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CLUB MOSSES.

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Few who worship Nature in her primeval shrine of the ancient wood can fail to have noticed some of these pretty evergreens on the forest floor. One kind with conspicuous fruiting spike woodmen and others know as Club Moss *par excellence*, but apparently the plants have always been favorites of the more simple peasantry, and in England their household names are legion. Many of these folk-names are of the quaintest—Foxtail, Staghorn, Buck-grass, Creeping Bur, Forks and Knives, Foxes' Claws, Lamb's-tail, Running Moss, Robin Hood's Hat-band, Tod's Tail, Traveller's Joy, Wolf's-claws; of these a few have migrated with early settlers, and occasionally in Canada you hear the names "Staghorn" and "Wolf's Foot" applied, but more generally the common species are distinguished as "Hemlock Club Moss", "Ground Pine", "Running Pine", and "Ground Cedar" or "Trailing Christmas Green".

Even the unhappy town-dweller gets glimpses from time to time of the fairer scenes of boyhood or the home of his rustic ancestry; for cartloads of *Lycopodium* are drawn to the city markets in December for Yule-tide decorations. The spores, too, of some species are gathered for commercial purposes, being dusted over pills to prevent them from sticking together; as a fixative for dyes; and for flashlights in photography, in pyrotechnics and on the stage, the spores containing more than half their bulk in a highly inflammable oil. On the mountain-sides of Cumberland in the English Lake District, I have sometimes shaken the fruiting spikes of *L. clavatum* over a lighted match and seen how instantaneous the combustion was.

These points of curious interest fade into nothingness compared with the importance of the plant to a student of evolution. The systematic botanist may be content with placing the Club Mosses among ferns and fern allies as sporophytes, but they throw a highly illuminative side-light on the doctrine of descent.