

exceptionally favourable to weeds—something harsh, ungenial, sharp-toothed that is akin to them? How woody and rank and fibrous many varieties become, lasting the whole season, and standing up stark and stiff through the deep winter snows—dessicated, preserved by our dry air! Do nettles and thistles bite so sharply in any other country? To know how sharply they bite, of a dry August or September day, take a turn at raking and binding oats with a sprinkling of blind nettles in them. A sprinkling of wasps and hornets would not be much worse.

“Yet it is a fact that all our more pernicious weeds, like our vermin, are of Old World origin. They hold up their heads and assert themselves here, and take their fill of riot and licence; they are avenged for their long years of repression by the stern hand of European agriculture. Until I searched through the botanies I was not aware to what extent we were indebted to Europe for those vegetable Ishmaelites. We have hardly a weed we can call our own; I recall but three that are at all noxious or troublesome, viz.: milk-weed, rag-weed, and golden-rod: but who would miss the latter from our fields and highways?

‘Along the roadside, like the flowers of gold
That tawny Incas for their gardens wrought,
Heavy with sunshine droops the golden-rod,’

sings Whittier. In Europe our golden-rod is cultivated in the flower-gardens, as well it might be. The native species is found mainly in the woods, and is much less showy than ours.