

red gooseberries : the dwarf kind seldom exceeds three or four feet in height, and the tall bilberry, or Juneberry, is a beautiful-growing shrub, with reddish bark, elegant white blossoms, and rose-coloured fruit, smaller in size than the other two, though the bush attains the height of fifteen and twenty feet. These bushes grow chiefly on dry gravelly, or sandy soil ; seldom in the rich black soil of the dense forest.

I am particular in noticing these peculiarities of soil, and habits, in describing the wild fruits, that you may not look for them in situations foreign to their natures, and feel disappointed if you do not find on your own immediate locality every one of the native fruits that I have described and recommended to your notice. Every spot has its peculiar vegetables, flowers, and fruits, and we must recollect in counting our blessings, what an old poet says :—

“ Who least has some, who most, has never all.”

It is our wisest part to receive with gratitude that which our Heavenly Father has prepared for us, and not weary him by discontented repinings, remembering in humbleness of heart, that we are unworthy even of the least of his mercies.

Of wild cherries there are many different species, but they are more medicinal than palatable : steeped in whiskey, with syrup added, the black cherry is used as a flavour for cordials ; and the inner bark made into an extract, is given for agues, and intermittents, and also in chest diseases. All these wild cherry trees are beautiful objects, either in flower or fruit, especially the red choke-cherry, with its bright transparent fruit ; but the excessive astringency of the juice causes a spasmodic contraction of the throat, which is painful, and to delicate persons almost dangerous, from whence its name of choke-cherry.—The bark is tonic and bitter : when steeped in whiskey it is given for ague. No doubt it is from this that the common term of “taking his bitters,” as applied to dram-drinking, has been derived. Bitter indeed are the effects of such habits upon the emigrant.

The reason why the native plants often fail to grow and thrive when removed to the garden, arises from the change in the soil and situation : to remove a plant from deep shade and light rich soil, to sunshine and common earth, without any attention to their previous habits, is hardly reasonable. A fine leaf mould, water, and shelter should be afforded till the tender stranger has become inured to its change of soil and position : those that neglect to observe the habits and natures of wild plants, rarely succeed in their attempts to naturalize them to the garden, and improve them by domestic culture.

I will now give some recipes for drying and preserving the native fruits :—