

Capital Letters

By THOMPSON GREENWOOD

The dogwood's blossoms this Easter stood out in contrast to the light green of the spring woods, and turned the forests of North Carolina into flower gardens. The leaves on large trees are still young and small, and for a short while the beauty of the dogwood reigns supreme, but at no other time of the year could the large white blossoms be visible to man, who now must see the forest from a distance. For 11 months the dogwood is only a tree, but during one bright spring month at Easter time it is king.

Small, unfit for use in great sawmills and pulp mills that gulp down and chew up the giants of the forest, the American dogwood is fast becoming the magnificent flower of springtime.

"At the time of the crucifixion," a legend has it, "the dogwood attained the size of the oak and other forest trees. So strong and firm was the wood of it that it was chosen for the timber for the cross."

"To be thus used for such a cruel purpose greatly distressed the tree, and Jesus sensed this, and smiled upon it and in His gentleness for sorrow said to it: 'Because of your regret and pity for my suffering I make you this promise: Never again shall the dogwood tree grow large enough to be used for a cross. Henceforth it shall be slender and bent and twisted, and its blossom shall be in the form of a cross—two long petals and two short petals, and in the center of the outer edge of each petal there will be nail prints, brown with rust and stained with blood."

"And in the center of the flower there will be an image of the crown of thorns and all who see it will remember that it was upon a dogwood tree that I was crucified, and this tree shall not be mutilated or destroyed, but cherished as a reminder of my death upon the cross."

The story has been told and retold, as are all legends, but the thought is beautiful for this Easter season—more than 1900 years after the death and resurrection of Jesus. The tree has long been used as a poetic term for the cross, for in the weary, dark days before

Christ a tree was often used for a cross in the haste of putting to death criminals.

The connection of the cross and a tree is explained by this legend: "As Adam lay dying, he sent his son Seth to the angel that guarded Paradise, to carve a bough from the tree of life. The angel gave it, and Seth carried it to his father, but found him dead. He planted the bough upon his grave. In the course of time, when Solomon was building the Temple, the tree was cut down but it refused to be fitted into any part of the Temple, and was placed over a stream to serve as a bridge."

"By and by the Queen of Sheba came with her gifts and offerings. Seeing the tree, she would not walk over it, since she recognized that the Redeemer of the world would suffer on it."

"Long afterwards the Jews took it and cast it into a stagnant pool, which derived a miraculous virtue from its presence; an angel descended from time to time and troubled the water, and the first that stepped in after the troubling was healed. There it remained until the time of our Lord's Passion, when it was taken out of the pool and fashioned into the cross on which he suffered."

But even after we leave the shadowy sweetness of legends and half-forgotten tales and emerge into the struggling, sinful, and realistic world of the twentieth century, we still find the dogwood—now the official flower of North Carolina—a thing of beauty for the lovers of nature. It climbs through the maze of underbrush to add its bit of loveliness to springtime and the Easter season.

However, those who put Jesus on the Cross so many centuries ago have virtually destroyed civilization in Europe, and the dogwood there has been cut down and used in the killing and maiming of millions of men, women and children. Its wood made into charcoal for powder to be used in shells to kill. Men of war describe it as "the best charcoal for gunpowder."

But throughout North Carolina this spring the dogwood has risen again—out of the swamps, out of the mountains, crags and thickets, blooming, brightening the darkening forests—bringing white floating beauty to the trees and a certain quiet peace into the hearts of men.

NOTES—If all signs hold—and frost holds off—this will likely be the best fruit year in N. C. in five years, or so those who are supposed to know are saying. . . This column appreciates the nice comment which the Greensboro Daily News, the Charlotte News, the Asheville Citizen and Grady Cole have carried about rural highway comparisons carried here. However, S. C. has contacted for 500 miles of secondary roads since January. . . not IN JANUARY. . . Sorry. . . A new magazine will be started in Greensboro in June. . . Strange to say, Progressive Farmer Editor Clarence Poe helped select the editor, whose name is not expected to be carried in the mag for some time yet. . .

Use The Want Ads

Lady Nearly Choked While Lying in Bed—Due to Stomach Gas

One lady said a few days ago that she used to be afraid to go to bed at night. She was swollen with stomach gas, which always got worse when she went to bed, and the gas would rise up in her throat after she lay down and would nearly choke her. She couldn't lie flat. Had to prop herself up on pillows. Recently this lady got INNER-AID and now says gas is gone, stomach feels fine, bowels are regular and she can go to bed and sleep soundly.

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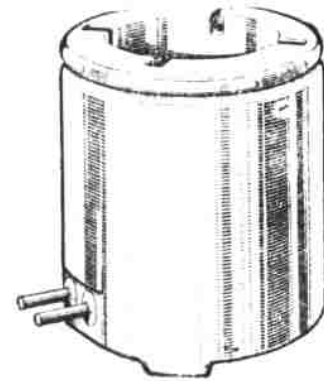
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Does Mother Know Best?

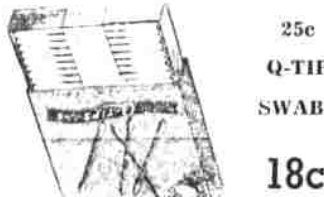
In many things she does. But when it comes to the treatment of baby oils, maternal instinct is not nearly as factual or reliable as the doctor's medical knowledge and authoritative counsel. Consult him in all matters pertaining to baby's health and feeding, and come to SMITH'S DRUG STORE for the preparations he prescribes or recommends.



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