appear above ground, and growing up between them the little stem bearing the true beech leaves.

The Clovers.

The clovers have no time to play;
They feed the cows, and make the hay;
And trim the lawns, and help the bees,
Until the sun sinks through the trees.

And then they lay aside their cares,
And fold their hands to say their prayers,
And drop their little tired heads
And go to sleep in clover beds.

Then when the day dawns clear and blue,
They wake and wash their hands in dew,
And as the sun climbs up the sky
They hold them up and let them dry;
And then to work the whole long day;
For clovers have no time to play.

—*Helena Leeming Jekiffe.*