

Summer Flowers.

Written for the Troy Daily Times.

With a view to refer to a few of the peculiarities and benefits of the vegetable creation, I would observe that there is a wide difference between the virtues of a plant growing in a wild or natural condition from that of the same herb when artificially cultivated. This is due to the fact that the transference of plants from their native locations to soils prepared by the hands of man induce many changes in their individual elements. And so palpable are these changes that plants formerly used for medicine are now cultivated for the table only. For instance, the large and nutritious article of diet known as the turnip was in its native state a small acid root. Again, plants when grown in natural localities possess well-defined medical properties, nearly all of which are lost by cultivation. Important changes in morphology are superinduced by the same means. In our gardens the stamens of the rose are converted into petals. In Africa the castor oil plant is a woody tree, while here it is an annual. It may be of interest also to show in this connection that the doors of plants and flowers have their physiological uses, for the fragrance of certain plants is evidently designed to protect them from the ravages of parasitic insects which are inimical to their growth and development. That the vegetable kingdom may be made to contribute to our comfort in various ways by proper forethought will be evident if we notice that though a shadow may be defined as an unsubstantial immateriality, yet, under certain circumstances, it may become a luxury or even a substantial benefit and blessing.

In some countries of Europe the great thoroughfares are lined on either side with umbrageous trees planted at regular intervals by order of the government and affording a grateful shade in hot weather to men and animals. These trees consist of apple, pear, cherry, prune and black walnut trees, and a pedestrian can travel many miles in Germany without being exposed to the rays of the sun even "when he shineth in his strength." The comfort of animals used in the transportation of merchandise on these highways is also largely promoted by this humane arrangement. Yet it seems never to have occurred to the "American people" that the enterprise and forethought evinced by the European authorities in this matter would be worthy of imitation.

We have many grand and noble trees available for such purposes; among these is the *Rubia* (locust), which in its durability and the beauty of its foliage is exceeded by few trees of the American forest. The flowers are numerous and rose-colored, and with the thick dark green leaves render this tree one of the most brilliant ornaments of the park or garden. Specimens now in flower may be seen in a ravine a short distance east from Pinewood avenue.

As information is desired by parties relative to certain medicinal plants, I would state that *Chelidonium majus* (celandine) is a pale green fleshy herb found along fences by roadsides and in many gardens. The leaves are smooth, spreading and consisting of two to four pairs of leaflets with an odd one. The bright yellow juice is used to cure psora and destroy warts. Properties: It is stimulant, acrid, alterative, diuretic and purgative. It is used internally in decoction and externally in poultice and ointment. The root is intensely bitter, and is the medicinal part. It yields its virtues to alcohol or water.

Erigeron canadense (butter weed).—The whole plant is medicinal and very valuable as a tonic, diuretic or astringent. Butterweed is common and abundant, growing in fields, meadows and by roadsides. It is now in flower, and should be gathered while in bloom and carefully dried. It is useful in gravel, dropsy and kidney complaints. The dose of the powdered plant is a half drachm; of the infusion three to four ounces.

Cannabis sativa (hemp).—An herbaceous annual, several feet high, with an erect, branched, angular, bright green stem. The leaves are opposite or alternate, with serrated leaflets tapering into a long, smooth point. The seeds are small and ash-colored. It is cultivated in many countries for its fibre, which is stronger than flax, and is the best of all materials for cordage and sail-cloth. Properties: It is narcotic, anodyne and anti-spasmodic. It has been successfully employed in gout, neuralgia, rheumatism and

hysteria. The leaves are stimulant and produce intoxication. Their exhilarating qualities are described as unequaled.

Cassia marilandica (wild senna).—This herb grows about five feet high, with a round, smooth stem. The flowers are bright yellow, and the fruit is a legume. It is found occasionally in rich, alluvial soils, from New England to the Carolinas. It is one of the most important cathartics furnished by American plants, and is equally valuable as the foreign senna of the drug shops, and far less expensive.

Eonymus atropurpureus (wahoo) or burning bush. —This is a small shrub, some six feet high, with smooth branches. The flowers are dark purple, and the fruit is of a crimson color. The bark is the official part. There is another variety, *E. Americanus*, known by the same name, wahoo, of similar properties, and equally useful medicinally. These plants grow in woods and thickets and in river bottoms. Properties and uses: It is tonic, laxative, alterative, diuretic and expectorant. It is serviceable in dyspepsia, torpid liver, constipation and pulmonary diseases. It yields its qualities to water. Of the powder, twenty grains constitute a dose.

Leplandrea virginica (black root).—The root is the medicinal part. The leaves of this plant are whorled in fours and fives around the stem. It is usually about four feet high. The flowers are white and numerous. This plant is found only where lime abounds. Sometimes, however, it is discovered in most woods and swamps, but not in good condition, its virtues being nearly lost. The dried root is tonic and laxative, and often employed in chronic hepatic diseases. Used in powder and in the form of infusion.

EAGLE MILLS, July 8, 1882.

Mt. Washington, N. H., and Trembling Mountain on Rouge River, Canada.

A few evenings ago I sat on the veranda at Fabyan's very comfortable resort near the base of some of the most lofty of the White Mountains, and gazed up—up—up at the summit of old Mount Washington, that grand vast and tossed-up mass of rock—year after year weathering browner and browner, always as hard to climb (barring the railway), ever as sublime, bound to last to "the end." But nearly every one has seen Mount Washington or has read of it, and it is not my purpose at present to heat myself by going into raptures over it.

Some months ago I sat at the door of a little white tent, pitched on the shore of the lonely but beautiful Trembling Lake, at a remote point in the Rouge River valley, almost directly north of Montreal, and gazed up toward the summit of a very similar pile of rock, "Trembling" or "Devil's Mountain." This, every one has not seen and probably very few heard of, but it is there notwithstanding. It is the highest point in the entire Laurentian range of mountains in Canada, and makes one surmise that it was about their last "kick up." Certainly old "Trembling Mountain" kicked the highest. There is no nice little accommodating railway here, no carriage road, no good footpath: nought but an obscure and very old trail, made nearly half a century ago and at present all overgrown with undergrowth. It is probable that not more than half-a-dozen human beings have ever fought, or rather, I should say, *torn* their way to the summit of this grand "look out." Looking at the mountain from the lake shore, the appearance presented is that of a gentle and gradually ascending plain, the summit of the mountain looking very far away and dim in the distance. But at or about sunset, and as the dying shadows of the day chase one another across the great slope, the well-defined outlines of less lofty ranges come into view between the lake and the greater summit, and it becomes evident that to reach this last mentioned, several mountain ranges will have to be traversed. As is the case at Mount Washington, ice and snow re-

main in the dells and valleys of Trembling Mountain all the year round, and we were informed that not unfrequently the mountain is snow capped during the summer months.

Our party did not attempt the summit. We preferred gazing at it from the bosom of the peaceful lake at its base, where we could be awe-stricken without being sun-stricken, while listening to the terror inspiring stories of our guide respecting the tremblings and groans which oft had been heard issuing from this mountain, and from which it had earned its "devilish" name.

Years ago, the late Sir Wm. E. Logan and party camped on the same lake; and on referring to the mountain in his report, Sir William mentions similar stories told him by his Indians as touching the noises and quakes said to issue from it at certain seasons of the year. He dryly adds, however, that while he was camped there "the mountain remained perfectly quiet." While we were there there certainly were noises heard, for toward midnight a violent thunderstorm set in, with very sharp lightning and rattling thunder, and the reverberating echoes produced just such a trembling as had been described to us.

It will be a long time before tourists will find their way to Trembling Mountain, as it is exceedingly difficult of access. Mountains have to be traversed in a "buckboard," rivers ascended in bark canoes, portages made and streams forded, and, worst of all, all necessary provisions carried. But once there the sight repays one for all the fatigue endured on the journey, and one has the satisfaction of knowing that the scene and surroundings are all natural. Nature herself, unobscured by the touch of man, and undisturbed by the shriek of the steam whistle.

July 29th.

Signal Service Review—June.

The monthly Review for June, issued by the Signal Service, and just at hand, is of special interest, as that month was, it will be remembered, particularly marked by the occurrence of unusually severe storms and tornadoes. A feature of the month was the absence of storm tracks from the southern States and Atlantic coast districts. The central depression of no disturbance appeared south of the fortieth parallel of latitude, except in the Middle Rocky Mountain slope, and the storm tracks were of the average paths in June. Ocean ice continued in the North Atlantic during the month. The temperature ranged slightly below the normal for the month except in the Missouri valley, Oregon and Washington Territory. On Pike's Peak it was 3.4° below the mean of the month, and the minimum of the month at that elevated station, 14,134 feet above sea level, was 2°. During June there was a deficiency of rain-fall in the Gu., Middle and New England States. In the States north of the Ohio and in the Northwest there was an excess. Some remarkably heavy rains occurred. Battle Creek, Mich., reported 3 inches in one hour; Logansport, Ind., 3.45 inches in one hour and forty-five minutes. Snow in June was reported from Lansing, Mich., Milwaukee, Pike's Peak and Mount Washington, and the summits of mountains in Vermont were several times covered with snow. Local storms were numerous and destructive. Pogue's Run, at Indianapolis, scored the greatest and most disastrous flood of the month. Numerous auroral displays were observed during the month, the most extensive being on the evening of the 14th, observed as far south as Springfield, Ill. Mention is made of an unusual electrical phenomenon in connection with an aurora at Pike's Peak. The anemometer cups, part of the instrument for measuring the velocity of the wind, like those on Pike's Opera House, were rapidly revolving as rings of fire. The telegraph line was outlined in bright light. The phenomenon was preceded by thunder and lightning and accompanied by a dense, driving snow. Slight shocks of earthquake occurred at San Francisco during cool and damp weather, contrary to the general experience that earthquakes occur on warm, sultry days.