

Wolf Willow

(Elaeagnus Argentea)

S. J. Wigley

Willow is an unfortunate name for this handsome prairie shrub for it is not related to the willow family. Silver leaf or silver berry by which it is sometimes known is a far more appropriate common name.

The yellow flowers which appear in early June are delightfully fragrant and for this alone the plant should be a favorite in our gardens. It has however the habit of spreading from the root stock and is not easily kept in place. The mealy, silver-gray berries are large and remain on the branches during the winter, but no birds seem to use them for food.

Red-Osier Dog Wood

(Cornus Stolonifera)

This is one of the most attractive of our native shrubs for its bright red bark in winter, its clusters of white flowers in June



Wolf Willow or Silver Berry

and waxen white berries in August all demand attention and invite investigation.

The shrub is very common in Central Alberta and grows readily from cuttings.

In northern districts it is a favorite food for moose in winter and for this reason is sometimes called "moose wood." By Indians it is known as Kinnikinnick and the inner bark, shredded and dried is used by them as a substitute for tobacco.

The berries seem useless for food and are very bitter.

This Month's Cover

We are indebted to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway for the photograph of the beautiful scene which is reproduced on the cover.

The Scandal of the Bottle Boy

By Marie Manning

HE was small for his age, so small, in fact, that he always hastened to justify himself with, "goin' on seven," after the humiliating admission of six. This affliction of being humiliatingly young for one's years seemed to run in the family. People were always telling him how pretty his sister was; and when he told them she was his mother, they seemed to think her too young for the part. And he resented it as he did those imputations against his own manly appearance. Perhaps they did look young, he and his mother. But even if it were a fault that she was so young looking, Robert was quite willing to condone it, for otherwise she was so absolutely satisfactory.

The family circle was small—Robert and his mother and old "Mammy Lucy," who had been his nurse and was quite one

taken on his return from kindergarten, worn with the ardors of the day. His mother would meet him at the door, and after she had kissed him and tousled his hair and they had had a few minutes' talk about the events of the day—for decency's sake—Robert would run to his room, and on the lowest shelf of his cupboard he would find his milk bottle warmed to a perfect and epicurean temperature. He would seize it quickly, that his manly eye might not be needlessly offended by a prolonged sight of the loathed infantile attachment that was at once his pleasure and his pain. Stealthily he would consume it to the last drop, then thrust the skeleton back into its closet, that no eye but hers might see, and—that she might have it filled and waiting for him on the morrow.

His purpose toward reformation was too much along the lines of Rip Van Winkle's to land him anywhere. It was the "one more" that made up Robert's Waterloo. His mother reasoned that as he had a slight appetite at the best of times, it would be unwise to interfere with so excellent a form of nourishment. Besides, the crime was not so heinous in her eyes; he was "her baby," after all, the one thing that had been spared her in the desolation of young widowhood.

About this time the children in Robert's school had formed themselves into a league for the protection of the animal world, and were known as the Little Defenders. Officers had been chosen for their respective qualifications, and on Robert's telling of finding a drowned cat and showering it with water for an hour to bring it back to life, the teacher had said that though his labors had been ineffectual and the methods employed were not the most modern, still it had shown so genuine an interest in the work that she moved he be elected president. The motion was carried unanimously.

A picnic in celebration of this humanitarian movement was soon under way. The president's mother would not attend, her mourning keeping her from such festivity, but she agreed to confine her precious son to a friend who would be personally responsible for him. In reviewing later the happenings of that day of wrath, it seemed to both Robert and his mother that the Fates had been secretly in league against them. For who could tell that on that particular morning Judge Wolcott, the former partner of Robert's late father, should take it into his head to come from New York to talk business with Robert's mother, and at the very moment when she was putting the president's luncheon into the basket?

"Oh, Mammy Lucy, please finish this while I go in to see the Judge—deviled eggs, ham sandwiches, jelly cake—gracious, Mammy, that does seem an unwholesome luncheon for a little boy; we'll have to get him something else. No, Robert, you may not have any pickles. Now run upstairs and get your flag, or you'll be late!" And she had whisked out of the room, playfully shoving Robert in front of her.

To Mammy Lucy the president of the Little Defenders was still her nursing and she had not shared any of the family qualms regarding the daily bottle. To her devoted mind it was perfectly proper that he should take bottle, nipple and all to the picnic. So while the president was unfurling the banner of the organization in front of his looking glass in the room above, so that there might be nothing amateurish about the way he handled it at the head of that gallant band, Mammy Lucy was corking up the nursing bottle, that its contents might not spill, and fitting that detestable nipple over the cork, that her darling might have no difficulty in finding it.

On the way to the grove, while the colors of the organization floated proudly above his head, and Johnny Briscoe and Willy Morse pushed the fife and drum to their uttermost limits in the way of martial music, Robert took counsel with himself and decided that he must reform. No man in his position could afford to drink milk from a bottle, even in secret. What if the League knew that their president did this thing? But they'd never know; he'd give it up this very day—he wouldn't go near the Bluebeard closet

when he got home, the closet that held the secret of his shame. And with this resolve he held his head a little higher and puffed his chest a little fuller as he walked to the grove at the head of the Little Defenders, full twenty-five strong.

At the grove the picnicers gave their lunch baskets to the ladies who had matters in charge. It was to be a community luncheon, with a general division of the good things, and already anticipation ran so high it was with difficulty that even the officers could sufficiently restrain their interest to fetch kindling for the fires or water for the lemonade. Robert yielded up his basket—with its skeleton—and set about making himself useful, as befitted a gentleman and a president.

Some of the girls, basely taking advantage of their sex, pried into the baskets under the pretext of assisting the ladies, and they would give shrill exclamations of delight when their investigations were rewarded by the sight of something particularly delectable.

The campfires were leaping joyously, the smell of boiling chocolate was wafted to high heaven, some one had spread a white cloth on the grass and little girls were decorating it with wild flowers. Then Molly Renshaw, a fat little girl with a lisp, began to call out something frantically; again and again she raised her voice as well as her impediment would permit and gave vent to her amazing discovery. To Robert, pressed forward in the center of a group that rushed to see, it sounded like: "Th' pwethideth goth a both! Th' pwethideth goth a both!" And he wondered, with the indifference of a man accustomed to having things come his way, what new honor had been crowded upon him.

A moment more and he saw! Then the horrid sight was blotted out by a dozen eager little hands stretched out to grasp this souvenir of his shame that Molly Renshaw held aloft. "The president's got a bottle!" "The president's got a bottle!" shrieked a multitude of shrill voices that had no impediment in their speech. The girls were the worst; their gestures of disdain, their cries of derision, were harder to bear than the boys' frank laughter. One of them ran to her mother with "Oh, mama, the president's got a bottle like baby sister!" The boys, his late retainers and allies, who at the beginning of the day would have been glad for a word with their chief executive on any subject, now indulged in a humiliating pantomime whereby they drew imaginary nourishment from imaginary bottles. Robert stood alone, a pale young gentleman with all the world against him.

The grown-ups seemed unable to cope with the disorder; two dozen screaming children with the spirit of anarchy let loose.

"Give me my bottle, please. It's mine, you know." And the deposed chieftain took the instrument of his undoing and walked away with head erect. When he got to a group of trees that hid him from his late tormentors he took to his heels and raced as if each small boy and girl had been a tiger in pursuit.

He felt that he had run a long way, miles and miles, but when he had gone through the grove and down a straight piece of road, and crossed the little foot bridge that led over the stream, he could still see the tops of the poplar trees in the grove where the picnic was in progress. The bridge and the stream suggested something, and retracing his steps, he stood in the middle of the bridge and flung the bottle on some rocks below. The sound of its shivering fragments made him feel better, and crossing to the bank, he threw himself down among the high grass, and cried.

From the tops of the poplars he could see the curling smoke, and he imagined the scene of splendid revelry taking place. He wondered, with a vague resentment at the world at large, who was eating his sandwiches, his deviled eggs, his layer cake.

He did not know how long he had been there—it seemed a long time—when his melancholy reflections were interrupted by a faint whining. He listened, and on the opposite bank of the stream he saw three boys—middle-aged boys—who must have been all of fourteen or fifteen, and who were employing the strength of their advanced years in drowning a puppy, a poor little fat puppy who could only whine and baby bark at the outrage.

Robert, on his stomach in the lush grass that grew to the water's edge, commanded