

The Pinehurst Outlook.

VOL. I., NO. 16.

PINEHURST, N. C., FRIDAY, JANUARY 28, 1898.

PRICE THREE CENTS.

IN THE PINE BARRENS.

An Amateur Botanist Writes of Native Flowering Plants.

Region About Pinehurst has a Wealth of Blossoms in Spring and Summer.

Some Familiar Varieties, but Many are New to the People of the North.

The name, "Pine Barrens," which is applied to that part of the southern states covered with the long-leaf pine, is not suggestive of flowers or aught else of beauty. "Nothing but pines, scrub-oaks, and sand!" is the petulant verdict of the casual traveler, as he journeys through this region.

Pines, indeed, there are! towering and massive, with foliage so dark as to make them gloomy, until one learns to know and love them. To those who come from the more ungenial North, in search of health and strength, these sturdy trees, breathing forth their fragrant, life-giving aroma, have proved truly that their leaves are "for the healing of the nations."

Wherever the pines are cut out the despoiled earth is covered by the scrub or "Jack" oak, which though never attaining any great size, and of little value for commercial purposes, is by no means useless. Practically it affords excellent fuel, and, notwithstanding its ugliness when deprived of its leaves, during the season of foliage it gratifies the aesthetic side of our natures. When, in the spring, the trees are covered with their yellow, tassel-like blossoms, they form brilliant masses of color against the sombre background of pines. The leaves which follow are at first the same shade as the flowers, gradually changing to dark green and when full-grown becoming so glossy and thick that they fairly tinkle in the light breeze, as did the golden bough sought by Æneas. Moreover, as a sudden gust sets them to quivering, they simulate human voices, and frequently when listening to the deep, musical song of the pines, is the dreamer aroused, thinking that guests are approaching. In the fall they turn to a rich red, rivaling the autumn foliage of the maples, but finally succumbing to the killing frosts, they turn to russet brown, and thus hang and shiver on the trees throughout the short winter until sent hurrying and scurrying by the mischievous breath of the March wind.

The particular locality under consideration is in the south central part of North Carolina, situated on a high ridge where the soil, composed mainly of sand so

white as to resemble snow, is said by the natives to be "mighty poor." "Why," said one of our southern brethren, "there won't anything grow there except cow-peas; and they groan when they sprout!"

Yet, in spite of such unpromising conditions, the flora is both varied and fascinating. The flower season opens early, or at least so it seems to a New Englander, and trailing arbutus—May-flowers no longer—are often in bloom on St. Valentine's day; and for six weeks these lovely flowers, so fraught with childhood memories and recollections of home, gladden our hearts. Encouraged by the balmy weather they sometimes produce a double variety so rare as to have escaped the notice of most botanists.

Before the arbutus is gone the violets

flowers, and the larger trumpet-leaf with its nodding, greenish-yellow blossom.

With the coming of May the varieties increase, and the Pulse and Composite families seemingly strive to out-do each other in numbers. The most noticeable of the Pulse family are the one-leaved lupine with blue flowers and ever-green foliage; baptisia or false indigo (so called because an inferior quality of indigo is obtained from it), bearing long racemes of golden-yellow blossoms; tephrosia, or hoary pea, familiarly known as devil's lute-string, or shoe-string—a name suggested by its long, slender, tough roots rather than undue intimacy with his Satanic Majesty—and having a variegated blossom of purplish-pink and yellow, which changes to pink and white, and resembles the sweet-pea in appearance, but without its perfume; the

found here; this has a deep-yellow blossom and prickles enough for a dozen species.

Among the minor spring flowers are a spider-wort, *tradescantia rosea*, a name much more imposing than the plant; a lobelia with a tiny blue blossom; five finger, gold thread, blue-eyed grass, and many others.

Most varieties of the Composite family bloom in summer and fall, though a few flower in the spring. Perhaps the most common are the asters, of which there are many kinds, most of them yellow, and varying in size from small low plants with tiny blossoms to those six feet in height with proportionately large flowers. The *liatris*, or blazing star, grows luxuriantly and is evidently blessed with an indomitable will, for its long branches of rose-purple flowers are sometimes found victoriously growing up from dry looking heaps of chips, or gaily creeping from under piles of lumber heavy enough to discourage anything less persevering. Golden-rod, here as everywhere, asserts its claim to the honor of being a national emblem, as, with true American patriotism, it shows its colors on umber-hued hillsides and waves triumphantly among the neglected grasses of "old fields."

The terrestrial orchids are a source of much enjoyment to the botanist, and among several varieties observed the following are most attractive: the yellow fringed orchis; *habenaria*, dazzling white with a long spur; *spiranthes*, or ladies' tresses, small white flowers spirally twisted in a spike; *calopogon*, and *pogonia*—whose names are derived from Greek words meaning "beautiful bearded."

One of the handsomest plants in the piney woods is the *Yucca filamentosa*, or Adam's thread and needle. The latter name is accounted for by the hair-like filaments on the edges of the leaves and the spines on their points; but, supposing that this plant with its lovely, creamy-white flowers was a habitant of the Garden of Eden, it is necessary to admit that Adam possessed more skill in the use of sewing implements than the modern man.

The passion flower is singularly beautiful, and, with a little imagination, one can readily see the crown of thorns, the nails, the hammers, and the cords in the fringe, the styles, the stamens and tendrils, as did the fanciful Roman Catholic missionaries of early times. The name of the edible fruit, "May pops," is hardly congruous with that of the vine.

Other more rare summer flowers are a small buckeye, fragrant and rose-colored; an evening primrose which opens in the sun and is fittingly called sundrop, and Indian pipe which apparently has a nature too cold and colorless to thrive in this land of warmth and sunshine, as only one lone, lorn specimen has come under my observation.

Many of the summer flowers remain in



ON THE ROAD TO PINEHURST.

appear; not only the small shy blossoms of the North, but larger, wide-open ones—light blue or lavender—and known as bird's-foot violet. With them comes a dwarf iris, bright blue and golden-throated; and about the same time, in great patches which cover the ground, is found a low-growing phlox, a delicate flower varying from bright pink to white, and easily reminding one of the Drummond phlox so universally cultivated.

During the early spring the trees give us many beautiful flowers, and a strikingly handsome bouquet is made of branches of the swamp maple, with its crimson, winged seed-vessels hanging in clusters, and the brilliant white blossoms of the dogwood. Throughout April the latter trees are a most salient feature of the landscape, and nothing else is so well adapted to household adornment. The flowers, growing only on one side of the branches, turn outwards when arranged in vases or fastened to the walls; and our rooms are often converted into bowers of purity and whiteness, charming enough for the most dainty bride.

Two members of the interesting *Sarcocolla* family are found here in abundance: the pitcher-plant with its curious

indigofera, or true indigo plant, which, though its blossoms are insignificant, is very graceful, somewhat similar to the maidenhair fern in form and foliage; the sensitive, or partridge pea, and the butterfly pea, a showy lavender flower with an unusually large "banner."

It is in May that the sweet bay and its cousin, the beautiful tulip tree, put forth their blossoms; those of the former, creamy-white and heavily scented, and those of the latter yellow and orange, with a scarcely perceptible odor. In this month, also, the roadsides are beautified by azaleas, or false honeysuckles, of which there are two representatives: one flaunting its bright red-pink flowers; the other more sedate with its white, rosy-tinged corolla, so clammy, or sticky, that its sides cling together, holding fast the unfortunate insects which alight upon it.

The spurge nettle, a low herb, with rather showy white flowers, attracts attention in more ways than one if an attempt to gather it is made. As might be inferred it belongs to the Spurge family, and is also appropriately called "tread softly," its leaves and stems being covered with stiff, stinging hairs. Speaking of nettles naturally suggests the cactus of which only one variety is