

THE PARTRIDGE BERRY.

I.—THE PLANT.

The partridge-berry of Newfoundland is known botanically as *Vaccinium Vitis-Idaea* L., var. *minus* Lodd. The typical form of the plant is not found with us, but is a native of Europe. Our plant, the variety *minus*, distinguished by shorter stems and shorter and narrower leaves, is widely distributed, being found throughout northern North America, and also in Greenland and eastern Asia. The southern limit of its range coincides approximately with the boundary between Canada and the United States, though it extends farther southward in the mountains, and along the coast as far as northern Massachusetts.

Relationship.

The partridge-berry is a member of the heath family (Ericaceae), to which also belong many of our familiar plants of bog and barren: the Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), the laurels (*Kalmia* spp.) the bog rosemary (*Andromeda glaucophylla*), and the capillaire berry (*Chiogenes hispidula*). In the genus *Vaccinium* are included not only the partridge-berry, but all our species of huckleberries, and also the marshberry or small cranberry (*Vaccinium Oxycoccus*) and the large or American cranberry (*V. macrocarpon*).

Common Names.

Vaccinium Vitis-Idaea, var. *minus* is called by several common names. Newfoundlanders know it as the partridgeberry, while in Nova Scotia it passes as the foxberry, and in the

United States as the mountain cranberry or rock cranberry. On the Chicago market it is called the lingonberry.

The plant which is called the partridge-berry in the United States is an entirely different species, *Mitchella repens*, a member of the madder family (Rubiaceae).

Habit.

The partridge-berry is a trailing undershrub, with stems of two sorts: an underground stem or rootstock, which branches freely and by its growth serves to extend the area occupied by a plant; and the familiar aerial shoots, which are in reality lateral branches of the main stem or rootstock, and which serve to display the leaves, flowers, and fruit.

Aerial Shoots.

While the underground portions of the plant live for many years, the life of a shoot is generally four or five years, and is ordinarily brought to a close by the production of a cluster of berries. Since the production of berries is accompanied by the death of the terminal bud, the growth of the main shoot cannot continue thereafter, and ordinarily it drops its leaves during the ensuing winter and dies.

Basal Buds.

Although shoots are thus continually dying, the total number of shoots borne by a plant does not diminish, but rather increases. This is due to the development of buds borne upon the rootstock, one or two of which may be seen near the base of most shoots toward the end of summer. Each of