

## PREFACE

Every book has a reason for its being,—or should have. There are excellent flower books, galore, but apparently there is a break in the series into which it is hoped the present volume will make a welcome fit. We are living in a progressive age, an inquisitive age, an age in which we want to know the names and meaning of all we see and hear. I have always held that a well-executed colored picture, as a means of identification, is worth pages of text. Of course the text is necessary to call attention to the salient points of the picture. In the case of flowers, birds, mammals, etc., the habits, ranges, sizes and other important points must be obtained from the text, but the picture, itself, forms the basis of quick and sure identification.

I was practically brought up among birds and, consequently, flowers, because the two are inseparable companions in the fields. Wherever I wandered, I had one eye open for "new" flowers. Every such prize went home with me; if not carried in the hand, why,—in the top of the hat. No sooner home than out came the old "Gray's", the microscope and dissecting points. Sister and I eagerly weighed the evidence, placing the "find" in one family and then another, as discrepancies were found, until at last, we had it cornered down to the family, the genus and, finally, the exact species.

Every new invention is designed to accomplish some end quicker or better than it has been done before.