

Weeds.

BY J. HOYES PANTON, M. A., F. G. S.

(Continued from page 185.)

PORTULACACEÆ (Purslane Family).

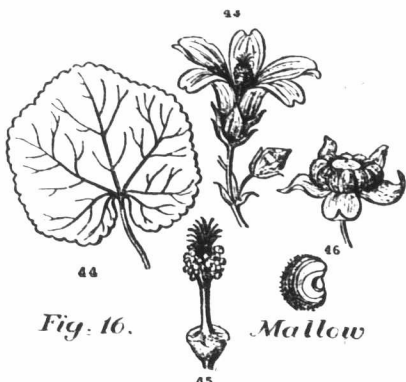
The leaves of the plants in this order are very succulent; the flowers are regular, but there are fewer parts in the outside whorl than in the next. The beautiful portulacæas, whose flowers are so numerous and varied in color, also belong to this order.

Portulaca oleracea (Purslane).

The stems of this annual lie on the ground and spread; the oval leaves are very thick and juicy. In July small yellow flowers appear, and the plant spreads rapidly, becoming one of the worst weeds in the garden to attack. So succulent is this plant that it will continue to perfect its seeds long after separation from its parent root. A day's sun will hardly wither the plant, but may ripen and shed many of its seeds. When pulled or hoed, it should be gathered into a heap and destroyed. In hoeing, it would be well to avoid tramping upon it, for if it is not entirely removed it is almost sure to continue growing, unaffected by its temporary disturbance. It seldom becomes a nuisance elsewhere than the garden. It has wonderful vitality, and may be for days root up without being destroyed. Hoeing is not sufficient, unless it is completely overturned and allowed to wilt beneath a scorching sun. The best remedy against Purslane is continued vigilance and incessant use of the hoe.

MALVACÆ (Mallow Family).

This is an order in which some beautiful flowering plants are found, such as the Abutilon, Hibiscus and the Hollyhock. A very striking characteristic of the family is that the flowers have many stamens all uniting by their filaments to form a tube around the pistil, and thus crowding the anthers together.



Malva rotundifolia (Mallow, Cheese plant).

This is also a great trouble to gardeners, but seldom invades the open fields. It delights in the rich loam of the garden, and retains a good foothold where once rooted. It has a perennial root which enables it to continue from year to year. Its long, creeping stalk contains a large amount of nourishment, which enables the plant to keep up life under adverse circumstances. It is known by its creeping stem—bearing round leaves, among which, from May to August, may be seen white flowers about half an inch in diameter, possessing the peculiar union of the stamens already referred to. When matured, the seeds form a structure not unlike a cheese in form, and hence the name sometimes given—Cheese-plant. It must not be allowed to go to seed, and as far as possible the leaves should be kept from forming. If these hints are followed the perennial root will soon fail and the plant be destroyed.

M. Moschata (Musk Mallow).

The stem of this plant is erect (1 to 2 feet), and is somewhat hairy. The leaves are more or less parted, or cut into slender linear lobes. The flowers are about one and a-half inches in diameter, and are usually white. This plant is

frequently seen along the roadsides in some parts, and can scarcely be considered a serious weed as yet. It has no doubt escaped from gardens to its present place.

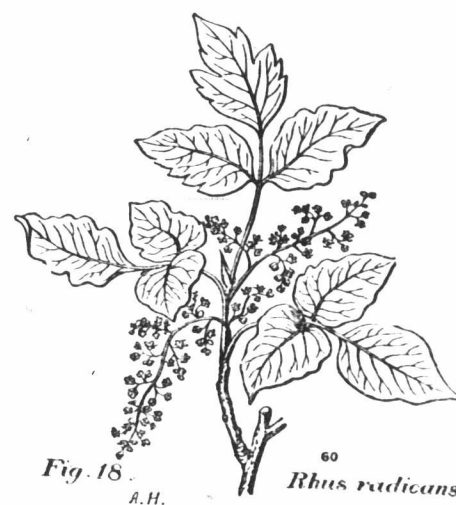
ANACARDIACEÆ (Cashew Family).

Attention is called to this order on account of three species here that possess poisonous characters. Where such are found they should be entirely destroyed. Not only the juice, but even the exhalations from some species are poisonous.



1. *Rhus venenata* (Poison Sumach, Poison Elder, Swamp Dogwood).

This is a very poisonous variety. The leaves are arranged in pairs along the leaf stem; from seven to thirteen leaflets, oval, entire, pointed, each about three inches long and one-half inch wide. These soon change color in the fall, and present foliage of a very attractive appearance. The flowers are small, greenish and in loose panicles. The fruit is in the form of small nut-like structures; dry, smooth and shining, whitish in color and about the size of small peas. The drupes are well separated from each other, and not crowded as in the case of common Sumach. This species grows from ten to fifteen feet high, usually in low spots. Several are to be seen in the Dufferin Islands, Niagara Falls. One very good specimen can be seen at the south end, right-hand side of the second bridge, as you go south. It would be a warning to visitors to have this plant labelled. Its convenient position and gorgeous foliage have no doubt been often a cause of sorrow to wanton visitors who visit the park from time to time.



2. *Rhus Toxicodendron* (Poison Oak, Poison Ivy).

This is a low variety; leaflets in clusters of three, broadly oval, pointed, two to five inches long, three-quarter inch wide; leaf-stalk three inches. The plant seldom if ever exceeds three feet in height, and is generally about two feet high. It is exceedingly common along the banks of the Niagara River, in the vicinity of Victoria Park. Flowers, yellowish-green in panicles; fruit, dry, smooth, shining, pale-brown berries. This is also a poisonous variety, but not so much so as the preceding. This plant is very common in many parts of Ontario, and is often seen along the railroads.

Alderman G. F. Frankland's Impressions of Manitoba.

The Dominion of Canada—how vast, how rich. Manitoba with her boundless prairies, brings to my recollection the words of Bryant:

"These are the gardens of the desert: these
The unknown fields, boundless and beautiful,
For which the speech of England has no name;
The prairies, I behold thee for the first,
And my heart swells, while the dilated sight
Takes in the encircling vastness."

During last fall I was wandering through Southern Manitoba, talking with the farmers and observing their crops, for unfortunately their industry is confined principally (through lack of funds) to the growing of wheat, oats and barley, and thousands of acres of grass and wild peas, knee deep, are going to waste for want of cattle. And if the pioneers were better off it would not be so; for two years before this frost ruined their wheat, and the few cattle they possessed had to be sold to meet their bills. However, last year of plenty will assist in making a change, and their lands will be utilized for different lines of agriculture. I am sorry to write that money is very dear to the farmers, and exorbitant interest is demanded for small sums that are borrowed from local money lenders. It does seem to me that when a man is down the treatment he receives is not calculated to get him on his feet again. One poor fellow gave his note for \$100 for six weeks until he got his wheat into market, and for that note he received \$76. And yet, notwithstanding all these difficulties, Manitoba is solid and developing well, for it was clearly demonstrated to my mind some miles from Manitou that necessity is the mother of invention, for I came across a farmer who had built a stable on the side of a bluff, covering it with small poplar trees and then placed square cut sods upon them that made a good warm roof, and as he had 10 acres of very fine turnips and a large quantity of frozen wheat and oats he had contracted to feed 50 eleven hundred pound steers for 190 days for \$20 each, and guaranteed to make them fat fitted for export to Great Britain. I saw the cattle and took note of the man and his pile of feed, and I felt assured that a man of energy and pluck that he appeared to be, who could build such a stable, dig a well under the same roof over an eternal spring, would never say fail. It is such men as these that are moulding Manitoba, for they have no sympathy with cowboys and cattle ranches, but believe in domestic farming.

I was engaged late one day in visiting several cattle breeders and was obliged to sleep in Manitou, therefore, I had to drive across a sea of prairie some 25 miles on Sunday morning to Pilot Mound, as I had promised to go with friends to hear a Rev. Dr. Lane preach some missionary sermons, for be it known that the little village of Pilot Mound is as full of churches as Toronto, comparatively speaking—Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and the dear old Church of England, and a corporal's guard of the Salvation Army. If I could write with the pen of Faith Fenton I would describe my lonely drive on that beautiful, sunny Sabbath across the solitude. But stay, I met fathers and mothers and children walking and driving, no doubt to some place of worship, and they looked happy. I will close by quoting again from Bryant:

"From the ground
Comes up the laugh of children, the soft voice
Of maidens, and the sweet and solemn hymn.
Of Sabbath worshippers. The low of herds
Blends with the rustling of the heavy grain
Over the dark brown furrows. All at once
A fresher wind sweeps by, and breaks my dream
And I am in the wilderness alone."

The crops were marvellously great, and God has bountifully blessed the farmers of this western part of our Dominion.