**A
Window
in Arcady**

**Charles
Francis
Saunders**

Class QH 81
Book S3
Cope 2

The Belcher Lithographing Company, Washington, D. C.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

A SEQUESTERED MEADOW

A Window in Arcady

A Quiet Countryside Chronicle

by

CHARLES FRANCIS SAUNDERS

Author of "In a Poppy Garden," Etc.

Illustrated from

Photographs by HENRY TROTH

"It were happy if we studied nature more in natural things . . . the world wearing the mark of its Maker, whose stamp is everywhere visible and the characters very legible to the children of Wisdom."

—William Penn.

PHILADELPHIA
THE BIDDLE PRESS
1911

copy 2

QH81

.S3

Copy 2

This simple chronicle of a nature lover's observations in southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey, is compiled from contributions to *The Philadelphia Record* and *The Churchman*, by the courtesy of whose publishers the present publication is allowed.

1900

Transferred from the Library
of Congress to D. C. Public
Library for use therein under
Sec. 59, Copyright law, 1909.

1900

By Transfer

D. C. Public Library
FEB 26 1938

Copyright, 1911
THE BIDDLE PRESS

©CL.A300158

149w 9 9p 38

WITHDRAWN
1802-51

To the Memory of
the Dear Companion who shared with
me these Arcadian paths,
My Wife

W. C. T. R. NOV 1 3 1811

W. C. T. R. NOV 1 3 1811

L. C. T. R. NOV 1 3 1811

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Opposite Page

A Sequestered Meadow (<i>Frontispiece</i>)	
The Monotone of Winter Fields	12
A Haunt of the Wild Smilax	18
Willows and Alders	23
The Meadow Brook in March	28
Croziars of the Ferns	34
A May Meadow	42
The River's Lower Reaches	49
A Roadside of June	58
Where Water Lilies Sleep	72
The Summer's Heart	77
Osmunda Ferns	83
A Pond in the Pine Barrens	88
The Riverside's Tangle	95
A Pine Barrens Stream	99
An October Wayside	107
A Hemlock Slope	115
By the Winter Sea	123

JANUARY

FLORA'S FIRSTLINGS

JANUARY 20.—Through all the wintry weather our kind Mother Nature keeps up a little conservatory in the woods, where anybody, at the cost of a tramp through the snow, may gratify the craving of his nature for a bit of green in winter, and may gather posies of refreshment. In shaded, springy pockets of the hills the strengthening sun has already lured a few skunk cabbage blossoms out. The pretty shells mottled in green and purple, peeping above the muck and brown leaves of their boggy home, are grateful reminders of the flight of winter—nature's modest dials whereby the observant Rambler may see how the world wags. They are out unusually early this year, but one must be cautious about accepting them as signs of an early spring.

In verdant mats the cheerful chickweed grows everywhere—in the fields and in the yards, but it is most luxuriant, just now, in damp spots on the southern fold of some slope that dips to a brook. Like the dandelion, which has been found in our latitude in bloom during every month in the year, the chickweed quite frequently expands its flowers in midwinter, and even sets seeds. It is a type of the sanguine nature among men; it trusts the sunshine and the south wind, and, whatever to-morrow may have in store, to-day it will be merry. It is a plant almost world-wide in its distribution, and, humble as it is, it is worthy of more than our passing notice. It has a habit of folding its leaves together on the approach of night or when clouds gather, and of expanding them again with the return of the light. On this account it has acquired in the Old World some reputation as a weather prophet,

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

and there is a proverb to the effect that if the chickweed shuts up then the traveler should put on his great coat. The plant is reputed to be a fair substitute for spinach and greens, but the principal use that our people make of it nowadays is to take it home for a salad for Dick, the canary.

Among the meagre delicacies of the winter fields is one in which pussy has particular interest, namely catnip. The hard frosts of autumn apparently kill this plant, but if we examine the bases of the dry stalks in winter we shall find, particularly if the situation is a somewhat protected one, that clusters of young shoots have sprung up about them. These grow a little during the mild spells of weather and are very tender and juicy, being apparently as grateful to the feline palate as the delicate yellow and white heart of a lettuce-head is to the human taste. Cats, however, are not singular in their liking for this aromatic herb, which is pleasant munching for a man, too, and with the old-fashioned country housewives is one of the most prized of "simples."

JANUARY 26.—All winter long by the roadsides and in old fields the dry stalks of the milkweed stand, holding aloft their burst pods for the winds to empty. The packing of the seeds in these pods is a marvel of neatness. Round, brown and flat, they overlap one another like scales on a fish, and the long, silken hairs that spring in a tuft from the summit of each seed and have gained for the plant in some districts the name of wild cotton, are drawn tightly upward in a compact, white cone that fits snugly in the taper end of the pod. As the seeds are loosened by the

THE MONOTONE OF WINTER FIELDS

1993

WINTER FIELDS

wind these hairy tufts spread out and bear the seeds as on wings long distances away from the place of their birth; so does the milkweed colonize the earth. It has an aristocratic cousin which is found occasionally in thickets and is distinguished by its climbing habit. A clump of brambles whereon this slender vine has clambered is dotted white, these midwinter days, with the opening pods, out of which the silken-haired seeds are only now escaping. These seed vessels of the climbing milkweed, which are covered with short spines, are very picturesque, being smaller and more delicate than those of the plebeian milkweed of the roadside. Before the beating of the elements has bleached them they are tinted in beautiful tones of green, brown and yellow, reminding one of shells from some tropic sea.

The gray monotone of winter fields is often exquisitely relieved by growths of Indian grass, which delights in sandy, sterile stretches of ground throughout our vicinity. There are several species of it, but in winter all look practically alike—tall, rank grasses, dried and rustling, but retaining in culm and leaf the warm, reddish yellow of ripened wheat. On a sunny January day as they bend before the rush of the north wind, they fairly bewilder the eye with their resemblance to a waiting harvest touched by the summer breeze. One wonders if the birds hunting for winter provender are ever deceived by the sight in the hope of a feast of grain. Like the hungry beggar of Bagdad, however, who dined with the Barmecide in the Arabian Nights, one finds here only a feast for the imagination, for the seeds that came with the autumn are long since scattered abroad.

FEBRUARY

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

FEBRUARY 22.—One of my midwinter pleasures is going berrying. Upon one of the February holidays where-with a kindly Legislature has so bountifully blessed us, if a man will wrap his ulster about him and fare forth to the nearest bog in the pines, he will be rewarded with treasure of berries of many sorts and hues. Here will be found, its blushing honors still thick upon it, the cheerful tree which contributes so important a part to the decorations of Christmas—the evergreen holly, prickly of leaf and crimson of berry. Growing everywhere about the swamp's edge are other sorts of holly, too, the most abundant being the smooth ilex, or inkberry, whose glossy foliage is so much prized by collectors of winter greenery that the gathering of it for shipment to the cities is a considerable industry. Its trim little bushes often cover hundreds of acres and vary in height from a foot or two in the open to six or eight feet in the swamps. In the latter situation it is a beautiful, slender shrub, particularly attractive in winter, when the absence of leaf from most of its neighbors makes its shining evergreen the more noticeable. It bears a profusion of jet black berries, like bright, beady eyes, amid the leaves, or, to speak more prosaically, like shoebuttons. They are worth tasting, so as to learn how bitter and astringent a pretty black berry can be, but once in a lifetime is enough.

Another slip of a holly in the swamp is the deciduous ilex commonly known as the winterberry, because of the abundance of bright red berries which line its bare branches most of the winter. In February they look decidedly the worse for the wear, and such of them as now remain on

FEBRUARY BERRIES

the bushes at all are more or less discolored to an apoplectic purple or a lifeless brown.

All about our feet as we skirt the border of the swamp are pigmy plants of wintergreen, fruitful with the familiar red, spicy berries, which we like to buy at a cent or two a glass from the Italian fruit venders on the city streets. It is almost worth a half-day's trip to see these berry-laden bushes, two or three inches high, which are the embodiment of sturdy endurance. The cold empurples their foliage as it reddens a man's skin, but they do not yield a leaf to its blustering.

Picking our way from hummock to hummock over the treacherous ice of the swamp, we come upon other berry treasures—the witherod's bunches of plum-purple fruit, the exact color of Concord grapes. The berries are shriveled now, like raisins, but, unlike raisins, are void of meat or taste; yet their rich color is a feast to the eye. Here, too, are the fragrant bushes of the bayberry, on some of which we shall find the little white waxy balls which old-time folk used to boil for the sake of a tallow-like extract so obtained, and which is a less resourceful age than this, was serviceable in candle making. Clambering over high bushes and clinging to the lower limbs of trees are vines of smilax—not the miscalled smilax of the florist shops, but the honest, simon-pure smilax of Father Linnaeus. The neighborhood of some of our swamps will yield three or four varieties of it. Usually they bear clusters of black or blue-black berries which persist nearly until spring, but are inedible from a human standpoint. There is one of our species, however, whose berries are a

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

vivid scarlet color and are rather palatable in their mellow old age, being mealy and with a slightly sweet taste.

Perhaps the finest of our smilaxes is the laurel-leaved which is found in the swamps of the pine barrens and southward along the coast. A beautiful evergreen vine, with elliptical, rather unctuous leaves, smooth and pleasant to the touch as Russia leather, it loves to climb by its abundant tendrils far up into the trees, where the graceful ends hang down like curls for Boreas when in playful mood to run his fingers through. It bears an abundance of berries in spherical bunches, which require the sun of two seasons to ripen them, and those which we now find on the vines are accordingly green and immature—infants exposed remorselessly to the winter's worst. One grows very fond of this sturdy, cheery vine and when passing a thicket where it grows likes always to step in and stroke its glossy leafage as one strokes a favorite cat.

Along fence rows and in thickets a pretty sight is offered by the vines of the round-leaved smilax or greenbriar. Its stout green stems, destitute of leaves at this season and armed with strong, wicked thorns, form impenetrable tangles which are attractive now with bunches of plump black berries swinging by slender stalks. The stems of this vine are curious in that, instead of being round, they are frequently quadrangular—a most unusual shape for a plant stem. More attractive is the glaucous wild smilax, whose stems are slenderer than those of the greenbriar, and are covered with a delicate, frosty bloom, which, when removed by the finger, discloses a purplish ground beautifully mottled in green. Some of the leaves of this plant

A HAUNT OF THE WILD SMILAX

FENCE ROWS AND THICKETS

in our latitude persist on the vines nearly or quite until spring. The frost colors them exquisitely in many tones of orange and crimson, which in the sunshine make a bright spot in the chill landscape, reminding the rambler in frozen fields of Portia's candle, which shone like a good deed in a naughty world.

MARCH

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

MARCH 15.—Spring arrived and went into hiding in the river meadows a couple of week ago, and all the disagreeable weather that followed hard upon her coming was not able entirely to keep her presence a secret. The willows ever since have been full of it, every bare twig of them aglow and beaming with the radiance caught from her, and they stand out in the landscape with crowns enveloped in aureoles of dreamy, yellow light—spectacles of rare and delicate beauty. The robins, too, soon got an inkling of her being about, and from their perches on the fence or on the stays that support the telegraph poles, the red-vested fellows have for some days been knowingly eyeing every passer-by, as though they could tell him a thing or two if they chose. But the song sparrows—bless their melodious little throats!—cannot keep a secret at all, and they have been blurting out the whole story for a week, carolling from every water-side bush for all the world to hear: “Sweet-sweet-sweet, sweet o’ the year is near,” and so the news got out.

The willows of the river meadows are not the stock that yield those precious posies of March, the pussy willows. These gray, silken-haired catkins that we all like to look at and stroke, and to buy in the market-place, are gotten usually from the goat willow of cultivated grounds, or from two or three species of wild willow shrubs found about swamps or along creeks, or sometimes at the edges of woods in the hills. The pussy, by the way, is rather skeptical of early March promises, and does not come out all at once, but after unbolting its door and emerging part way from its winter house on the twig, it likes to bide

WILLOWS AND ALDERS

AWAKENING CATKINS

a while and look leisurely about with an eye on Jack Frost. It is in this early stage of temporarily arrested development that pussy willows are in the most serviceable condition for home decoration. Cut then from the branches and kept out of water, the fat little catkins retain their sleekness and characteristic color for a long time, and may even be used effectively in the trimming of ladies' hats.

Another catkin that is feeling the spring in the air is that of the alder. This shrub, which many people persist in confusing in their minds with the very different elder, is even more of a water drinker than the willow, and grows everywhere in sociable clumps by the meadow runs. Its catkins, at least the male ones, got in line early, long before there was any hope of the doors of the spring performance being open—in fact, last fall—and all through the winter they were patiently enduring the cold in stiffened purple clusters on the branches. Now, under the genial influence of the sun's waxing power, they are stretching themselves luxuriously into tassels of magenta and gold, and, by-and-by, like confetti throwers at the carnival, they will be casting prodigal showers of yellow pollen upon the winds. Companions with them, set close upon the twigs, are the staid little crimson cones, now gleaming in the sunlight like bits of rubies, that are to develop the seeds of the year. The empty cones of a year ago, black, lifeless and gaping now, still persist upon the branches and add a picturesque touch to the shrub in flower.

MARCH 20.—The wind, tired at last with blustering,

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

has paused for breath, and I close my desk and go for an hour or two to the fields in quest of whitlow grass. In southeastern Pennsylvania this little plant is usually the first wilding of the year to bloom—barring the skunk cabbage, which seems more of a joke than a serious blossom—and the finding of it is an assurance, as comforting as the first bluebird's visit, that spring is really at hand. Its tiny white flowers are twinkling prettily in the gray mat of last year's turf in old fields and on roadside banks, even in advance of the hepatica, or the bloodroot, or the anemone. Common as it is, however, few people seem to regard the plant, or to know it. A small rosette of leaves which a dime may cover, flat to the ground, with a slender branched stalk two or three inches high rising from the centre and bearing a cluster of small flowers—that is whitlow grass. The seed pods are so impatient to be up and doing that they cannot always wait for the flowers to drop, but are often seen, in shape like flat spear-heads, protruding from the heart of the unfallen corollas. We may lift a few plants, root and all, and they will, if placed in a shallow saucer of water in a window at home, continue to grow and bloom and set their seed-vessels as cheerfully as though they were outdoors—a sure source of pleasure and interest to the stay-at-homes. The flowers are so sensitive to shadow that they expand fully only when the sun shines on them, like some shy human natures which cannot do their best without the warmth and light of kindly treatment.

The name of the whitlow grass is due to an old-time association of the plant with the cure of whitlow, a painful

LESSON OF THE WHITLOW GRASS

disease of the finger joints. It is not really a grass, but a pigmy member of the hot-blooded family of the mustards. Some of its distant relatives are of a habit of growth so robust in comparison with the minute seeds from which they spring that the mustard seed, as we know, has been used in the Divine teaching to typify the development of the heavenly nature from the seed of the Kingdom implanted in the human heart. It is not given our little mustard, the whitlow grass, to produce branches in which the fowls of the air can lodge, yet in its humble way it would seem to have a lesson to teach in Christian living. Look the open blossom full in the face, and you will see that its four petals are so set as to form a cross. So is the plant's cheery daily life under the cross a type of the Christian disciple's day, which also, in proportion to the reality of his discipleship, is a day of cross-bearing. And just as amid the flowers the seed vessels grow and ripen, so is the Christian's cross not barren, but ever fruitful in good deeds.

MARCH 24.—These last days of March Mother Nature is bustling about the woods waking up her plant children, stripping the covers from their snug winter beds and exposing the sleepy little buds to the chill morning air in the most hard-hearted way imaginable. On the warm slopes hepaticas in blue and white have been up for a week making pollen, much to the gratification, doubtless, of sundry small bugs and bees and palpitating butterflies, which the sun lately lured abroad, and which may now be seen distractedly flying this way and that in nervous endeavor to solve the never-ending problem of what to eat and where to get it.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

The spring beauty, too, has been roused out of its warm nest, and is shaking its clustered buds in the sunny air like rebellious clenched fists. Every lover of the vernal woods knows this exquisite little flower, its white petals flushed with auroral pink, which is shot through with red rays. In gathering it it is noticeable that the stems of the plants always snap off at or just below the ground, so that one rarely ever sees the roots. The reason of this is that the plant springs from a deep tuber which anchors it fast. To find the roots requires careful and persistent grubbing. The redman used to be a more inveterate hunter of spring beauties than we palefaces are, but for a different reason. It was those tubers that he was after, and when he found them he ate them with great gusto. They have a crisp, pleasant taste suggesting chestnuts.

Hard by, the snowy blossoms of the blood-root are expanding, their stems wrapped about with the drapery of their one big leaf, and in stony places the chubby rosettes of the saxifrage are showing white dots of coming bloom in their centres. One naturally looks for blossoms of the arbutus in this goodly fellowship of early comers, for the poets like to tell us of its blooming by a snowbank. As a matter of fact, however, this flower is quite suspicious of such companionship, at least in our latitude, and is usually very cautious about uncovering its perfumed chalices before a number of the other wildings have gone on ahead and reported the coast clear.

Fringing the ledges and carpeting the summits of the rocks are the evergreen polypody ferns. During the winter's cold snaps they were curled into pictures of de-

OAKS IN THE CRADLE

jection, but now they are enjoying the reward of the persevering and are basking in the light of good times again. With pretty green faces washed clean and glossy by the early rains and most of the kinks brushed out of their erstwhile disheveled fronds, they nod gayly at all visitors when the sun is not too hot. It is pleasant to see them, after a wetting, alert as though they had particular instructions to sit up and look pretty. Thoreau has a special word of commendation for this commonest of our ferns—"the cheerful community of the polypody" he calls its clustered fronds in one of his books.

MARCH 25.—It is as good as a tonic to see the acorns now. After a winter spent in luxurious ease they are learning what it is to earn their board and lodging. They have thrown off their caps, and, with red faces and jackets split up every seam, are intently engaged in putting down taproots into the mellow earth, digging away for dear life. As a result of this fit of industry the woods will by and by be full of tiny oak trees—most of them, sad to relate, destined to be eaten up by grubs and fungi and such small deer. An oak just out of the cradle is a jaunty little fellow, with a fat, juicy stalk and the two chunky halves of the acorn, probably still in the shell, clinging to it like a lunch in a bag, for it is on the stock of starch stored in the meat of the nut that the plantlet subsists until it develops strength enough to make a living for itself.

MARCH 28.—Among the earliest gifts of green to the woods is the despised field garlic—a plant which is by no means confined to the fields. A tuft of it plucked and

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

carried as we walk exhales a warm, aromatic perfume, very grateful to the system tired of winter provender and craving freshness, and to our surprise, though we detest the taste, we find ourselves again and again burying our noses in the plebeian posy. Field garlic, by the way, is not native to America, though the wild leek is, but is said to have been first introduced into Pennsylvania by the early Welsh settlers, who thought it would make a pleasant sort of spring pasture—certainly a characteristic idea of a people from the land where the leek was a national emblem.

We had a severe sleet storm in February and of all the trees that suffered by it the river birches appear to have taken it hardest. They have literally been shedding tears as a result, so that people passing under their boughs during the last few weeks have been treated to shower baths of sap which has been issuing from the broken branches and falling pattering to the ground beneath. The river birch is, indeed, a fountain of refreshment in March when the sap is running, and refuses no thirsty wayfarer who taps it. Thrust your knife into the bark, insert a splinter at a declining angle, hold a cup to catch the drippings, and you have in a few minutes a mouthful of a beverage as clear and cool as spring water, with the faintest possible suggestion of sugar in it.

THE MEADOW BROOK IN MARCH

APRIL

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

APRIL 10.—Now is the time of year when the fancy of many a country-born citizen of slender purse turns to thoughts of his inherited rights in Nature's great kitchen garden, and he promises himself the first fine Sunday off to hunt "greens" in the fields. Of these unquestionably the most gathered—probably because the most abundant—are the tender new leaves of the dandelion, which have long done duty on old-fashioned country tables as a pleasant and wholesome salad. The sprouts of the plebeian poke, however, make a good second in popular favor, and a mess of these boiled as cabbage would be, with a bit of juicy ham, livened up with a dash of vinegar, makes for some palates just the acme of good eating—a continuing delicacy to be enjoyed, too, in reminiscence like a cud for memory to chew.

The first shoots of the common chicory, the plant whose blue stars of bloom adorn every August wayside, have some devotees, and doubtless would have more, but for the fact that comparatively few Americans know the plant in its first appearances. It is only a tramp here, but in Europe it has for centuries been cultivated as a crop, and latterly in our West, some farmers have taken to cultivating it in a small way.

In the swamps and along the meadow streams the red maples are in full bloom at last, their flaming masses of color making the pallid cheek of earth ruddy again with the hue of abounding life. Like the flush in the sky at dawn which heralds the sun, the red maple's blossoming is herald of a greater glory shortly to be—the bursting into leaf of all the forest fellowship. When we see it

ELFIN LAUNDRY

flowering we know that winter is surely gone over the hills and can no more come back than last night can. It is noticeable that some of these trees are of a much more vivid red than others; a condition which is due to the fact that such individuals are bearers of the pistillate flowers, which are a deep crimson in color, while those of the staminate trees have a tone of yellow in them.

Among the firstlings of the floral year is that dainty wild flower to which common speech has attached the unpoetic but obvious name of Dutchman's breeches. These early April days, as one threads the recesses of rich moist woodlands, one occasionally comes upon a colony of it, the prettily dissected foliage covering the ground perhaps for square yards like a gossamer carpet. From the midst of leafy coverts here and there the flower stalks arise strung with the odd breeches-like blossoms, one set above another, sometimes eight or ten on a stalk.

To walk unexpectedly upon such a scene is like surprising Fairyland with its masculine wash hung up on poles to dry. One's fancy likes to dwell upon the thought of stout Hollandish elves fitted into those cream-colored inexpressibles, each with a lovely yellow frill at the waistband, the whole of such a tinting and texture as philosophy of human tailor never dreamt of. This charming wild flower is cousin to the showy bleeding heart of old gardens.

APRIL 15.—"The rose is red, the violet's blue"—so runs the familiar song of childhood, but it does scant justice to the various hues of either rose or violet. The first, indeed, of native violets to bloom bears a lovely yellow blossom—a quaint, saffron bonnet streaked with brown

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

within. It was beginning to look up from amid the brown leaves in our hills a week ago. The poet Bryant knew this flower well, and has sung its charms in familiar verse:

“Ere beechen buds begin to swell,
And woods the bluebird’s warble know,
The yellow violet’s modest bell
Peeps from the last year’s leaves below.”

By the banks of woodland rills and in moist meadows the dainty white violets are beginning to waken up to captivate the heart of everybody that sees them. Companionship the common blue and purple sorts about May day will be two late blooming yellow violets, whose flowers are borne high on leafy stems. There is one species with blossoms that are pale lavender or cream-colored.

APRIL 18.—Man’s faithful benefactor, the earthworm, is about again. He has been spending the winter in seclusion below the frost line with a few friends, all fast asleep together. The earthworm is such an uncomplaining creature, so unassertive and so absolutely lacking in elements of picturesqueness, that his value to the world is by no means generally appreciated. He is a type of a great army of humanity, nameless in history or even in the country paper, whose unremitting faithfulness in hidden avenues of humdrum duty, day in and day out, keeps society sound and its wheels unclogged. For he is, indeed, “Nature’s plowman,” perpetually keeping the earth loosened by his borings, making ground mellow and fertile that would otherwise settle down to hardness and sourness, bringing the subsoil to the top and vice versa—this last a process

WAYS OF THE EARTHWORM

which also tends to preserve the land level and to cover natural rubbish, such as vegetable litter and stones. In this way it is said the whole of the superficial earth of any fertile field passes every few years through the bodies of these dumb, insignificant delvers.

The reason the earthworm is so fond of eating dirt is probably because he can extract from it certain microscopic organisms that inhabit it and which he finds nutritious. He rivals the goat in omniverousness, however, for he will swallow anything that fits his mouth, and those who profess to know all about him credit him with a pretty taste in small stones and bits of glass. Judged from a human standpoint, he keeps very bad hours, being as a rule out all night. In fact, one rarely sees him abroad by day, unless after a shower when he comes up for a bath or a drink for he is a thirsty soul and has no use for neighborhoods that are dry. If he had any say in ordering the universe he would probably abolish moles and robins. The former catch and eat him below the ground and the latter on top. Indeed, even within his own doorway he is liable to be pounced upon by the robin, and one of the delectable sights of the year to small boys of all ages is to see the bird bracing himself in the grass with his stiff legs, while with his head drawn back he hauls the resisting, attenuated worm slowly but remorselessly out of his hole.

APRIL 20.—A name full of suggestive beauty given by the English to one of their spring blossoms, is wake-robin. We have imported the name into America and attached it to quite another sort of flower; so that while the wake-robin of the old world is a kind of Jack-in-the-pulpit, the

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

wake-robins of America are those pretty mountaineer cousins of the lilies known to the botanical as trilliums. In our neighborhood we have but one species, a denizen of loamy, moist woods, and nowadays somewhat of a rarity. The plant looks very much like the Jack-in-the-pulpit, but the pure white blossom is hidden from view beneath the large green leaves that top the stalk.

Wake-robins are strange plants in their persistent devotion to the mystic number three. Thus the number of leaves is three; three are the petals of the flowers, and three the divisions of the calyx; the pistil is three-parted and set about with stamens whose number is twice three. To cap the climax, the seed vessel is three-celled within and frequently three-angled without. In the mountains a species is common which bears conspicuous pods of a dull crimson color. These have appealed to the rustic imagination in such a way as to gain for the plant among the country folk the very realistic names of "bloody noses" and "nose-bleed."

Thick as autumn leaves in Vallambrosa's storied brook, the mottled leaves of the dog's-tooth violet are clustered now in almost every damp wood and shady meadow, and lifted above them here and there the yellow lily-like blossoms nod and nod. That this flower should be called a violet is misleading, for it is a true lily, and looks every inch its lily-hood—one of the most splendid of our wild flowers. The plants that bloom are, as a rule, at least three years old, and their history is rather interesting. The first year's seedling consists simply of one leaf springing from a bulb lying close to the surface of the ground. This little

CROSIERS OF THE FERNS

HOW DOG'S TOOTH VIOLETS GROW

bulb in the course of the season sends down a shoot and develops another bulb at the further end an inch or two under ground. The next year this bulb number two usually sends up only a single leaf, and at the same time lets down another shoot into the earth, there to develop a third bulb which is perhaps three or four inches below the surface of the ground. From this deepest bulb, the others meantime having died, two leaves will arise the third year, and the charming flower we all love appears with them. Like the efflorescence of a beautiful human soul, the blossom is no hasty, superficial growth, but is the crown of a life whose springs lie deep.

The slippery elm is already setting its seeds—those flat, filmy disks that come floating down upon us out of the tree-tops like flakes of ethereal wampum, to our puzzlement until we have learned what they are. The slippery elm, which is not uncommon along Pennsylvania fence rows and on the fertile banks of sylvan streams, is a somewhat homely tree, being short and ungainly in comparison with the stately grace of its classic cousin the American elm—the elm of history—but it is firmly endeared to all hearts by reason of its fragrant, mucilaginous inner bark, which everybody knows. On a damp day in spring the atmosphere of woods where these trees are abundant is perceptibly perfumed with the characteristic odor of this bark. To smell it there is a pleasant experience, the memory of which abides with us long after we have returned indoors serving to make indoors tolerable.

APRIL 25.—Everybody has a warm spot in his heart for the ferns; even nature is disposed to indulge them a little

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

and to let them sleep late in the morning of the year, so that it is only within the last week, when some of the wild plants have been thinking of going to seed, that the ferns have been stirring. One sees them now stretching up their pretty arms and fists from beneath their leafy coverlets in wood and swamp and holding them there as though half inclined to lie in bed a while longer if they might. Among the first of this graceful tribe to unroll their fronds are those large, wooly-stalked ferns of the swamps and wet meadows called osmundas. People learned in woodcraft obtain a toothsome morsel from these ferns, the leaf-stalks of which at the point where they are attached to the root-stock being in spring white and tender as celery and with a pleasant, chestnuty taste. "The heart of Osmund" the old English herbalists called this dainty bit in the British species.

Fields are gay now with the dandelions' round suns of bloom, to the great delight of the babies. Of all our wild flowers none is commoner, yet none perhaps has power like these to touch simple souls. They are poor folks' crocuses blooming freely and without price and filling all the grass with such a golden light that the sublimated sunshine of a whole winter seems concentrated in each round disk. It is useless, however, to gather the blooms, unless for the material purpose of dandelion wine, for they close in the hand and never open again; so stoop to them if you would enjoy their beauty, look into their orange-yellow centres rimmed round with a ring of paler gold, and if you do not rise with a tenderer heart be sure the world has a hard grip on you. There is something

QUAKER LADIES OF THE FIELDS

almost startling in the sudden appearance of hundreds of these bright flowers on some roadside bank, where none were visible the night before; they awaken one's latent faith in magic and the reality of fairy life.

Another field flower which the warming earth has encouraged into abundant bloom during the last few days is that small, lavender-colored blossom with a yellow eye known to all good Philadelphians as the Quaker Lady. Myriads of these flowers are now expanded in pasture lands and on wayside slopes, often forming dense patches of pale color that are conspicuous from long distances. In New England a quaint common name for them is innocence, and elsewhere in our country they are called bluets—a term which is probably of foreign importation, though the flower itself is a native American. The name Quaker Lady seems to be confined to the neighborhood of Philadelphia, for it is not even mentioned in Dr. Darlington's classic work on the flowers of Chester County. There is a particular charm in the buds, which are shaped like tiny rectangular boxes pinched in at the top and droop bashfully on slender stalks.

There is preaching by Jack-in-the-pulpit this week in every woodland. A week ago, when he was just coming out of winter quarters, you would scarcely have known him. The first appearance of this familiar plant is in the shape of a spear point, which when four or five inches high opens down the side and lets Jack out. A most discouraged-looking object he is then, very flat and with leaves attenuated and all adroop, suggesting a man who has just been released from a folding bed that had shut upon

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

him. A few days of fine weather, however, make a new man of him and he is now among the jauntiest of all the woodfolk. Every country child knows the intense, biting acridity of the bulb-like root of this plant, which also goes under the name of the Indian turnip because the redmen used it for food. One must respect the memory of that aboriginal genius of the kitchen, whoever she was, who discovered that roasting the fiery vegetable transformed it into a harmless ball of starchy nutrition.

Near neighbor to the Indian turnip in rich woods grows the wild ginger. This is one of the oddest of our sylvan blossoms and is sure to interest those who see it for the first time. In April the creeping, snake-like root puts up buds, each of which develops a pair of stout, heart-shaped leaves and between them a short-stalked, furry little flower grayish without and dark purple within, and resembling a cup with three wavy, tapering handles. At first the two leaves interlock in such a way as to form a protecting chalice about the flower, but when the latter's infancy is passed the leaves grow upward beyond the reach of the short-legged blossom, which then lays its cheek confidently against old Mother Earth's and so lives out its little life to the profit of sundry humble bugs that creep about the ground, glad of a chance at pollen and honey-stores so convenient to their reach. A pleasant characteristic of the wild ginger, which, by the way, is no relation at all of true ginger, is the aromatic fragrance which it exhales from root and leaf—a pungent perfume which has given rise to the popular name of the plant, and has caused the root to be extensively employed in the manufacture of perfumery.

FLOWERING OF THE PINES

APRIL 26.—The early mosquito is up and looking about him, adding his minstrelsy to the songs of the sparrows and the peeping of the marsh frogs. In spite of popular belief to the contrary, he is a strict vegetarian and though it sounds ungallant to say so, it is the ladies of his party—his wife and female relatives—that bite people and sip their blood. As a matter of fact, the male mosquito is a most peaceable fellow—if the men who write natural history are to be believed—and lives exclusively on an Arcadian fare of plant juices.

APRIL 28.—One of the pleasures of April is to go to the woods and see the pine trees in blossom. There is nothing showy about a pine blossom; in fact, it is so small and so destitute of all that goes to make up a flower in the popular estimation, that a careless observer might look at a tree in full bloom and not realize its condition. Yet, to lover eyes the pine then is enhaloed with a tender glory that once seen is not soon forgotten. The flowers are of the simplest pattern, without corolla, and of two sexes—the males, whose number is legion, being set in clustered, light yellow or purplish catkins among the leaves near the branch tips, and the females, which are much less numerous, not far distant from them. These latter may be recognized by their resemblance to little brushes with stubby cream-colored bristles. They develop in two years into the mature cones with which everybody is familiar. The male blossoms discharge an incredible quantity of yellow pollen, which sometimes is caught up by the wind and carried great distances, to descend in sulphur showers and make a news-note in the papers.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

Among all the trees of our northern woods, there is no family so ancient as that of the pines. Fellow-dwellers with the great lycopods and sigillarias and calamites, now long extinct, but which crowded the miasmal swamps of the Carboniferous Era before coal was laid or man created, the pines serve to link us with earth's infancy—with old chaos and the reign of night—with things primal and fundamental. Down all these ages they have come, preserving in their character the traits of that far-off period when life's method was more direct than now; of which it may be part of their mission to remind us. The upright shaft of the trunk pointing without halt or division of purpose heavenward; the straightforward swing of the branches outward on every side free from crookedness; the simple tufted leaves, which return alike to winter's blasts and summer zephyrs the soft answer of fragrance and of music—these inheritances of the pine savor of a time before sin and guile had entered into the world, and we may well heed their lesson.

With the passing of the months most trees change their foliage, a new mood for each season, but the pines are always the same. Amid the stress and glare of the high-road and the market-place, we sometimes remember fondly the balsamic odors, the restful twilight and the silence of the pine forest aisles as we knew them long ago, and we are sure should we return to them, at whatever season, we should find all as we had left it. So, in an unstable world, the pine stands for the steadfast nature—the dependable one that never disappoints.

MAY

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

MAY 1.—All the excitement of the world this last week has by no means been confined to the stock markets. Quiet folk, who, having freedom of mind and inclination to watch other things than brokers' blackboards, have had their reward in witnessing the trees burst into leaf—an event which has been later this season than usual, but which, once begun, has been accomplished with startling suddenness.

A few days ago there was scarcely an opened leaf bud on a tree in all our countryside. For some reason unknown to mortals, April and Old Sol were at loggerheads this year. April pouted and cried her best days away, and Sol, Achilles-like, sulked in a tent of clouds, and so between them they managed to hold back the whole leafy procession until May was at the very door.

Then, presto! and the race of the trees for the first full suit of the year is on. The thick, gummy scales in which the buds snugly spent the winter in security from icy blasts crack at last in every tree top and come dropping to the earth in chaffy showers. Out of the buds comes a variety of things. Here are, first of all, the infant leaves which unfold themselves very neatly and grow into big leaves with almost the rapidity of Jack's beanstalk; then there comes the new twig growth, which, instead of being spread over a whole season as one is apt to think, is usually completed in these first few days of real spring; and then again, there come the flowers of the tree, for every tree bears flowers, though sometimes so modestly that the careless world never sees them. We all know the blossoms of the fruit trees, and the showy panicles of the horse chest-

A MAY MEADOW

COLOR IN SPRING WOODS

nut, but many a good citizen goes to his grave in ignorance of what an oak flower looks like or a hickory or walunt blossom.

Now that the buds have burst, what a glory is in all the tree tops! We speak of the tender green of spring, but that does scant justice to the actual fact. The color of the spring woods is nearly as varied if not so brilliant as the tints of autumn. The unfolding maples are bronze and red; the oaks sometimes a quiet crimson, sometimes a creamy yellow, sometimes a brilliant red, as though dipped in blood; the birches and poplars and tulip trees an ethereal shade of yellow; the hickories a tawny brown. It is as though the woods' first thought on awakening to a new year was of the glory of the autumnal evening when they fell asleep, and for a moment the memory of that old glory suffuses all their being. It is, however, only for a moment; almost as we look the delicate tones fade away like the colors of the dawn in the sky, and the work-a-day garment of green is over them all.

MAY 3.—The meadows where the marsh marigold grows are quite likely to be vocal nowadays with melancholy double whistles long drawn out. You look in vain, perhaps, for the source of these plaintive calls, which sound first on one side of you and then on another, now at your feet and now in the air, until if you are of a nervous disposition you are half inclined to believe the place haunted. You are, indeed, in a field with meadow larks, which are of a color so like the ground whereon they feed and nest that they are quite invisible except to the trained eye. As you walk, however, the birds rise and fly, display-

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

ing the characteristic yellow breast of their kind and two conspicuous shafts of white, one at each side of the tail. The flight of the meadow lark is often in circles, and if you happen to be in the centre about which he whirls it makes your brain reel to follow him. He is, by the way, in spite of his name, no relation to the Shakespearean songster at heaven's gate; indeed is less lark than starling.

Now that the red maples are through blooming, the sugar maples have begun. These attract less attention than their florid cousins, but to people who have open eyes for the less showy side of nature few sights are more charming than a sugar tree in flower. From the midst of the opening leaf buds at the branch tips the greenish-yellow blossoms swing in long-stalked clusters, enveloping the crown in a tender mist of inexpressible loveliness. Although the sugar tree is a native of the United States from New England to the Gulf, the specimens to be seen along our roadsides are mostly of man's setting out, not Nature's, for it is one of the most satisfactory trees to transplant, growing readily in almost any environment. A curious characteristic is its bark, which is frequently of two distinct sorts on the same tree—the upper bole and branches being covered with the smooth, silvery skin that we usually associate with maples, while the lower trunk is encased in a cracked, flaky integument resembling that of the shell-bark hickory. In Pennsylvania this maple is especially abundant in the highlands of Somerset County, which contains the most elevated land in this State. There it is the commonest of trees; almost every farm has its sugar grove, and the region ranks with the most important maple

GARDENS IN THE TREE TOPS

sugar districts in our country. Somerset farmers will tell you that a sugar tree is worth as much as a cow.

While we are looking into the treetops the buttonwoods are worth attention now. Like thrifty farmers, who do not part with the whole of a crop until another is in sight, these trees have been holding fast to some of their brown seed-balls, apparently until certain that this year's weather conditions would be right for ripening a fresh lot. They are dropping the last of their seeds now, and if we look sharply among the new leaves we shall see, dangling from their midst, hundreds of queer little fat balls on long stems. These are the great tree's modest flowers, which are the least sensational of blossoms, each hardly as big as a shoe peg, and scores of them packed into those spherical heads of Doric simplicity of form. Some of the balls are dark red, and they are male blossoms, which, their pollen spent, disappear from view as a man who has run through his money drops out of sight of his quondam companions. Others of the balls are green, with a rosy tinge to their greenness; these are the female flowers, destined to become seed-bearers, and so, if all go well, to persist till next year. In some parts of our country this tree is called the sycamore, but it is a misnomer—the real sycamore, that of the Syrian lowlands and of the Bible, being a very much smaller and different tree, related to the fig and the mulberry.

MAY 12.—As the tulips on the lawns drop their petals and settle down to the homely condition of seed bearing nature prepares a second tulip show among the treetops. The blossoms of the tulip poplar—one of the cleanest,

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

straightest and most thoroughbred of our native trees—are beginning to open. This tree when in close company with others does not branch out until so high in the air that we cannot see the flowers with any satisfaction, but when a specimen is encountered dwelling singly in the open the crown is lower and more spreading and it is worth our while to look along the branches for the great cups of yellowish bloom exquisitely dashed with orange and silvery green. The tulip tree is a relative of the flowering magnolia, so that it would seem to come naturally by its love of fine flowers.

Americans in search of spring greens would hardly think of turning to a nettle patch for material, yet in the Old World, particularly among the peasantry of Ireland and Scotland, the shoots of this roadside pest cut before flowering are esteemed as a pot-herb of some value. Indeed, in earlier times, when the vegetable garden was less well stocked than now, even the quality found cooked nettles palatable, for garrulous Mr. Pepys, the famous diarist, has minutely set down the fact of his eating nettle porridge on February 27, 1661, and finding it very good. The sting of the plant is produced by an intensely burning juice emitted from the tips of the hairs with which stems and leaves are covered. The acrid character of this juice is entirely subdued by drying and boiling, and so nettle broth and nettle porridge have found a place on rustic bills of fare.

MAY 15.—These pleasant May mornings, when the wind blows languor from the south and industrious farmers are plowing fields and digging garden, expectant

BROTHERS OF THE ANGLE

flocks of chickens trailing in their wake, every man and boy with a drop of vagabond blood in his veins is tempted to go fishing. Accordingly if we follow the path through the sweet-flag meadows down to the creek where the oaks are shaking out their delicate catkins above the water we shall be pretty sure now to find the most comfortable spots along shore pre-empted by brothers of the angle. Silent and motionless they sit, an ever-present sense of the possibility of a bite giving a spice of excitement to a life which meantime has touches of Eden in it—the benediction of the sunshine and the breeze, the melody of birds and the fragrance of sweet flowers. Mysterious, indeed, are the ways of nature that in every generation she should plant in certain elect breasts this same longing to sit in the shade of a bush and contentedly watch a cork on the water till it be pulled under.

MAY 18.—The wild azalea is everywhere filling the woods and glades of Whitsuntide with the glory of its bloom. This trim little shrub can always be depended upon to come into blossom at this season of the church's Pentecostal festival, which was known among the early Dutch settlers as Pinkster—a word near akin to our present-day Pennsylvania German Pingsta; and as the flower-loving burghers of New Amsterdam could not fail to notice the profuse bloom of the beautiful wilding they gave it the name of Pinkster flower, by which it is known in the vicinity of New York to this day. Pennsylvanians usually call it the wild honeysuckle, though really it is not that, but a true azalea. The lovely flowers when at their best are arranged in soft, buoyant spheres at the

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

branch ends—often of a red so deep as to make one almost think the flame of a new Pentecost has come upon the bushes.

The woods would seem to be taking other notice of Whitsuntide, too. There is, for instance, another preacher there now besides our familiar friend Jack-in-the-pulpit. The newcomer is a strange little orchid which loves to inhabit the loamy banks and hollows along woodland streams. Its flower at a short distance appears for all the world like the head of a cowled monk with a long, flowing white beard; or, looked at more closely, the upper part of the blossom is seen to be formed like a miniature purple hood or sounding board, and the pistil beneath it is not unlike the face of one speaking within. So the plant has come to be popularly known as the preacher-in-the-pulpit. No sight of the spring woods is more charming than one's first glimpse of this little gnome-like flower looking shyly up from the mossy ground, with a face so nearly human that it seems as though it should have a human message to deliver.

Perhaps it would remind us by the shadowing forth of humanity in its outlines that the qualities of the rightly developed human life have prototypes in the flowers. In one, as in the other, there are sweetness and purity and simplicity; open-heartedness and a cheery brightness in fair weather and foul, shed with equal favor upon all creatures; and there is in each an equal dependence upon the divine largess for the wherewithal of the daily life. How great is the mystery of a flower! Before it the whole wisdom of this world stands baffled, impotent to ex-

THE RIVER'S LOWER REACHES

THE RIVER MEADOWS

plain any absolute thing of its origin, its essence, or its ultimate mission in the earth. Yet it has power sometimes to make a hard heart tender and a tender heart glad, and the mind of faith ever finds in it an evidence of the universal providence of God, beyond which man cannot stray.

In the pastures also, where the daisies are just beginning to open their eyes to the May, there is a touch of the same churchly feeling. Here in the shadow cast by the woods grows a stemless bulbous plant with clustered grass-like leaves and star-shaped flowers, which are white within and green outside, with white margins. This is the Star-of-Bethlehem, which is native to Palestine, the Levant and parts of Europe, and like the Heavenly Star for which it has been named, has spread its rays far and wide in the earth. It is a very particular little flower about its weather, and if the sun does not shine just to its liking it becomes sulky and stays shut; even under the most favorable conditions it seems to open late in the day and close early. The irregularity of its flowers to open has given rise to a number of quaint names for it in the old world. Thus in England it is sometimes called sleepy Dick, and sometimes Betty-go-to-bed-at-noon; while to the French it is the lady-of-eleven-o'clock.

MAY 25.—Along the lower reaches of our river Nature delights to weave some of her most subtle charms. Gray days such as have recently been giving us the blues in town are very pleasant days on those breezy flats. Cloudiness fits the mood of the wide meadows, the vast expanse of sky and the placid river, in whose waters the cloud changes are constantly reflected.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

Once in a while the placidity of the river is disturbed by the passing of a steamer. The long ripples which her screw stirs up come rolling in at our feet, setting a-rustle the great beds of aromatic calamus, which grows in prodigal abundance along these flats. Sweet flag is the old-fashioned country name for it. It is a sure sign of spring in town when we see upon the street the first bunch of the familiar, long, dirty-white roots swinging from the shoulders of some itinerant vendor. Time was when the plant was esteemed fit for princes' gardens and Europeans used to import it from India for the domains of the rich. A popular Old World confection used also to be made from the warm, spicy root, which would be sliced for the purpose and the slices treated with sugar, with a result, one would imagine, like candied ginger. In some parts of New England the root is similarly prepared even yet.

Not the least of the pleasures that the riverside has to offer is to be found about the old pilings and the wrecks of barges ingloriously stuck in the mud and left to the mercies of the elements. They represent commercial ventures in which man has no longer an interest, but Nature's watchful eye has not overlooked them, and she has established gardens on them. To be sure, they are very humble plants she puts there, yet not incapable of touching the spring of feeling in human hearts, and so not without service. The crumbling cracks and ever-widening seams in planks and posts are rich in deposits of mould and river mud left by freshets, and furnish all the comforts of home to many a pleasant little plant—to the blue-flowered skull-cap, to the white smartweed, to grasses of several varieties,

STUDIES IN YELLOW

and to the water-horehound, whose long runners dangle picturesquely in the air, if its lodging happens to be, as it often is, on the perpendicular side of a post. So, after their long day of homely labor, Nature gives the old hulks a crown of posies that she renews year after year, and will renew until the last wreck of them is gone.

MAY 28.—Now and then Nature dearly loves to paint the world bright yellow. Just now, besides the ubiquitous buttercups and dandelions, there is an especially fine crop of yellow rocket or wild mustard blossoming in the meadows in patches so thick and broad that the grass where the flower grows is quite hidden. In the Old World this common wayside weed is sometimes called St. Barbara's herb, presumably because the day of that saint occurs in December, when the plant is frequently gathered for winter salad. The root leaves are usually found alive throughout cold weather, and, like all the mustard tribe, are hot to the taste. To an American palate they make but a poor apology for a salad, however. Much pleasanter is our native wild peppergrass, whose little, flat, round seed-vessels are already maturing on plants not yet entirely out of flower. To pick a bunch and munch the green pods as you walk is to have your whole being brightened. They bite the tongue and exhilarate the brain, bracing up your physical system just as your sluggish soul is sometimes benefited by a good "talking to" from some plain-spoken, clear-sighted friend.

JUNE

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

JUNE 1.—Whisky Run may be in almost any county, for, after our ancestors had given the jovial name to one sequestered brook among our wooded hills, the habit seems to have grown on them, and they gave it to still another, and so on, until, like Jones and Robinson among human patronymics, the appellative lost distinctiveness. On the other side of the ridge, like as not, flows Brandy Run, making its stony bed in a similar little glen. Such names are quite meaningless to-day, but they serve as picturesque memorials of a time when small distilleries, long since forgotten, nestled in many a shady pocket of the slopes now given over to soberer sort of work.

These days of early summer are odorous in our Whisky Run with the spicy breath of the wild cherry in bloom, and upon the mossy bank violets and Solomon's seal and bellwort, Indian cucumber, sweet cicely and "sasparell" are sociably flowering. Its upper waters flow through sunny meadows, where spearmint grows, to breathe whose aromatic fragrance is like inhaling a poem, As children most of us have chewed the leaves of this beloved plant for the sake of their sweet, biting warmth, speedily changed into tingling coolness by a draught of water. The gathering of it forms one of the countryside's minor industries in spring and early summer, when you see men clipping it in the meadows and tying their spoil into bunches to be sold to the mutton butchers in town for eventual use in the making of mint sauce.

In the vicinity of old gardens peppermint also may be found growing wild in the grass, but it is not so abundant as the spearmint, from which it is distinguished by longer

A Roadside of June

THE WOOD THRUSH'S LIQUID NOTES

stalked leaves and blunt, short heads of bloom. In summer the spearmint sends up its gracefully tapering spires of pale purple blossoms which are bunched in numerous separated clusters along the axis of the spike—a pretty sight that many overlook. It is said that mice have a particular dislike for the smell of mint, and that a handful of the leaves thrown in a mouse-infested closet will drive the little pests away.

JUNE 2.—I find it profitable at times to vary my country rambles by sitting on a log by the pathside and simply being still. My coming causes some consternation among the various small deer whose lives are laid in these pleasant wild places, and for a few minutes they will be shy of me, but by and by, when stillness has merged me into their permanent landscape, the play is on again. Robin runs and struts about the ground, showing off his spring vest and tilting his yellow beak in the sunlight; a wood wren flies in from the outer air carrying an unlucky worm, and, perching upon the fence, has luncheon, wiping her bill upon the rail when it is over. There a chipmunk sits and scolds, and here, leisurely loping, comes Br'er Rabbit, stopping now and then to enjoy the view till his bright eye lights on me, then if I move but a finger he is off through the brush, his white ball of a tail shining for a moment like a cotton meteor and is lost to sight.

The wood thrush's liquid notes dropping meditatively from above, the drowsy hum of foraging bees, the woodpecker's steady rat-tat-tat as he makes a xylophone of a distant tree, are like lullabies, and I am about dozing off,

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

when a rustle among the dry leaves awakens me to the neighborly presence of that humble fellow-traveler on life's pathway, Bufo, the hoptoad. There he sits, stolid as the truth, homely as sin, and his eye, like Bunsby's, fixed on the coast of Greenland. He is one of the most companionable of good fellows. Unlike the fearsome rabbit, he does not care if I do move a muscle or two; he will not disturb the current of my thoughts by irrelevant chatter like the scolding squirrel; never, like the busy bee, does he suggest industrious habits to me when I would have a respite from work and indulge my soul. In short, in the gentle art of "far niente" he is a past master. But all this, be it remembered, by daylight. When evening draws on and the twilight is filling the corners of the earth, he wakes up and takes a lively interest in the universe. Then he hops abroad in quest of bugs and slugs, which he dearly loves, launching the while upon the patient ear of night that gurgling song of content which we all know and which our alphabet can only represent as ur-r-r.

Popular superstition has dealt unkindly with our warty friend. His undeniable homeliness, his horny forehead and his love of darkness all doubtless contributed to make him regarded in the Middle Ages as the devil's representative on earth, and his skin was supposed to be poisonous to the touch. You will remember that a toad which sweltered venom was the first to go into the witches' hellbroth in "Macbeth." Even to this day the toad, like the snake, is generally regarded with aversion, and children will tell you that to handle one will give you warts. Nevertheless the little beast is quite harmless and is really a benefactor,

THE HOPTOAD'S WAYS

particularly in gardens, where he feeds on some forms of animal life injurious to vegetation. The common species of America is somewhat less warty than his European cousin, and, as becomes a true American, hops faster.

JUNE 5.—May was a fretful month this year in our latitude, breaking easily into tears, and winter, lingering, chilled her lap; but because of the wet and cold, she has left to June such a heritage of lush green as otherwise would not have been. The intense richness of this green which is now upon wood and field and roadside is full of variety; it ranges in tone from a suggestion of yellow, as in the foliage of the buttonwoods, to a shade that is all but blue in some of the conifers. The eye that is weary with traveling the barren sands of cash books and ledgers turns to this living page and finds perfect restfulness.

Most people who think themselves fond of nature yet make the mistake of keeping too much indoors when it rains. If you have mackintosh and rubbers you are weather-proof, and it is not meet that the ducks should put a man to shame. On a moist day this time of year the country is one great bouquet of subtle odors, through which your individual speck of humanity threads its way like a bug in a posy. To say nothing of flowers, there is the earthy fragrance of the fresh furrows in the fields; by the roadside, the aroma of mint and sweetbrier; in the woods, the breath of sweet cicely and spicewood and wild ginger. Crush a sassafras leaf or run your hand along a hickory branch and you liberate such odors as transport you in a twinkling to the shores of Araby the Blest or the Spice Islands.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

JUNE 10.—If any man goes dirty in these United States it is not Nature's fault. She not only sets water freely by the dusty wayside, but soap also. The particular form in which this natural soap masquerades is the familiar flower known as bouncing bet, common on waste lots, in fields and along country roads. Everybody knows the comfortable-looking plant, with its stout, sleek leaves and abundant stars of white or pinkish bloom. The leaves and root are rich in the vegetable principle which chemists term saponin, and the foliage, if bruised and agitated in water, will produce a lather like that which is made by manufactured soaps and possessing similar cleansing properties. In spite of its abundance in this country, the plant is not native born, but is an importation from over the sea. It used to be a favorite in old-fashioned gardens, and it was to adorn these, doubtless, that its seeds were first brought to America. Taking kindly to our land, it eventually escaped from the respectable seclusion of garden life and is now a confirmed gypsy.

A flower-bedecked meadow or roadside has been compared to a living palimpsest, where in the popular names of many plants we may read some dim record of our race's history—its joys and sorrows, its superstitions and bygone practices. Thus our buxom bouncing bet in the Old World is sometimes called fuller's herb, a name which perpetuates the memory of medieval monasteries, where the brothers used it for removing stains from cloth. The yellow flowered St. John's wort, which grows in almost every field, recalls to the lover of quaint and curious lore the time when yearly on midsummer eve (June 24)

THE MEADOW'S PALIMPSEST

every hill-top in Europe was ablaze with bonfires in honor of John the Baptist, and when the herb was gathered and woven into garlands—very efficacious, it was thought, in warding off the machinations of the devil and witches. Each tiny blue flower of the speedwell that is blooming in our meadows to-day was in the eyes of our sixteenth and seventeenth-century ancestors the miniature versimilitude of St. Veronica's handkerchief, whereon, the legend ran, Christ on His way to Calvary wiped His face in agony and left the impress of His features.

But you do not need to be a student of plant history to enter into the joy of a June roadside. This is the month when the wild roses swing their censers of incense in almost every fence row and meadow; when clover is abloom, and banks are red with the ripened fruit of wild strawberries, as fragrant as they are luscious to the taste. No less characteristic of June are the bunched blossoms of the wild grape, whose delicious perfume is one of the rare delights of the year. There are three native species of this cherished vine common in our neighborhood, probably the most familiar being the little chicken grape, whose black berries, ripe in November and about the size of peas, are principally composed of stones and acidity. They would mix quite harmoniously with the snaps and snails and puppy dogs' tails, which, according to the nursery rhyme, are the component parts in the make-up of small boys. The so-called summer grape bears berries about twice as large as the chicken grape, is mature in September or October and is of a pleasanter flavor. More valuable than either of those, however, is

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

the fox grape, the musky fragrance of whose ripening clusters fills the dells of late August and when first perceived startles you with thoughts of autumn's nearness. This is the wild stock of the Concord, Catawba and Isabella varieties of our markets. Did you ever notice that the flower of the grape does not expand? At maturity the corolla loosens at the base, and, stubbornly refusing to open its mouth, is pushed bodily off by the force of the growing stamens.

JUNE 20.—One of the most charming of our wild vines is the coral or trumpet honeysuckle, which grows in rich woodlands and on shady roadside banks. Its trumpet-shaped flowers, scarlet without and yellow within, may be found in bloom now and make one think of Tennyson's "horns of Elfland faintly blowing." An interesting feature of this plant is that the upper pair of leaves is completely welded together at the base, so as to form a sort of platform around the stem, above which the clustered flowers appear. This peculiar leaf structure is common to several species of honeysuckle, but is not a characteristic of the Japanese woodbine so frequent in American gardens. The latter species, by the way, is now so thoroughly established as a wild vine that it may be classed as a naturalized American. So pertinacious is it in staking out its claims on Uncle Sam's great homestead and so densely does it grow in some places that it has even been known to overcome and smother the life out of poison ivy—a record which entitles the doughty plant to honorable mention.

The honeysuckle and the climbing rose appear to divide

WILD VINES

the honors pretty evenly as popular favorites for the covering of rustic arbors, but in our vicinity the former probably leads. The pleasant custom would seem to have been handed down to us by our English forbears, for it is alluded to by Shakespeare. Do you not remember in "Much Ado About Nothing" in Leonato's garden,

"the pleached bower,
Where honeysuckles ripened by the sun
Forbid the sun to enter; like favorites
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against the power that made it."

JUNE 25.—The man who first conceived the idea of encircling the trunks of trees with rings of stickiness to keep the caterpillars from crawling up into the leaves may have thought he had an original idea, but as a matter of fact Mother Nature has been doing that very thing on some of her plants ever since their creation. Growing in neglected fields, or in old country gardens sometimes, there is a slender, much-branched herb with few leaves but an abundance of minute flowers, soon succeeded by swollen green pods of seed. If you gather a stalk you will as likely as not feel your fingers stuck up by some viscid substance adhering to the stem; so you throw that plant away and reach for another. This treats you in the same way. Then you look more carefully and you find that every one of these plants has a band of some purplish, gummy exudation about the stalks below the flowers. Stuck fast in these rings are various bugs of low degree, obviously all very sorry they came that way. So

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

here is another vegetable bug-catcher, like the sundew and the huntsman's cup; but, while those plants consume the insects caught, this one, which is known as the catch-fly, has apparently no use for its victim after catching it. It has been suggested that the object of these gummy bands is to prevent crawling insects of the ground from reaching and perhaps injuring the flowers, which Nature may have designed shall be visited only by insects that fly.

JUNE 28.—Mulberries are ripe, and what with them and the cherries it has been flush times lately with the birds. Our native American mulberry tree is neither the white of silk-worm fame nor the black of Europe and literature, but the red. It is a moderate-sized tree, which in our neighborhood loves to grow in rich woodlands and along fence rows, and, while its fruit is not popularly esteemed in this country as the black mulberry is in the Old World, it is nevertheless by no means to be despised. The berries are in shape like an elongated blackberry, deep red in color and juicy and sweet to the taste, but rather prosy withal when one thinks of the lively lusciousness of such contemporary fruits as the strawberry and the cherry. Mulberries rarely find their way to our markets, but the country dweller sometimes indulges in a feast of them. Since they drop to the ground as fast as they ripen, they are best gathered by spreading cloths beneath the trees and then shaking the branches, which readily part with the ruddy harvest.

If I were a farmer, I suppose I should not see any beauty in the wild carrot, which, originally a visitant here

THE WILD CARROT

from over the water, has long since worn out its welcome and been relegated to the social degradation of a weed. Nevertheless, it has its beauties, and now is the time to enjoy them, for the flowers are expanding along all the waysides. The tiny white blossoms are grouped in round flat disks, which are supported by scores of slender green rays springing from a common point below, like the ribs of an expanded umbrella. These level tops of bloom have all the delicacy of lacework, and have doubtless suggested the name of Queen Anne's lace by which the plant is sometimes known. With seed time comes a transformation; then the head assumes a bowl-like shape and grows somewhat to resemble a bird's nest, so "bird's nest" is another common name that has gained some currency. The delicately cut leaves of the wild carrot are as graceful as fern fronds, and it is said that in the reign of Charles I ladies were in the habit of wearing the foliage by way of ornament.

A curious feature of the wild carrot bloom is that the center of the flower head is generally marked by the presence of one blood-red floret, turning black eventually and producing no good seed—the black sheep of the family. Another thing one is apt to find in the flower tops is an assortment more or less varied of insects—usually sluggish, beetle-like bugs, with their heads buried amid the flowers and their hind legs toward the outer world. What they find to interest them there is by no means apparent, as they are, as a rule, quite motionless. Perhaps they are philosophers of their race, who retire hither for meditation and to gain strength against their next

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

sally into a world of pitfalls and vanity. They seem quite spiritless, for when you shake the flowers the bugs drop dejectedly off, as though they had expected nothing better from their lot in life. As a matter of fact, the carrot appears to be a favorite mark for many sorts of insects, the larvae of which often destroy the roots of the garden variety—a form, by the way, which is believed to have been directly developed from our wilding weed. The root of the wild plant, while possessing the characteristic flavor of the carrot, is inedible on account of its woodiness.

JUNE 30.—From time immemorial May has been the poets' especial favorite among the months, but warm-hearted June, with a rose in her hair and an ocean of daisies surging about her feet, is a rival that presses her hard in the affections of the people. And there is this advantage that June has—a man may lie on his back on the turf, immersing himself in a very bath of grasses, with comparative immunity from rheumatism. So lying, his eyes, upturned, confront a fact of which in the absorption of earthly pursuits he is prone to take all too little account—the fact that there is a Heaven above him.

From the sunny sky of June a shadow sometimes falls that is not from a passing cloud. We look up and see floating in the clear ether a great, dark bird, with wide extended pinions fringed at each tip. Now it is motionless and drifts with the wind; now it slowly careens to one side and now to the other, like a ship on the billows of an aerial sea; now its flight is quickened, and, describing great arcs of circles, it passes from view. This is the

WHERE WOOD ROBINS SING

turkey buzzard hunting, and to watch its majestic progress brings refreshment to a man's spirit. It seems hard to believe that this wanderer in the realms of light is one of the disagreeable fowls whose roosts we sometimes come upon in our walks afield. Of all filthy spots a buzzard's roost is one of the most disgusting—reeking with foul odors and bespattered with offal, a very harpies' den—the scavengers themselves when gorged being stupid, ill-smelling, scarce able to move and looking the very incarnation of bestiality. Under such circumstances we can only retain respect for the repulsive birds by remembering how useful their work is. They remove uncleanness which, if left, would make many a spot in the world unbearable, and if they do overeat themselves it is from a good trait, the love of their appointed task.

It is worth going to the woods after a shower just to hear the wood robins rejoice. Their joy that the rain is over and gone cannot be restrained. Their song seems like a rainbow transmuted into melody. First is a dropping of liquid flute notes that sound to some fancies like "e-o-lee," and to others like "come to me"; then a gurgle or two, a trill like a shiver of rapturous delight, and then back to the beginning and over again. Usually the songster is hidden from view in the leafy coverts of the dripping tree tops, but occasionally one sees him in the open places. A few days ago, after a hard rain, while following a woodland road, I looked through a rift in the trees, and there, outlined against the clearing sky, was a wood robin perched on a dead branch and pouring forth his ravishing melody—his head turned now to one side and

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

now to the other, like an impartial public speaker addressing an extended audience. The cracking of a twig or the swish of a bush pushed back startled him by and by, and, ceasing his song, he betook himself to safer quarters, his reddish-brown coat and speckled white vest making a dim track of vanishing color through the wood as he flew.

JULY

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

JULY 5.—Of a hot July afternoon, when the air is drowsy with the hum of bees, and when the far-off shouting and the tumult of the swimmers down the creek sound a lullaby in the ear, one's rambles are preferably confined to earth's shady places. Along the wood's edge, which casts upon the field a grateful shadow lengthening with the afternoon, there is, these summer days, entertainment for man and beast—for besides my own intellectual browsings my dog will be busy as a bee on all sorts of wild goose chases. There are, for instance, certain profligate birds that must be barked at—marauders with beaks deep-dyed with cherry and mulberry juice, and flirting their impudent little tails just out of reach; there will be Mollie Cottontail that must be chased into the brier patch; there will be sundry holes in the earth to be burrowed into in the hope of a woodchuck or a mole supper. As, for myself, here are the queer little paniced flowers of the figwort staring me full in the face, like so many aerial rabbits of Lilliput, with expectant ears straight up. Here, too, are the low bushes of the New Jersey tea, of patriotic memory, from the leaves of which shrub the cup that cheers but not inebriates was often brewed when King George was odiously taxing our ancestors' bohea. I like to look close at the dainty clusters of white flowers of which each tiny petal is hooded—a very fairy bonnet.

By the wood's edge, too, particularly on the side of a bank, one of the prettiest of small ferns grows, slim and straight as an arrow, its tiny leaflets alertly looking this way and that; and if ever a fern had a mission to preach uprightness in the earth, this is that fern. It and

THE WOOD'S EDGE

the poker would be great friends, you would think. Sometimes its erect fronds are seen rising from amid a bed of poison ivy, reminding you of some sweet soul that in spite of evil surroundings strives resolutely upward to the light. The fern's name is the ebony spleenwort—ebony because the stalk and midrib are dark and shining, and spleenwort because men used to think ferns of this tribe were remedial in diseases of the spleen.

Now are the childhood days of the nuts which will be cracking next fall and winter. It is worth your while, when you are so close to the woods, to take a look at them in the nursery. The chestnuts are hardly out of long clothes yet, for they were still in flower a week or two ago, but you will find them snuggling among the leaves near the branch tips; shellbarks and walnuts bloomed more than a month ago, and these baby nuts now look like fat little flasks; it is pleasant to rub them and sniff their wholesome, bitterish fragrance. Infant beechnuts are bristly little fellows on rather long stalks, and when quite young make you think of tiny brushes that have been dipped in yellow. They are getting to be big boys now, as also are the hazels, which are encased in tight green jackets with frills.

JULY 8.—It is back in the hills, far from the madding trolley gong, that I meet now and then a ginseng hunter. It may be he sees me stoop to a plant, and a fellow-feeling prompts him to acquaintanceship; or perhaps he drops in upon me as I am weathering a shower in some wayside shack, and fellowship in adversity makes, for the nonce, of us two one. Not that he divulges at once the fact

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

of his vocation; by no means, for ginseng is the most select of roots, and sells dried for about \$3 a pound. He tests me in half a dozen ways, as a trout a suspicious worm, before, assured of my trustworthiness, he shows me one of the precious forked roots, and bites into it for love of its warm, spicy flavor. Like poet and fisherman, the ginseng hunter is born, not made. At his best he is kin to Thoreau's famous visitor at Walden Pond—that true Homeric or Paphlagonian man. He loves the wild life of outdoors for its own wild sake, and all elemental things—the sunshine, and the wind, the low flying mist, even a dash of rain; uncultured though he be, there is that in him which responds blindly to the solemnities of the still deep woods, where the rare plant of his seeking spreads its palmate leaves and nurses its family of small red berries. With the ginseng of the books he has no acquaintance; what he knows is “ginshang,” but this so familiarly that he has even verbalized it, and speaks of its quest as “goin’ ginshangin’.” He will spend days in contented search for it, faring dinnerless if need be, and sleeping out in the open, until with pockets packed and bulging, he returns to his home, lays his spoil on the garret floor to dry and takes up again the thread of his village life. As other men go fishing, he goes “gins-hanging.”

JULY 10.—Jack-in-the-pulpit has a cousin that loves to live in the sunshine by the river waters. Sometimes we find it when we go for water lilies. Arrow arum is its name. It is a stemless plant, readily recognized by its stately upright leaves with blades shaped like great flat

THE PROSE OF THE WATER LILY

barbed arrow heads, and by its curious flower clusters, borne on stout stalks about the bases of the leaves. Each flower head is enveloped in a long, pointed hood, which in shape reminds one of a lobster's claw. Down the front the hood is split, and through the crinkled folds of the opening light and air and ambassadors from the insect world find their way into the small flowers which are packed about a slender column resembling Cousin Jack within his pulpit.

Although late in the year we often find the ripened seeds of the Jack lying about the woods in the most slovenly way, the arrow arum's disposition of its seeds is in marked contrast to this. As they mature during the summer the stalks that bear them bend downward and carefully bury the precious harvest in the mud about the plant's feet, where it remains snug and safe as possible until spring sets it sprouting. The Indians, who were great grubbers of roots, discovered that the big root of the arrow arum—it sometimes weighs five or six pounds—is edible when baked, so they added it to their bill of fare. In the language of some of the Atlantic seaboard tribes it was called tuckahoe, a word which is familiar to us to-day as the name of a quaint old village of southeastern New Jersey, lolling under patriarchal trees "where the meadows meet the sea."

In spite of the large scale on which the white water lilies are picked—bushels of them being daily offered for sale on city streets—they are apparently as abundant in the ponds as ever they were, while many another wild flower grows annually scarcer near large towns. The

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

reason is that the water lily is so well rooted in inaccessible mud that the gathering of the blossoms in no wise harms the plant, which continues to put up fresh growth from its undisturbed perennial roots. It is abundant in ponds and slow streams throughout the United States from British America to the Gulf of Mexico. Readers of Longfellow will remember Evangeline's voyage through Louisianian waters, where

"Water lilies in myriads rock on the slight undulations
Made by the passing oars."

Our pioneer ancestors in their practical way found that the water lily, beside its offering of beauty and fragrance, possessed qualities of a more material character. Thus, the juice was thought to be good for inflammation and burns, and the roots used to be gathered by herbalists for various purposes, one of which was the composition of a cosmetic for ladies—the fresh juice of the root being used with lemon juice. The young leaves were to some extent a part of the spring menu of country folk and were boiled as greens, so the plant often went by the very prosaic name of water cabbage, and sometimes cow cabbage, for the leaves would also be fed to cattle. The water lily flowers have a pretty fashion of going to sleep in the afternoon, waking again next morning.

JULY 12.—A showy object along our water courses lately has been the catalpa—a tree which, like the persimmon and the chinquapin, we still know by the name the Indians gave it. In late June and early July the crowns are white with the attractive flowers which are

WHERE WATER LILIES SLEEP

THE LEOPARD FLOWER

borne in generous panicles and are about the latest of the year's tree blossoms to appear. The individual blooms remind one of small white sunbonnets frilled at the edges, and are handsomely mottled within in purple and orange. Sometimes one finds them transformed to ogre's dens by the webs of small spiders, which feed on the flies that come there hunting.

The catalpa as we know it in Pennsylvania is an introduced tree, its native heath being the rich woods of the Gulf States. The long seed pods which follow the flowers remain on the trees sometimes the year round, and their resemblance to extra long "stogies" tempts country boys sometimes to smoke them. The wood of the tree is soft and weak, but, like Antaeos of classic myth, whose strength was great so long as he kept his feet on the ground, it is very durable when in contact with the earth, for which reason it is a favorite material for railroad ties.

JULY 21.—Compatriot of Ah Sin is the pretty leopard flower, which I sometimes find sprawling over roadside banks these days of midsummer. Its petals are purple-spotted on a yellow background—a combination which suggests a bit of leopard's skin, and so the flower's name. Its introduction to this country was as an honored guest in old-fashioned gardens, but it has found the conditions of life in our Middle States so much to its taste that it has taken out naturalization papers and set up house-keeping for itself—in a timid sort of way, though, for it is not yet by any means common as a wild flower. Many people know it best by the name of blackberry lily, because of the seedpods which late in the year split open

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

and expose a cylindrical head of shining black seeds so closely simulating a blackberry that it is said that even the birds have been known to be deceived by it. Lily, however, it is not, but a member of the iris family and own cousin to the flags of the meadows.

Often of a summer evening I meet upon some footpath in the field, a country laborer leisurely plodding homeward—pipe in mouth, dinner pail on arm and his day's work behind him. Close behind him, too, sometimes jogs his dog with drooping tail and dripping tongue, and perhaps a child or two tagging along, come half way from home to meet father. Long after the little procession has passed the memory of it lingers with me and I like to think of its further progress—of the cottage toward which it fares, with a bit of yard in front and probably a white-washed picket fence with a gate that clicks behind them as they pass through. Just above the brow of the hill I can catch a glimpse of the roof with smoke rising from the chimney. If it is a hot night supper will be on the back porch, whence is an outlook through trellised vines into the garden. There, after supper, the man will hoe and weed while the twilight lasts, the crickets and frogs shrilling meanwhile their vesper songs.

JULY 26.—Growing in the chinks of a cliff by the river I have found a blue bell—the genuine bluebell of Scotland and of immortal song. This is, perhaps, the southern limit of its range in the eastern United States, for it is a lover of the higher latitudes. As we go further north we find it more abundant, and along the Delaware in the neighborhood of the Water Gap it is quite common. It

THE AZURED HAREBELL

delights to perch far up on inaccessible cliffs, where its lovely flowers nod nonchalantly down at the baffled city boarder, who would gather but cannot.

It is frequent, too, throughout the British Isles and Europe, and in England is usually known as the harebell, but why it should be associated with the hare is an enigma which has proved so difficult of solution that some desperate etymologists claim that the spelling should be hairbell—a plausible theory in view of the delicate hairlike flower stalks. This pretty flower is one of those fairest which Cadwal promised should sweeten the sad grave of Imogen:

“Thou shalt not lack
The flower that’s like thy face, pale primrose; nor
The azured harebell, like thy veins.”

Unemployed philanthropists might find occupation during the season of flowers in rescuing unfortunate honey bees and bugs of less degree from the pitfalls of the milkweed blossoms. If you will examine these flowers any sunny day you will be pretty sure to find them decorated with a miscellaneous assortment of struggling or dead insects, with their legs fast in the slits of the peculiar blossoms. The pollen of this common plant, instead of being a powder, as in the case of most plants, consists of sticky waxen masses hidden within the blossom. When a visiting insect thrusts a proboscis or leg into the opening of such a flower some of these masses stick to it, and the natural course is for the insect to fly off to another flower and fertilize this with the adhering

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

pollen. All insects, however, are not strong enough to extract their legs from the sticky places, and then ensues the slow torture of hanging there until death or a helping hand releases them from misery.

Under the name of Virginian swallowwort our roadside milkweed used to be, and perhaps still is, cultivated in English flower gardens. Besides being beautiful it could be quite a useful plant if we cared to develop its virtues. Thus its milky juice contains caoutchouc; brown sugar has been made from the flowers; the silky hairs of the seeds are serviceable in the manufacture of textile fabrics, as cotton is; and a fibre of good quality for ropemaking may be extracted from the stalk.

JULY 30.—One of the most interesting phenomena of plant life is that of sleep. The approach of darkness affects many of our familiar flowers as it does the animal creation; they become drowsy, lose their sprightliness of habit and are practically out of business until morning. The wild oxalis folds its leaflets back to back, reminding one of hands folded in prayer, and the clovers are given to the same practice. The little yellow-flowered sensitive plant, common in old fields and by roadsides, huddles its leaflets together as though to keep them warm. Some flowers, like the wild rose and the poppy, close their petals, and some that do not shut their corollas nod on their stalks.

A pretty sight of the evening is offered by the flowers of the fleabane—those small, daisy-like blossoms that have been starring the grass fields and waysides for a couple of months past. In these the rays stand bolt upright,

THE SUMMER'S HEART

SLEEP OF THE FLOWERS

transforming the flower-head into the shape of a miniature tub. It is a pleasant occupation of a summer night to observe the behavior of our wild flower friends in the dark. Their drowsiness is a touch of nature that makes them seem akin to us and gives them a yet firmer place in our affections.

AUGUST

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

AUGUST 8.—Down by the river or along the creek's side, where these August days we go for a whiff of the freshness which nature sends into the world by the water-ways, the arrow-head displays its pretty white flowers amid rustling leaves whose characteristic shape gives the plant its popular name. This plant, which is distributed throughout our country from ocean to ocean and from British America to the Rio Grande, has a special interest in that its tuberous roots furnished the North American Indians with an important part of their diet. The tubers are like the potatoes "on Maumee"; they grow small—that is, they are about the size of a hen's egg. They can be eaten either boiled or roasted, and the collection of them from the muddy depths of the waters in which they grow was reduced to a science by the tribes of the Pacific coast. There, according to Lewis and Clarke's narrative, the Indian women would push light canoes into the ponds where the arrow-head grew, and, standing in the water up to their breasts, would work the tubers loose with their toes. Thus released the roots would float immediately to the surface of the water, where they would be gathered and thrown into the canoes to be transported ashore to the campfire.

Humbler beauties are the common cat-tails, which are marshaled, millions of them, side by side in roadside swamps and marshes everywhere. When the wind stirs the long, rapier-like leaves nod and sway and flash back the sunlight from their polished surface as from so many Damascus blades. If you look closely at these leaves you will find that they are not flat in a rigid plane, as you

RIVERSIDE PLANTS

thought at first, but have a slight spiral twist to them—a little natural touch to which much of the varied beauty of a cat-tail swamp is due. The dark brown “tails” which peep out from amid the green leaves here and there all over the marsh are compact seed masses, as you will surely learn if you bring some home and stand them in a vase or in the hall corner, as many are wont to do. By and bye the brown mass splits and the seeds, each in its long cotton robe, fluff out and float about the house, to the great annoyance of the neat housewife. The flowering of the cat-tail is in June, and those who desire a store of the decorative material for their apartment do well to gather it very early in the summer, before the seeds have matured. They then remain fixed in the club-like heads not alone for one winter but for many.

The great bulrush, which grows in similar situations to the cat-tail and is sometimes eight or nine feet tall, is another interesting plant of the waterways. We shall find it in bloom now, a loose cluster of small brownish balls at the pointed summit of the round leafless stems. The blossom used to be another source of food supply to some tribes of Indians, who would beat the pollen off on a cloth and make the collected meal into cakes. The principal use of the bulrush, however, both to uncivilized and to civilized men, is derived from its spongy stems, which may be woven into excellent mats and baskets. Shakespeare devotees who visit Stratford-on-Avon may to this day see laborers cutting these rushes out of the waters of the classic stream and spreading them on the green banks in regular swaths to dry.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

Most curious of our water plants, perhaps, is the eelgrass, which grows in quiet waters throughout the eastern United States and may be gathered now along our rivers. On the Chesapeake it is called wild celery, and is said to give the characteristic flavor to the canvasback duck, which loves to feed on it. It grows in bunches in the mud of the bottom close to shore, and its ribbon-like leaves, sometimes six feet in length, float on the stream. The oddity of the plant is in its mode of flowering. The flowers are of two sexes, of which the females or seed bearers rest upon the water and are connected with the root of the plant by a long, slender stem. The males, on the contrary, have very short stems and are hidden far under water. As the male buds mature their stems snap in two and allow the flowers to rise to the surface. These decapitated blooms then shed their pollen about the expanded seed-bearing blossoms, which are thus fertilized, whereupon the long stems coil themselves spirally and draw the precious seed-vessels under water down into the mud to ripen. This operation is so nearly akin to the exercise of real intelligence that it is worth one's while, if he have an opportunity, to watch it.

AUGUST 15.—Stopping recently at a wayside farm, I had my attention attracted by the sight of a colony of white flowers blooming neither quite in the garden nor quite in the field, but in a sort of no-man's-land between, and I was told they were musk roses. On inspection they proved to be not roses, but musk-mallows, grown restive and inclined to wander out into the wide world. That these old garden mallows should be known here as roses is an interesting instance of the persistence in rural neigh-

OSMUNDA FERNS

SOME FLORAL ETYMOLOGIES

borhoods of expressions once universal, but now out of vogue and forgotten by most who consider themselves educated, for time was when the word rose far from being restricted to the queen of flowers, was used to signify blossoms in general. Thus the guelder rose was, and still is, a viburnum, and the corn rose of Britain a poppy. Similarly, the term violet was employed by ancient writers to denote many flowers not of the pansy tribe, and in that little wild lily, the so-called dog's tooth violet, the name survives to puzzle amateur plant philologists with every return of spring.

There is another bit of etymology awaiting our investigation in the fields and low meadows, which just now are frosted over with the flat-topped, whitish flower clusters of the thoroughworts. There are half a dozen different sorts of these that one may gather in the course of an August afternoon's ramble, best known of which is that old stand-by of the herb gatherers, the bitter boneset. The scattered leaves of this plant grow in pairs, joined at the base, so that the stalk seems to run through them like a skewer, and here we have the explanation of that curious other name, the thoroughwort, which has come to us from old England. There it was once applied to an herb whose stalk in the same way grew "thorough" the "wort"—that is, "through the herb." The tonic effect of our plant upon the human system when taken in the shape of a tea, putting strength, as it were, into one's bones, appears to be responsible for its commoner name.

The country, unusually fresh and green this summer, has presented few lovelier sights of late than the tasseled corn-

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

fields. No wonder that Europeans have been inclined at times to grow this stately plant for ornament. Year after year it comes to us a gift of surpassing beauty and usefulness out of the unknown, for its origin is an unsolved mystery. We know to-day no more whence it came than Hiawatha did, when, lying half-famished in his wigwam, he for the first time beheld it, in the shape of a youth,

“Dressed in garments green and yellow,
Coming through the purple twilight . . .
From the Master of Life descending.”

White men have never found it growing wild, and it would appear to have been a cultivated staple crop among the native peoples for centuries before the coming of Columbus. The early white settlers in adopting it for their own use appropriated also the Indian ways of cooking it, though these, of course, have been much improved and extended by Yankee ingenuity.

The hulled corn of New England is practically the samp of the northern Indians, who beat the parched grains to remove the hull and boiled the kernels whole. Hominy in aboriginal cookery was a similar native preparation, but in this the grains were coarsely ground or cracked. The corn cakes known as tortillas, and familiar to every traveler in Spanish-American countries, are made from ripened corn that has first been soaked in lye of wood ashes to soften and remove the hulls and then rubbed into a meal between two stones by Indian women to-day, probably just as their ancestors did 1000 years ago, for the same sort of stones are found in remains of prehistoric times in Mexico.

AUTUMNAL HERALDS

Even the modern camper's delicacy, the roasting ear, is an inheritance from the Indian. An historian writing of Virginia in 1705, speaks of the natives as delighting "to feed on roasting ears—that is, the Indian corn gathered green and milky, before it is grown to its full bigness, and roasted before the fire in its ear. And indeed," he adds naively, as from experimental knowledge, "it is a very sweet and pleasing food." Probably no better way than this has been devised for preserving the full flavor. The husks are first pulled back to permit the drawing of the silk; then they are carefully replaced, and the juicy ear is laid in the hot ashes of a wood fire. The result is a steaming process, the protecting husks keeping every virtue imprisoned while the cooking goes on.

AUGUST 19.—Country outings in latter August are replete with suggestions of the fall. In the tangled grass of the orchard, where the early apples are dropping, and in the stubble of the brown grain fields the quail cheerfully pipes "bob-white" and sets the gunner's fingers tingling, while the rabbits that bound across the road are now so plump that to see them is to think of autumnal rabbit pie. Every day or two a new aster or golden-rod blinks its bright new-opened flowers at us, and already in the swamps the hand of autumn is seen in the dashes of scarlet upon the rich glossy green leaves of the sour gums—the first of the trees to change color. One of the most charming of our native trees is the sour gum and deserves a more poetic appellation, as, indeed, it gets in New England, where the pretty Indian name tupelo is given it. The little blue berries which it bears will be ripening in a couple of weeks,

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

to the great satisfaction, you may be sure, of Br'er 'Possum who finds them mightily to his taste.

Twice a year the tangled country lane takes on a special grace; first, when April spreads a golden mist of bloom over the spicewoods and sassafras, and again when the early days of autumn come. By this is meant not the autumn of the calendar so much as of nature. It is as Thoreau says, the fall comes in a night, but we cannot foretell what night. We were languidly aware of its being summer yesterday, but this morning, though it may still be August by the almanac, there is a new quality in the air, and we grow suddenly conscious that the tangles of our old lane are blushing with the first colors of the coming autumnal glory. Glowing purple within leafy coverts the fox grapes hang, and to the damp air of evening their musky fragrance lends a delicious sweetness. On bitter-sweet vine and sugarberry bush the orange-yellow berries are set thick, and the sumacs have donned their crimson caps and lord it right royally over the humbler golden rods.

The everlastings are in bloom now in the lanes and old fields. There are a number of species of these, the small white flower-heads of one of which—the pearly everlasting—are familiar sights in the make-up of the funeral wreaths and crosses of the florists' shops. The purity of the pearly spheres, each surrounding a tiny tuft of golden yellow florets, is very captivating. There is an ethereal sort of pallor about a patch of these plants in bloom, which has probably suggested the fanciful name of "moonshine" by which they are sometimes known in the Pennsylvania

THE TONIC WILD CHERRY

mountains. More common with us than the pearly everlasting is the sweet life-everlasting, which is easily recognized by its smaller flower heads and a delicious fragrance, like that of slippery elm, which exhales from the entire plant. It is a peculiarity of flowers of this order that the true blossoms are surrounded by a dense involucre of chaffy scales almost destitute of moisture, and because of this they undergo scarcely any change in the process of drying and may be kept for years with little loss of beauty. Such flowers are common in Europe as well as here, and the French know them as *immortelles*—a term which we have imported into our own tongue.

Now is the time to gather the wild black cherries if you are a believer in the old-fashioned tonic that is made by soaking this bitter fruit in whisky. There is many a little tree along our lane hanging thick with the long straggling racemes of the black pea-shaped fruit. It is plump and juicy now, with a characteristic bitterish flavor which is very agreeable to many people, and which is almost identical with that of peach stones. Birds are very fond of these cherries, as well as of the kindred wild species, the choke cherry, but when eaten by them to excess it is said a sort of intoxication is produced.

Our bitter wild cherries were not at all to the taste of the early English explorers of our land, one of whom, writing of them two or three centuries ago, says in disgust: "They so furred the mouth that the tongue will cleave to the roof and the throat was hoarse with swallowing those red bullies (as I may call them), being little better in taste. English ordering may bring them to be an English

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

cherry, but yet they are as wild as the Indians." Probably this testy chronicler referred to the choke cherry, which is scarcely edible under the most favorable circumstances.

AUGUST 22.—How many northern folk that have read James Lane Allen's romance of the Kentucky hemp fields know that the hemp plant is a not uncommon weed in the neighborhood of their cities? It is coming into bloom now, and while its blossoms are rather lacking in beauty, the delicate fingered leaves are the very embodiment of aristocratic grace. The soul with a feeling of romance cannot but be touched at the sight of this historic plant, which from time immemorial has been associated with man in his economies, his vices, his superstitions. This is the plant whose fibres supplied cordage to the navies of Greece and Rome and Tyre and to the hangman time out of mind. Its resinous secretions form the basis of that drowsy syrup of the East, the insidious drug hashish, under whose influence the mediaeval followers of the Old Man of the Mountain carried out the murderous will of that Oriental chief. Called hashishin—that is, the hashish eaters—they gave to our language one of its most terrible words—assassin. Among the simple-minded to dream of hemp has been firmly believed to portend evil, and the seed, besides possessing its well-known prosaic value as food for canary birds, has played an important part in Old World divination and as a love charm on St. Valentine's day.

AUGUST 27.—Along fence rows and country lanes at this the summer's end, the elderberry bushes are hanging thick with their flat-topped clusters of ripe fruit. One

[88]

A POND IN THE PINE BARRENS

ELDERBERRY COMFORTS

often sees from the road the purplish-black berries spread out on sunny boards before farm houses to dry, and as stock for pies they are much esteemed by old-fashioned folk. Some even enjoy the rank tang of the raw fruit, but this, like the taste for caviare, is by most of us not acquired in a day.

The elder, indeed, plays a considerable part in the comforts of backroad country life. Elderblow tea, made from an infusion of the blossoms, is an old standby in many families, to be taken hot for certain complaints and cold for others. Elderberry wine shares with cider a place in some households that hold themselves anti-alcoholic. As for the elder wood, with its easily removable pith, is there any other so aptly fitted by nature for the construction of popguns?

In mountainous districts there is a species of this shrub which bears inedible scarlet berries ripening even as early as June, and the red-fruited bushes are then one of the striking sights of summer. The elder of England often attains the height of a small tree, and has long been associated with popular superstitions. Its foliage exhales an unpleasant odor, and it is said to be dangerous to sleep beneath the branches. Popular tradition has it that Judas hanged himself on such a tree—a fable which Shakespeare has perpetuated in his comedy of "Love's Labor Lost."

Imagination and old sentiments, we have been reminded by the genial Autocrat of the Breakfast Table, are more readily reached through the sense of smell than through other sources. You realize this very quickly when, tired by your rambles you stretch yourself out in the grateful

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

shadow of the wood's edge where dittany and pennyroyal grow. As the pungent fragrance of the crushed plants fills the chambers of your being you are back in a twinkling—you are startled to think how many summers—to your childhood's home among the hills, where this time of the year it was one of the season's special joys to tramp off with the family herbalist in quest of plants of virtue against the coming winter's ills. People and incidents you had clean forgotten throng back into your memory, and with them some aftertaste of that blessed undaunted spirit of life's morning; and the old wholesome times that you thought gone forever become for the moment a reality again. So in the perfumes of an old field where cattle would starve, the spirit of a man may find some drops of elixir to renew his youth withal.

AUGUST 31.—When poets sing of the stillness of evening they can hardly have in mind an August night in the Middle States, which is indeed somewhat a babel of small noises. Strolling homeward in the gathering dusk from an afternoon's ramble in the country one has ample oral evidence of the active companionship of nature. There is the clamor of the katydids and locusts and the cheerful chirping of the crickets, the tree frog's meditative rattle and the solemn croak of his cousin green-back in the pool, and pervading all is the subtle hum of the ubiquitous mosquito.

Now and then the mysterious tremolo of the screech owl issues from the shadows of some darkling wood lot, to be succeeded, perhaps, by the harsher, insistent demand of the whip-poor-will—a note that makes one's heart jump when suddenly uttered near-by. Pleasanter than all, however, is

THE HUMAN TOUCH

the watch dog's honest bark which from afar strikes into this wild chorus and tells of the nearness of humanity; for whatever the delights of reading the book of nature by day, in culling flowers and coquetting by the waterside with frogs and fishes, there is that in man's soul which craves when night falls the sound of a human voice, the touch of a human hand.

SEPTEMBER

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

SEPTEMBER 4.—These early September days are the time of the tobacco harvest in our State, and great leaved plants spreading to catch the dews of heaven in the morning are at night dejectedly swinging by the heels from wooden racks in rows of faded green. Occasionally one sees in the fields a plant that has been allowed to flower, and it is a stately sight—five or six feet in height, crowned with its loose panicle of funnel-shaped rosy blossoms. It is said that when the herb was introduced into Spain three and a half centuries ago it was at first cultivated for ornament, and, indeed, any garden would be graced by the attractive flowers. The living leaves are peculiar in being covered with clammy hairs about as disagreeable to the touch as were Uriah Heep's hands.

Back in those hills where the tobacco grows the stranger that you pass upon the road nods to you and wishes you a good day, and if you are afoot and do not look too much like a tramp you are reasonably sure of being invited to share an unfilled seat in a wagon if one overtakes you going your way. These are pleasant customs and worth keeping up, dictated by the old-fashioned spirit of neighborliness, which has all but been crushed out in the self-interested hurry and hubbub of city life.

SEPTEMBER 8.—In the woods nowadays there is blooming a coarse, weedy-looking plant bearing aloft a straggling bunch of odd little yellow flowers, each with its tiny mouth stretched wide apart and one stamen protruding far out of each corner like the antennae of an insect. The blossoms, and indeed the whole plant, exhale a most peculiar fragrance, which at first strikes you as agreeable and then

THE RIVERSIDE'S TANGLE

THE NIGHT-BLOOMERS

almost nauseates you—a cross between the odor of lemon verbena and that of a certain obnoxious bug not mentioned in polite society, but which the dictionary tells about under the word *cimex*. The plant is known by many names, such as horse-balm, richweed, knotweed and stoneroot. The last is suggested by the hard lumpy root, which a penknife can scarcely cut into, and which if hammered breaks up into flinty fragments like stone indeed. The plant has long enjoyed a reputation for medicinal virtue, the Indians employing it for the cure of sores and wounds, and the whites, particularly in the southern mountains, using it in home-made decoctions for fevers, colic and indigestion. The bees are very fond of visiting the blossoms, and one often sees the big fellows in apparent ecstasy hanging upside down from the small flowers, which are borne down by the insects' weight.

SEPTEMBER 10.—There is a class of plants which one is inclined to think would have been strongly disapproved by Julius Cæsar, whose liking in men was for “such as sleep o’ nights.” These are those owls among flowers, the night-bloomers, like the evening primrose, which we all know both as a garden plant and as roadside weed.

One of the most beautiful of such flowers of the dark that grow wild in America and dispense sweetness to prowlers in the night is the white or night-blooming campion, which blooms with us until the October frosts come. It is usually found in waste grounds about seaboard cities, where it loves to live in a tangle of old weeds—a dull enough place by day, but when the sun gets low filled like the night sky with the glory of a thousand eyes. The

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

star-like blossoms open rapidly as the light fades, and breathe an exquisite fragrance. With the returning day they wither or close.

The name campion is explained by the tradition that the flowers of this genus in ancient times were often used in chaplets prepared for the brows of champions in athletic games. The plant belongs to the same family as the pink, which in the days of old Rome was also employed as a garland flower, adorning even the temples of the gods. Among country people in England the night-blooming campion goes by a number of curious popular names, of which not the least quaint is grandmother's nightcap, an appellation which has obviously been suggested by the scalloped white petals which are set like a ruffle about the flower's eye.

SEPTEMBER 15.—The swamp lured me to-day to its depths again. Every man in whose veins there still lingers some strain of the primitive wild life of the race has a warm spot in his heart for the old swamp. He loves to trump up an excuse to go it. It may be for calamus root in the early spring, or to watch the red-winged blackbirds at their housekeeping, or for grapes in later August, or for the winter's store of boneset or for a shot at a bullfrog. So, leading off to the swamp there is always a path, and into it, when one goes gypsying through the golden rod and purple asters of mid-September, his feet somehow, sooner or later, find their way; and, breaking through the encircling thicket, they bring him beside quiet waters where in the warm sunshine the white water lilies are still basking and shedding their exquisite fragrance. Of all flower per-

THE SWAMP'S LURE

fumes none wears better than this: it never cloyes but is always tonic, feeding the sinews of a man's spirit. Here in the swamp autumnal fires are earliest kindled flaming scarlet in the foliage of red maple and sour gum and sumac; for the nights fall chill here and it will be in such lowlands that we shall see the first hoar frost of the season lying.

Redder than any color in leaf of trees is the brilliant hue of the cardinal flowers which gleam among the browning grasses by the water, and with them we shall likely find a blossom of duller red, that of the meadow beauty, or deer grass as it used to be called in the West. This latter plant has a peculiar charm in its seed vessel, which is shaped like some slender vase with a flush of rosy color spread over it. Interesting, too, are the chocolate brown clusters of the groundnut's flowers, swinging from the bushes over which this vine delights to clamber. This, by the way, is not the groundnut of commerce, but a kindred plant with an edible tuberous root, which has probably only escaped being a table favorite because the catalogue of American vegetables is already too crowded to make a place for it.

The swamp is indeed a paradise for vines, among them the bur cucumber. This rank-growing plant, swinging itself upward and onward by its forked tendrils, covers considerable areas with a cheerful coverlet of prosperous-looking green. It is an annual and lives its short life merrily; for not only does it attain a great length—sometimes even sixty feet or more—in its four or five months of growing, but it bobs up in all sorts of unexpected places, and, not content with its native swamp, pre-empt's land that the owner had designed for other purposes. Thus, you find

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

it springing up, almost in a night, like Jack's beanstalk, in your garden beds or in your back yard if you are a citizen, smothering your choice plants before you well know it. The little spiny cucumbers are borne in clusters, each bunch of them resembling a burr, whence the popular name. They are by no means filled with the cool succulence of the true cucumber, however, being principally seed and skin.

SEPTEMBER 19.—The fields and roadsides of autumn yield a harvest of wild perfumes to one who cares for such homely delights. Some of these, such as the aromatic fragrance of the spice bush or of the dittany, are released by the mere brushing of our bodies against the bushes, so that for a moment all the air is redolent about us; but more have to be hand gathered. Thus, the sweet fern, if its fragrance is to be properly enjoyed, must be plucked and crushed slightly in the palm; so, too, the delicious odors of green walnuts and hickory nuts come with rubbing the hulls. The goldenrod plant has a decidedly characteristic smell, faintly perceived as we pluck the flowers and more apparent if we strip the leaves. Like the fragrance of chrysanthemums, however, while it is grateful and invigorating to some people it is very distasteful to others. Magnolia leaves crushed yield a warm aroma, which deepens in the seed pods to a calamus-like quality. One of the pleasantest perfumes of the mellowing year is that of the cudweed or everlasting, the pearly white plant that is now conspicuous in most old fields. There is a dreamy suggestion of the fragrance of slippery elm about this herb that makes it a delightful nosegay.

A PINE BARRENS STREAM

LADIES' TRESSES

SEPTEMBER 20.—On grassy roadside banks the last orchid of the year is now blooming, the odd little flower which we know as ladies' tresses. Sixty odd years ago this, with other wildings, seemingly dropped by Proserpine, nodded farewell and godspeed to Thoreau as he set off upon that memorable week's voyage on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers which was to add a rare volume to the world's library. The greenish-white blossoms are curiously arranged in a spiral around the stalk, a unique characteristic by which the plant may readily be recognized. The appropriateness of its common appellation is hardly apparent to the practical mind, for ladies, unless they be mermaids, do not customarily possess greenish-white tresses. An older name for it, still heard in England, is ladies' traces, which may mean the twisted cords used in old times for lacing up the feminine bodice. The flowers when closely examined are seen to have a delicate frosted look, as though the coming event of frosty days were foreshadowed in their late-opening chalice.

Though oak trees are associated in the popular mind with massive strength, as a matter of fact some oaks are among the most dwarfish of trees. The chinquapin oak, for instance, which is abundant in dry soil is a veritable arboreal Tom Thumb. In our neighborhood its usual height is about three or four feet, but sometimes it is not over two feet high, while its maximum is believed to be twelve. It is, nevertheless, a charming shrub, and owes its name doubtless to its being a miniature edition of its cousin, the chestnut oak. At this time of year its acorns are maturing and are borne in remarkable abundance. They

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

make an excellent food for hogs and have helped to fatten many a porker in South Jersey, where the little tree is very common. Between pigs and acorns, indeed, a sort of natural affinity has existed from time immemorial. Are they not associated in popular proverb, and did not Gurth, the swineherd, feed the refractory herd of Cedric, the Saxon, on the oak-mast of Sherwood Forest as long ago as *Ivanhoe's* day?

Man, too, has found acorns a food not to be despised, for, if only the bitterness can be nullified, there is much nutriment in them. The Indians discovered that by shelling and peeling them, then pounding them into a meal, washing this thoroughly in water and then boiling it, the result was a very passable mush, practically free from acidity. The bitterness may also be partially removed by burying the nuts for a time in the earth.

SEPTEMBER 25.—Of a still autumnal afternoon, when the descending sun is flinging the shadows of the riverside trees far into the placid depths of the stream, to walk along the banks of our rivers is to participate in a scene of rare rural loveliness. It is such a scene as duplicates in kind the classic reaches of the English River Lea, where Father Walton was wont to angle and contemplate, and whither to this day his disciples love to repair. Our river has its anglers, too, patient, hopeful men who come out from the turmoil of the city's forging and trafficking to sit on the bank with rod and pipe and luncheon done up in a bit of newspaper, and, chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy, silently bide their luck. Tradition has it that a fish is sometimes caught, but eye witnesses to the fact are not numerous.

AN UP-RIVER RAMBLE

Here, within earshot of the city bells, ferrymen still ply their trade with row-boat and oar, the superior claims of steam and electricity being to them as though they were not. Arriving at the water's edge, if the boat be on the other shore, you stand and call "O—ver!" in your most robust tones, until, by and by, from among the willows across the river, the small craft puts out, with mayhap a sunbonneted woman at the oars, and you feel as though you had somehow got back to Twickenham Ferry and the eighteenth century.

Another charm of an up-river ramble is when around a bend of the stream a couple of staggering mules and a boy put in an appearance, and after a while the deep coal-laden canal boat which they herald plows by on its silent way cityward. The steersman is a picturesque sight, sharply defined against the sky as he leans on the tiller, and if the lock be near, you may have the delight of hearing him blow a mellow blast or two upon the conch shell, which usually lies on the hatch in front of him. There is something quieting in the passing of a canal boat, with its slow but sure progress, absolutely without noise or bustle. It is the visible expression of a forceful leisure, a dignified sight that strengthens you; whereas the hissing and puffing of steam or the sputter of electricity communicates somewhat of its own unrest to your spirit.

OCTOBER

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

OCTOBER 2.—October is a month of fruit rather than of flowers, but there is at least one wild blossom that we find in perfection this month, and of all Flora's train it is one of the quaintest. This is the sneezeweed, which revels in the alluvial soil along the margins of streams, and is readily recognized by the little round balls of central bloom surrounded by a circlet of drooping yellow rays. A side view of this blossom reminds one of a tiny straw hat with the brim pulled down all around. It is a lover of cool weather, almost rivaling the garden chrysanthemum in this respect, and may be found blooming even in November. Its very unpoetic name is derived from the fact that the dried flowers and leaves possess the property of inducing violent sneezing. On this account the plant has a place in medicine, for some of the ills that flesh is heir to are relieved by a good, honest sneeze or two rightly timed.

After a long summer spent in the comparative obscurity of commonplace green, our democratic friend, the pokeweed, has donned the imperial purple, and is making a brave show in fence rows and by the borders of woods. Its robust stems and branches are full to bursting with the rich color, which has flowed down the mid-rib of the leaves and overrun into the blades. The branches are now loaded with their racemes of black berries, the crimson juices of which we prized as children for the manufacture of what we were pleased to call red ink—a most illusive fluid, the only virtue of which was that it cost nothing, for it would keep no trust reposed in it and would fade in a short time quite off the paper. The pokeweed, like the en-

PICTURESQUE LANES

terprising American that it is, has even invaded Europe, where it has become naturalized in the basin of the Mediterranean, and where the thrifty natives have found a use for it in the adulteration of wine. It is a plant full of energy, as is evidenced by its still blooming, although borne down with fruit and Jack Frost like a sword of Damocles hanging over its head. New Englanders know it under the name of garget, which is a rather more dignified term than poke, although both names appear to be incomprehensible to our philologists.

The word poke is perhaps of Indian origin, but the plant which we know specifically as the Indian poke is of quite another family, being a rank plaited-leaved weed of swamps and low grounds, the leafy stems of which are topped in early summer with great pyramids of dingy yellow flowers. Indian poke is quite poisonous, a fact well known to the red men, who, it is said, sometimes turned the quality to account in selecting their chiefs—the candidate who could imbibe most of the poison and survive being regarded as born to leadership.

OCTOBER 10.—The lanes are now among the most picturesque of sights, and offer much entertainment to one who has a taste for enjoyment on a low key—to use John Burroughs' phrase. Among our hills there are many such pleasant lanes, half hiding between stone walls and fences that are buried in clambering vines, now skirting woodland or orchard, now winding up hill and along the ridges by cornfields and turnip patches, and now descending into little dales that carry in their laps brawling streams to feed the river.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

In such places, these October days, we find the climbing bittersweet in abundance. This characteristic American vine, which dearly loves to climb a tree, is shyness itself in spring and summer; its flowers are so unassuming that they are rarely ever observed, and its foliage is of so conventional a pattern that it passes equally unnoticed in the general green livery of the wayside. But suddenly in the fall it flames upon our startled sight with showy bunches of orange-colored berries, which after a hard frost burst open and glow yet more ardently because of the fiery red-coated seeds which are within. Bittersweet berries retain their brightness indoors for months, particularly if gathered unopened before the frost touches them, and are among the most cherished of decorations in some rural homes. The vine is a famous contortionist, and often twists and doubles upon itself to a remarkable degree. To-day I gathered a spray of it that had tied itself into a loose knot.

Common along the fence rows is a shrubby relative of the elm, the sugarberry, which, like Corp, the friend of Sentimental Tommy, has a pronounced tendency to warts. These knotty protuberances, which often stud the leaves so thickly as to be an actual deformity of the foliage, are, like oak galls, due to the egg deposits of insects. The sugarberry shrubs are easily detected in the lanes at this season of falling leaves by the numerous reddish-brown berries set solitarily upon the twigs, where they remain throughout the winter if the birds do not eat them—crusty little beads by no means distasteful to human palates, too, owing to the presence of a sweetish pulp be-

AN OCTOBER WAYSIDE

PERSIMMON HISTORY

tween the large single stone and the enveloping dryish rind.

Our old lane will probably yield us a persimmon tree or two, and it is pleasant to look up into the thinning leaves and see clinging to the limbs the round, fat persimmons, like rosy little puddings tied about the throat. There has hardly been frost enough yet to soften their asperities, and we shall do well to treat very gingerly the fruit we may now find upon the ground. Something of the old malicious spirit lingers in persimmons which was in that strange fruit, *sardo*, that grew anciently in Sardinia and so contorted the faces of those who ate it as to give to them a look of unreal laughter and so to human speech the adjective sardonic.

Nevertheless, few wild fruits are so dear to the American heart as this, which with many of us is associated with wholesome country outings and good times, and has a special place in popular song and story. It may not be generally known that ebony is the wood of certain species of persimmon trees that grow in tropical regions. Our North American variety, while presenting in its heart-wood—which is dark and close-grained—some characteristics of the ebony of commerce, does not develop a timber of much value.

OCTOBER 20.—The autumn rains have served to keep the pastures quite green, late as it is, but rusty brown patches appear here and there. These are not altogether the effect of withering vegetation, but in many places are due to the presence in great abundance of a curious little plant called the clammy cuphea, a country cousin of the familiar cigar plant of old-fashioned gardens. It bears

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

small flowers of a deep magenta color, and a purplish, sticky fuzz that clothes the whole plant makes it very disagreeable to handle. The odd feature of the cuphea, and one which any one may observe, is the way it ripens its seeds. The capsule, instead of staying fast shut until the seeds are mature and ready for sowing, splits open while they are still green, and, exposed to the elements in this Spartan fashion, they grow to ripeness.

If we have ever wondered why cockle-burrs and Spanish needles and beggarticks and all that vagrant fraternity of stick-tights that pester us in the fall are so widely distributed in the earth we shall do well to notice the cows of an autumn evening as they come home from a day's foraging in some weedy pasture. Their hides are often stuck as full of them as pincushions with pins. Rubbing off in stall and barnyard, the seeds eventually become a part of the compost heap, which in due time may be shipped scores of miles away to fertilize fields in another State, and, the seeds germinating there, their progeny will by another fall be at the old tricks of the family—stealing rides on folk and cattle.

OCTOBER 28.—That man must be a hardened citizen, indeed, who on a fine October morning does not feel the country tugging at his heart-strings and inviting him to take a day off and go nutting. For now is the delectable time of year when nuts are dropping, when "the frost is on the pumpkin and the corn is in the shock," and the air is spicy with the fragrance of the cider press; when quail and rabbits scurry about at their plumpest, blissfully ignorant of the nearness of the fateful First of November;

WHEN NUTS ARE DROPPING

and when the blackbirds in the treetops are holding those wonderful conventions of theirs, their jargoning being as the creaking of innumerable wagons.

The ideal day for nut gathering is a windy one after a frosty night, and you would better be afoot betimes, or the squirrels will have had the pick of the windfalls, for windfalls, if you are wise, are what you are after. Clubbing the trees not only turns your sport into labor, but is injurious to the trees and altogether brutal. There is hardly any shorter cut back to the youth of the world than this scratching for the brown nuts among the fallen leaves and green mosses of the woodland floor. Each one found whets the appetite for more, until you are prouder of your bulging pockets than you were yesterday of a lucky turn on the market.

This year chestnuts, the popular favorite among nuts, seem scarce, but the yield of shellbarks is abundant. The hickory tribe, of which the Eastern shellbark and the pecan of the Mississippi Valley are the most esteemed as nut-bearers, are among the most interesting of our native trees. America has a monopoly of them, for they do not grow in the Old World. The peculiar character of the wood is its elastic toughness, which has passed into a proverb. This quality makes the hickory very valuable in the manufacture of agricultural implements, while as fuel for an open fire it has probably promoted more waking dreams and pleasant reveries than any other wood of our forests. The Indians, who knew a good deal more about some of our native products than we do, found that by pounding the nuts, putting them in boiling water and then

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

passing the mass through a strainer, the result was an oily liquid said to be as sweet and rich as cream. This was used as an ingredient in aboriginal corn cakes and hominy, and, on the authority of the immortal Captain John Smith of schoolboy memory, was called by the Virginia Indians pawcohiccora; whence, by our American fashion of making short work of long names, our modern word hickory.

Perhaps the most neglected of our American nuts, yet certainly one of the choicest, is the beech nut. These nuts are borne at the branch tips in spiny little husks, which crack open in October and disclose within two triangular nuts, each about the size of a small chinquapin. Unfortunately, in our neighborhood the nuts are very frequently either undeveloped or wormy, but the perfect ones are well worth looking for, as the meat is of delicious sweetness. In eating them one needs a knife to slice off one side of the angled shell, and then the kernel falls easily into the hand.

By the wood's edge, where the sunshine lies warm and mellow, the hazels have been lately dropping their nuts, and, strange to relate, preparing for another year by putting on their next spring's catkins. They know enough about the weather, however, to keep their infantile mouths tight shut until winter is over, and so are preserved from death by freezing. The field violets over the fence are less prudent, and an occasional blue blossom nods jauntily at us as we pass, as though it knew all about the weather, and this were just as good a time to blossom as next May; but with the night will come a frost to nip its tender leaves of hope.

NOVEMBER

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

NOVEMBER 1.—One must be hardened, indeed, not to lose his heart to that neatest of wild shrubs, the sassafras—true lover of the fence row and abandoned field. Sometimes we find it in its proportions a small tree; indeed, in our Southern States it often attains the height of a large tree, and in colony days the exportation of the logs was something of a trade item. There is no season when the landscape is not the better for its presence. In spring, when covered with its lemon-yellow blossoms, appearing before the leaves, it looks from afar like an exaggerated golden rod; in summer its dense, flat-topped crown of verdure is coolness personified; in the fall, when leaves are turning, it is brilliant in tones of yellow and red. It is pleasantly aromatic in all its parts, but particularly in the root, which is dear to most Americans that have ever lived in the country, as the essence of that delectable beverage of childhood, root beer.

In olden times great was sassafras in the family pharmacopoeia. A specific for ague, as well as for sundry other ills, it used to command extravagant prices not only in the colonies, but in the mother country, which, mother-like, took considerable pride in our products, even if she did tax us pretty roundly. The leaves are sometimes cleft at one side into the shape of a thumb, so that in your country walks when you come upon a little tree that astonishes you by appearing to wear mittens you may be sure you have met the sassafras. There is a curious story that it was the fragrance of this tree wafted out upon the waters that encouraged Columbus to persist in his westward voyage in the face of the protests of his mutinous crew.

TWO SORTS OF HAZELS

NOVEMBER 7.—These are bright November days and now the woods have a look that one sees in them at no other time of year. They are filled with a strange, unearthly light—the pale sunshine reflected from myriads of brilliantly colored leaves that strew the ground and are still falling. It is a fit setting for that weird last blossom of the year, the witch hazel, whose snaky lemon-yellow petals are bristling now on bare, straggling branches. These are the branches which from time immemorial provided country water finders with their choicest switches wherewith to point to hidden springs.

The true hazel, which bears some resemblance to its uncanny namesake, is easily distinguished from the latter by straighter branches and a more upright habit. It is a more sociable plant, too, loving to grow in clumps along the borders of the woods. Even at this late date I find clinging to the twigs and gayly defying the chill night winds a nut or two in ragged brown jacket with the lapels thrown jauntily back, reminding me of some dashing out-at-elbow cavalier of comic opera. Encouraged by such luck, I search industriously among the leaves for the nuts that must have dropped, but all that I find have a big hole in one end and the meat is gone. Derisive chatter from a neighboring tree and the flourish of a bushy tail disappearing around the trunk incline me to believe that my discomfiture has added somewhat to the gayety of bunnydom.

Two orchids of our woods are preparing to spend the winter with us. The commoner of the two is the rattlesnake plantain. This has small, fat leaves of a velvety green color beautifully reticulated in white, which are

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

usually found growing close to the ground in clusters partially under the cover of the woodland litter. Like many of our native plants it once enjoyed some repute as an antidote to the dreaded rattlesnake bite, whence the common name. It is said to have been regarded by the Indians as so sure a cure that they would from bravado allow rattlers to bite them if they had a supply of these orchid leaves at hand to apply to the wound.

Our other winter orchid, one which is now reckoned as a rarity in our neighborhood is popularly known as Adam-and-Eve. It is readily recognized at this season by its solitary silvery green leaf of a parchment-like texture prominently ribbed and wrinkled, which, if all go well, will outlive the storms of winter and die only when the plant blooms next May. The leaf springs from an underground bulb, shaped like that of a crocus, and this will always be found united by a horizontal shoot to the bulb of the previous year, wherein lies the significance of the name. Last year's bulb we may reasonably assume to be Adam, from whom by a rib put forth, Eve is formed.

NOVEMBER 15.—One is prone to think of fishing as the contemplative man's special recreation, but as a matter of fact to sit on a log in the woods at this time of year is quite as prolific of quiet enjoyment, if one have an easy mind, a half holiday, and eyes that see and ears that hear. At no season are woodlands lovelier than now before the heavy snows have come. The sunlight fills them completely and brightens up their thick carpet of dry leaves to a warm, ruddy hue, as cheerful as the glow from a hearth, while upon the frosty air is borne a various music. Now

A HEMLOCK SLOPE

WOODLAND SOUNDS

it is the ringing of horses' iron-shod hoofs upon the distant, hard turnpike, now the hum of the country trolley car, now the frenzied barking of dogs in hot pursuit of a rabbit, now the sharp concussion of the wood chopper's ax and its quick following echo. That sound, like a bung drawn suddenly from a barrel, is the discharge of a far-off hunter's gun, mellowed by distance. There is in these humble noises the raw material of real poetry; as we heed them and let them sink into our consciousness they reach to the red earth in us, the Adamic part, which finds a zest in all rural sights and sounds, and which lingers in most of us an inheritance from a time before cities were.

We may have thought when we came into our wood that it was deserted of life, but we do not sit long on our log before we find company. There are sparrows among the dry leaves that strew the brook side, and they are busy rustling them in their search for seeds or whatnot, keeping up a monotonous melancholy chirp the while, that works on one's feelings. A woodpecker makes his way up the big chestnut in front of us, hammering melodiously as he goes, and when he gets high enough, backs methodically down again. Perhaps, too, we shall have a sight of that most charming of our winter birds—the nuthatch, which like the woodpecker also picks a living from tree bark. It should be tonic to sluggards to watch this little bird engaged in getting dinner. Industriously it searches for insect eggs in every likely crevice from root up and then turning about it descends headfirst over the same route to make sure it missed nothing. This odd way of coming down a tree trunk is a characteristic of the

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

nuthatch and makes it very easy of identification in winter.

Another busy bird in the winter trees is the brown creeper, which invariably begins at the lower part of the tree and works upward, then flies downward to the base of another tree and starts up again. Unlike the nuthatch it takes no chances of a rush of blood to the head.

NOVEMBER 20.—In our country rambles we sometimes notice a neat little pile of feathers and bones bleaching upon the ground in the woods or by a fence, and, if we are disposed to speculate upon its reason for being, we probably pronounce it the remains of a worn-out bird that has fallen dead by the way long ago. As a matter of fact, these deposits represent what is left of some unlucky sparrow or tom-tit after an owl has breakfasted upon him. Master Owl's table manners are by no means of the politest, and when he captures his prey he simply swallows it whole at one gulp and sits solemnly upon his perch until his digestive apparatus has assimilated all of that particular bird that is good for an owl. That point reached he opens his mouth and ejects from it in a small wad the indigestible bones and feathers which have attracted our attention, and then, like *Oliver Twist*, he is ready for more.

Now, that the leaves have fallen from deciduous tree and shrub, many a plant becomes conspicuous that we passed by unnoticed in the leafy season. Among such not the least picturesque is one which country people still call by the name the Indians gave it, the pipsissewa. It is a low evergreen, with glossy foliage, common in woodlands, and so great faith had the aborigines in its medicinal

WILD HARVESTS

virtues that the fame of it spread among the whites, who adopted the plant name and all as a home remedy. It really has some tonic value, being bitter and astringent, and is collected by herb gatherers to this day wherewith to make a tea for coughs and colds. The seed-vessels remain on many of the plants throughout the winter. Held aloft on the slender stalks they make a very graceful study, reminding one of burned-out candelabra that may have lighted fairy revels on midsummer nights.

Another species of pipsissewa, bearing dull-green leaves, streaked with white, is also abundant in winter woods. For some reason the herb collectors in South Jersey regard it as poisonous—a reputation quite unwarranted by the facts so far as generally known. The botanical name of both species, by the way, is an unusually beautiful one, in view of their hardy way of life—"chimaphila," meaning the winter loving.

The yellow-flowered, prickly cactus, that grows wild in sandy places throughout the Atlantic seaboard States, is now decked with its ripened fruit and making evident to all who see it the reason for the plant's popular name of prickly pear. The fruit is a purplish berry shaped like a small pear, and, though very full of seeds, is edible and even pleasant to the human palate, possessing something of that thirst-quenching quality which makes the cactus family of such great economic importance in the deserts of the Southwest.

Like miniature red-cheeked apples are the crimson hips of the swamp rose, sprays of which brought home from a November ramble make the house as cheerful as with

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

flowers. After being touched by the frost the wild rose hip becomes sweet to the taste, and is a dainty morsel to birds and sundry small deer in winter. It has even been of some account in the diet of the Indians, particularly in the far Northwest, where there is at least one species of rose which bears fruit that is comparatively large and juicy.

NOVEMBER 29.—Before entering upon her winter slumbers, Mother Nature makes a beginning at her spring work, as a thrifty housewife the last thing at night hangs the cream kettle outside the kitchen door and sets her biscuit to rise. So as we tramp about the woods and fields these days of the fall of the leaf we shall see many things that point to spring. *Arbutus*, for instance, is already in bud, and the alder shrubs are loaded with clusters of close-fisted catkins, hoarding golden pollen subject only to the order of next year's sun. Some of the other plants, however, are more secretive. To look at the *hepatica* and the wild ginger you would think they considered one year at a time enough for them, for they give no outward token of preparing for spring. Nevertheless, if you thrust your finger into their loamy bed you will find buds started underground, inclosing baby flowers in their winter wraps.

DECEMBER

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

DECEMBER 15.—If you are disposed to think that winter marks the death of the year you should take a closer look at the trees. What though Jack Frost has locked fast the ponds and lesser streams and goes roystering about the country with his boon companion, the north wind? Set thick upon the trees are the young buds of a new year's life—hope's candles to keep us in cheer until the spring comes. Almost all the trees have their buds set, and if you have a friend who is disposed to talk about these being melancholy days, you can hardly do better than show him the heralds of spring resident upon the twigs. The branch that Noah's dove brought back across the waste of waters was not more truly a harbinger of the return of better times than are these winter twigs of our forest trees. The bud usually appears in the axil of the old leaf stalk or near it, but an interesting variation from this is made in the case of the buttonwood. Here the bud is produced in hiding directly beneath the base of the leaf stalk, which fits like a cap upon the pointed head of the bud and finally falls off, leaving the latter bareheaded in a cold world.

People are apt to give but scant attention to these winter buds, which are often very beautiful and characterized by the same marvelous variety that is upon all Nature's handiwork. The buds of the white oak, for instance, are small, blunt excrescences, while those of the hickory are good-sized pointed cones, in shape reminding one of the sharp iron plugs of our boyhood's tops. The beech buds, in tones of light chestnut, are an inch long, slender and delicately pointed like a lance head, while

WINTER BUDS

the tulip tree's are a dark crimson, clothed in a frosty bloom and beveled down at the tip like a chisel. The twigs of the dogwood are terminated by round, flat buds in gray, as a fencing foil is capped by its button; and the great brown buds of the horse chestnut, as every one knows, are shingled like a roof and covered neatly with a protective coat of varnish. Indeed, so well marked are the characteristics of the winter buds that an expert can often distinguish by them one species from another without the aid of leaf or flower.

No one who loves the trees can afford to miss acquaintance with them in their winter moods, when they are no less beautiful than in summer and when the absence of leaves lets us into their more secret places.

DECEMBER 20.—One of the very conspicuous native trees at this season is the buttonwood. The bald trunks from which the bark scales in great patches gleam white for long distances in winter, and readily distinguish the tree from every other. The curious habit of shedding its bark is due to the expansion of the trunk's girth as the tree grows; but, while the bark of other trees is continually stretching a point to meet the demands of growing hosts, that of our sycamore is inelastic and unaccommodating, and so gets constantly pushed off the tree—a type of the old foggy among men who refuses to adapt himself to the changing needs of the time. Sycamore seeds are more fortunate. They are borne in compact balls, which swing by long stems from the upper boughs from autumn until spring. A branch or two of these dangling button-balls make a novel and interesting indoor decoration direct from Nature's workshop.

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

Another showy tree in winter is the tulip poplar, from whose magnificent columnar trunk, straight-grained and soft, the Indians were wont to make their dugout canoes. The seed vessels are large cones, consisting of numerous long-winged seeds packed around a central axis. These seeds are scattered abroad by the winds of autumn and early winter, leaving the bare axis standing in a hollow bowl of yellowish brown scales, which the sun of a winter afternoon vivifies to a pale gold. A treeful of them is one of the pleasant sights of a country ramble at this season.

Perhaps the most striking of our roadside trees in winter, however, is one which is covered with upright panicles of yellowish flower-buds, mingled with gaping seed pods shaped somewhat like English walnuts. Examine these buds and you will find them apparently encased in buckskin, through which the frost has no power to penetrate, but which the springtime sun will cause speedily to fall away and reveal to the world a wealth of violet purple blossoms. This showy tree is the paulownia, a native of Japan, from which country it was introduced many years ago for the adornment of lawns and city streets, where it is still more often seen than in country fence rows. Its stately name perpetuates the memory of a Czar's daughter, Anna Paulowna, child of the despotic Muscovite, Paul the First.

In winter our admiration of the familiar sumac bushes, whose foliage puts a special strain of brightness in the autumnal coloring of old fields and roadsides tangles, receives a fresh impetus. Against the white background of the desolated earth they now stand out in decorative out-

BY THE WINTER SEA

A TAVERN IN THE PINES

line, with upright, pyramidal clusters of velvety crimson berries topping the writhing branches. An armful set in a big jar in a sunny corner of the library will fill the room all winter long with outdoor memories.

DECEMBER 27.—These winter days my lungs pant sometimes for a breath of the pines. It is something of a journey thither and I like to go down the night before and sleep at an old-fashioned hostelry in the woods. There sitting for an hour or two before bedtime planted as Tom o' Shanter was, "fast by the ingle bleezing finely," I like to get acquainted with my fellow-men of the pine belt—hewers of pine and drawers of cedar, charcoal burners and gatherers of peat-moss; doughty Nimrods all, full of strange stories of great game killed and of greater that got away. Then, when 10 o'clock comes, I take my lamp up to a fireless room and tuck myself away under covers a foot thick, while the northwest wind, battling against the rampart of pines that hem the inn about, roars me to sleep.

The stars are still shining in the sky when a pounding at the door calls me downstairs, where I perform my ablutions in a tin basin at the kitchen door, rub my face into a glow with a crash towel, and sleek my locks with a veteran comb that hangs by the bit of looking-glass near the window. I am the only guest, so I am sure of the warm seat by the stove at breakfast—and such a breakfast! There are for *piece de résistance* fat, juicy sausages, cracking their chestnut sides with geniality, and brown buckwheat cakes hot off the griddle and almost as round as the same, their entrancing vapors mingling in

A WINDOW IN ARCADY

midair with the aromatic steam that rises from the coffee pot at my elbow. So fortified, I am ready to fare forth by frozen paths to meet the sun, already sending yellow shafts of light through the silent aisles of the woods.

Few people realize the wealth of color which the pine barrens hold even in midwinter, and which is revealed on a sunny day. This color is due principally to the prevalence of evergreen plants whose foliage the frost turns to many shades of crimson and yellow and green. There are verdant banks of laurel streaked with the scarlet of the season's twigs, and inkberry bushes in blue-black. The tiny green leaves of the sand myrtle are lit up by the sun with sparkles of white light reflected from them as from so many little mirrors, the cranberry vines, fast in the embrace of the marsh ice, stand blushing deep crimson, as though ashamed of having been so caught, and the miniature forests of teaberry make splashes of dull red over the ground, with here and there a flash of scarlet where a berry shows. In great patches of emerald green or sulphur yellow the mosses of the upland sands grow, but in the swamps the spongy peat-moss is dyed in exquisite shades of red and old gold and looks like a rich carpet.

Rarest of all treats to the eye, however, in these flowerless days is the sight of the open marshes and savannas, where, ringed about by the dark-green pines, the cassandra bushes are gathered into billowy lakes of foliage. The leaves of this shrubby little plant, which covers great areas in open bogs and in the wet grounds along the pine barren streams, are in winter the dullest of dead browns, dotted with minute points of gray. In cloudy weather no one

THE DESERTED CABIN

would think of these bushes as beautiful; but let the sun shine upon the brown billows and they are transformed in a twinkling to such a glory of warm, vivid auburn as fairly takes my breath away, and humbles me by a revelation of beauty that seems let down from heaven.

After walking for miles in these piney stretches and seeing no sign of man I come upon a weed-grown clearing, where, amid brambles and scrubby sassafras and suckering white poplars, a deserted cabin stands—the home aforetime of human beings who sought there to wrest a living from the sand. The roof sags in, bowed by the burden of many a winter's snows; the floor is crazy and rotting; where windows once were are now but gaping sockets. Is this the forgotten grave of some family's buried hope, or is it an abandoned stepping-stone to better things?

Standing in the crumbling doorway I note amid the desolation two simple things that touch within me a tender chord. One is a corner cupboard, its broken door revealing a cozy top shelf that surely lodged that solacer of housewifely care, a tea pot. Daily for how many humdrum years has it not come down from that top shelf on its kindly mission to tired femininity! And the other is a blackened hearth, where fire once blazed. There the kettle must have sung, and of a cold night weary feet were stretched out to gather warmth and comfort; by its fitful gleam perhaps some Hampden of the pines or mute, inglorious Milton may have conned his humanities. So in the depth of the wildwood is a tongue to speak of home to the traveler and keep his heart warm.

ENVOY

ENVOY

*The year is done; frostbound and chill
Lie all those pleasant paths we trod;
Thou mindest not; thy feet, dear love,
Tread heavenly ways with God.*

*Before the embers of my fire
That lights the hearth which thou didst bless
I sit alone tonight, bereft
Yet not all comfortless.*

*Though thou art vanished, faith abides
That He who of us twain made one,
Parting our hands, binds still our souls—
Has not His work undone.*

INDEX

	Page		Page
Acorns,	27, 99	Eelgrass,	82
Adam-and-Eve,	114	Elderberry,	88
Arrowhead,	80	Everlastings,	86
Autumn heralds,	85		
		Ferns,	26, 35, 68
Beechnuts,	110		
Berrying in winter, . .	16	Ginger, wild	38
Bittersweet,	106	Ginseng hunter,	69
Bluebells,	74	Grapes, wild	59
Bulrush,	81	Grasses, winter	13
Buttonwood,	45, 121	"Greens", wild	30
Buzzards,	64		
		Hazel,	110, 113
Campion, evening . . .	95	Hemp gone wild,	88
Carrot, wild	63	Hickory tribe,	109
Catalpa,	72	Honeysuckle,	60
Catchfly,	62		
Catkins,	23	Indian uses of plants, 26, 38,	
Catnip	12	71, 80, 81, 84, 95, 100,	
Cattails,	80	105, 109, 118, 122	
Cherries, wild	87		
Chickweed,	11	Jack-in-the-pulpit, . . .	37
Clammy cuphea,	107		
Corn, green and dried, .	84	Ladies' tresses,	99
Cucumber, burr	97	Lanes of Autumn,	105
		Lily, blackberry	73
Dandelions,	36	Lily, water	72
Dog's tooth violet, . .	34		
Dutchman's breeches, .	31	Meadow lark,	43
		" palimpsest, . . .	58
Earthworms,	32	Milkweed, blossoms . . .	75
		" climbing	13

	Page
Mints, wild	54
Mosquitoes,	39
Mulberries,	62
Nettles,	46
Night-blooming flowers,	95
November woods,	113, 114
Nut-hatch,	115
Nuts in the nursery,	69
“ “ autumn,	109
Oaks,	27, 99
Orchid, earliest	48
“ last of the year	99
“ winter persisting	113
Owl's table manners,	116
Paulownia,	122
Perfumes, wild	98
Persimmon,	107
Pine barrens in winter,	16, 123
Pines,	39
Pinkster flower,	47
Pipsissewa,	116
Pokeweed,	104
Preacher-in-the-pulpit,	48
Prickly pear,	117
Quaker ladies,	37
Rainy days outdoors,	57
Rattlesnake plantain,	113

	Page
River-side in spring,	50
“ “ flowers,	50, 80
Rose, musk	82
Rose, wild	59, 118
Sassafras,	112
Skunk cabbage,	11
Sleep of plants,	76
Smells of crushed plants,	89
Smilax,	17
Sneezeweed,	104
Soap by the road,	58
Sounds of summer night,	90
Spring beauty,	26
Spring heralds,	22
Star-of-Bethlehem,	49
Sticktight,	108
Stoneroot,	95
Sugarberry,	106
Sugar maple,	44
Sumac for indoor adorn- ment,	122
Swamp plants,	96
Sweet flag,	50
Thoroughwort,	83
Toad, Bufo the	56
Tobacco plant,	94
Tree blossoms,	42
Trees, glory of spring foliage	43

	Page
Trees, seed vessels . . .	122
“ winter buds . . .	120
Tuckahoe,	71
Tulip-tree,	45
Violet, dog's tooth . . .	34
“ earliest	31
Wakerobin,	33

	Page
Whisky Run,	54
Whitlow grass,	24
Whitsuntide woods, . . .	47
Winter buds,	118, 120
Wood robins,	65
Woodlands in March, . . .	25
“ in November,	113, 114
Wood's edge, flowers of	68

OCT 18 1911

CHARGE FOR OVER-DETENTION TWO CENTS A DAY
ERATIONS OF THE RECORDS BELOW ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED

1990

50M—P. L. 134—1-12-10

5468-11

PUBLIC LIBRARY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

MY

Sa885w

.....

All losses or injuries beyond reasonable wear, however caused, must be promptly adjusted by the person to whom the book is charged.

Fine for over detention, two cents a day (Sundays excluded).

Books will be issued and received from 9 a. m. to 9 p. m. (Sundays, July 4, December 25, excepted.)

KEEP YOUR CARD IN THIS POCKET

One copy del. to Cat. Div.

OCT 18 1911

W

BU

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

0 005 018 975 2