

3. Let us now look at the **Stem** (Fig. 3). It is upright, pretty firm, coloured green, and leaves spring from it at intervals. As there is scarcely any appearance of wood in it, we may describe it as *herbaceous*. At several points along the main stem branches are given off, and you will observe that immediately below the point from which every branch springs there is a leaf on the stem. The angle between the leaf and the stem, on the upper side, is called the *axil* of the leaf (*axilla*, an armpit), and it is a rule to which there are scarcely any exceptions, that branches can only spring from the axils of leaves.

The stem and all the branches of our plant terminate, at their upper extremities, either in flowers or in flower-buds.

4. Let us now consider the **Leaves**. A glance will show you that the leaves of this plant are not all alike. Those at the lower end of the stem have long stalks (Fig. 4), which we shall henceforward speak of as *petioles*. Those a little higher up have petioles too, but they are not

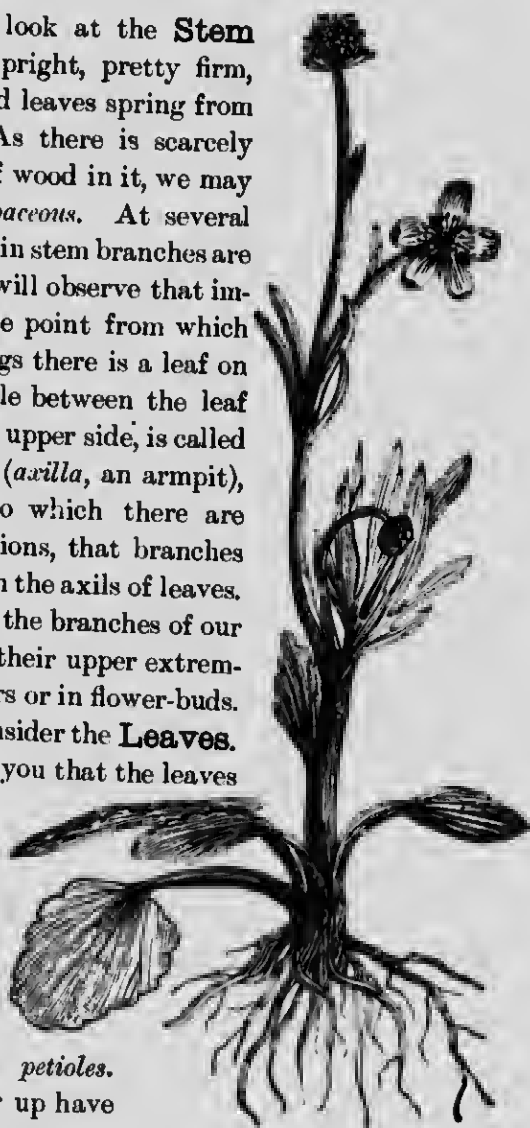


Fig. 3.

Fig. 3.—Buttercup plant.