

## Botanical Walks Round Derby.

BY THE REV. W. H. PAINTER.



THE plants enumerated in the following pages were seen by me in the various localities mentioned during the years 1871-8, when I was living in Derby. They are distinct in a great measure from those which grow in the other parts of Derbyshire. This is owing to the Geological Formations of those parts.

In the Peak district, as is well known, there are the Carboniferous or Mountain Limestone, and Millstone Grit. In the district between Sheffield and Belper there are the Coal Measures, whilst the remaining portion of the county rests upon the New Red Sandstone, with an outline of Mountain Limestone at Tickenhall, and Coal Measures on the borders of Leicestershire. The difference in altitude between the country north of Belper and this district is also a factor in the difference of the Flora, which must not be overlooked; for whilst the northern part of the county is elevated and hilly, the southern portion is much lower, and consists for the most part of a plain. Again, the land round Derby, and especially to the south of that town, is highly cultivated, and very much of it is arable. Hence, as might be expected, a large number of plants are to be found here which are usually found upon similar ground.

In some of the cornfields round Derby, I met with the Field Buttercup (*Ranunculus arvensis*, *Lin.*), or as it is called in Buckinghamshire, "the Devil-on-both-sides," on account of its prickly fruit. In the lanes near these fields the Wood Crow-foot

(*R. auricomus*, *Lin.*) is to be met with, a plant which is easily distinguished by its long-stalked, almost circular root-leaves, and *small* flowers on a long stem. And close to Borrowash Railway Station I found another species of this genus, the "Celery-leaved Crow-foot" (*R. sceleratus*, *Lin.*), with its celery-like leaves.

The Water Crow-foots, with their white flowers, are to be found widely dispersed over the district. The largest of them, with white starry flowers (*Ranunculus fluitans*, *Lin.*) is to be found in the Derwent, just above Darley Mills; whilst a smaller one (*R. peltatus*, *Schrk.*) occurs in ponds; *R. circinnatus*, *Sibth.* at Repton; whilst *R. hederaceus*, *Lin.*, the Ivy-leaved Crow-foot, is of frequent occurrence.

Morley and Breadsall Moor will delight the botanist. In the lane near Morley Church he will find the Barbery (*Berberis vulgaris*, *Lin.*), a shrub which also grows near Boulton Church; whilst in the Rectory grounds he will see the Dusky Geranium (*Geranium Phæum*, *Lin.*), for the knowledge of which I am indebted to my old friend Mr. Whittaker, of Morley. On Breadsall Moor, in the clay pits, are to be found the Water Violet (*Hottonia palustris*, *Lin.*), a plant which I gathered in the old bed of the Derwent near the London Road; the true Forget-me-not (*Myosotis palustris*, *Lin.*, *var strigulosa*, *Reichb.*), and the variety of the Marsh Horsetail, with its head on a peduncle (*Equisetum limosum*, *Lin.*, *var fluviatile*, *Lin.*); whilst on the Moor itself, the Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Lin.*), the small Lousewort, with its pink flowers (*Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Lin.*), the Marsh Speedwell, with flesh-coloured flowers on long stalks (*Veronica scutellata*, *Lin.*), and the Marsh Speedwell (*V. officinalis*, *Lin.*), are to be met with. The Bird's-eye Speedwell (*V. Chamædryas*, *Lin.*) is to be found on all the banks, enlivening them with its bright blue flowers. On this common, as well as upon all others, the Marsh Sedges are of common occurrence, such as *Carix ovalis*, *Good.*; *C. echinata*, *Murr.*; *C. remota*, *Lin.*; *C. punicea*, *Lin.*; and *C. flava*, *Lin.*

Near Breadsall Moor is a wood called Horsley Car. Here is to be found the Black Alder (*Rhamnus Frangula*, *Lin.*), a shrub

which also grows at Drakelowe and Repton Rocks, the Marsh Violet (*Viola palustris*, *Lin.*), and the Wood Horsetail (*Equisetum sylvaticum*, *Lin.*), with its gracefully branched fronds, the barren one being longer and more branched than the fertile one. In the lane leading from this wood to Little Eaton are to be found a small but beautiful grass (*Aira caryophylle*, *Lin.*), and the Buck's-horn Plantain (*Plantago Coronopus*, *Lin.*), both of which grow upon sand.

Not far from this wood and lane are the ruins of Horsley Castle, round which are to be found about Easter thousands of the Lent Lily (*Narcissus Pseudo-narcissus*, *Lin.*), a plant which abounds in the valley of the Derwent between Cromford and Ambergate.

The neighbourhood of Spondon and Ockbrook will well repay a botanist. At Locko Park he will find the Nodding Bur-marigold (*Bidens cernua*, *Lin.*), and the Spiked Water Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*, *Lin.*); whilst in the lane between this place and Spondon he will meet with the Bastard Stone—Parsley (*Sison amonium*, *Lin.*), and in the canal at Spondon two Pondweeds (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*, *Lin.*, and *P. zosteræ folius*, *Schum.*); the Arrow-head (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*, *Lin.*), and the Flowering Rush (*Bertomus umbellatus*, *Lin.*), which, after all, is not a rush; at Ockbrook, the Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*, *Lin.*), and the Horned Pond-weed (*Zannichellia palustris*); whilst between Ockbrook and Dale Abbey he will see in July the sweet-scented Orchis (*Habenaria conopsea*, *Benth.*), and in the woods of Dale, the Tuberous Vetchling, with its tuberous roots (*Lathyrus macrorrhizus* *Wimm.*), the elegant grass *Milium effusum*, *Lin.*, and the Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*, *Lin.*).

Returning to Derby by way of Chaddesden, the Water Chickweed (*Stellaria aquatica*, *Scop.*) was one day seen by me in a damp but small plantation—a plant of not unfrequent occurrence in various damp places about Derby; whilst in the meadows between the Derwent and the Nottingham Canal, *Crocus nudiflorus*, *Lin.*, used to be found in abundance.

Another rare plant in South Derbyshire is the Autumnal

Crocus (*Colchicum autumnale*, *Lin.*), which grows in the Breadsall meadows, the flowers of which appear in the autumn, and its leaves in June. In these meadows, also, in the spring, the large Bitter-cress (*Cardamine amara*, *Lin.*) is to be found growing abundantly on the banks of the Derwent.

The banks of the Derwent below Derby are a good hunting-ground for the botanist, as several good aquatic plants may be found upon them. The chief of those that I found there were two species of Nasturtium—*N. amphibium*, *R. Br.*, the great Water Radish, and *N. sylvestre*, *R. Br.*, the annual Yellow Cress, both of which grow to a great size. The former of these is remarkable for its small pods as compared with the size of the plant, whilst the last-mentioned one may be readily distinguished by its *linear* pods, which easily distinguish it from *N. palustre*, *D. C.*, with its swollen turgid pods.

Quarndon must not be overlooked by the botanist, as several good plants are to be found in its neighbourhood, such as the Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Ornithopus perpusillus*, *Lin.*); and in Lord Scarsdale's park at Ireton, *Narcissus poeticus*, *Lin.*, a remnant of former cultivation, and *Galanthus nivalis*, *Lin.*, the Snowdrop, are to be found. Here, many years ago, Mr. Whittaker, of Morley, found *Tulipa sylvestris*, *Lin.*, the Yellow Tulip; may this interesting plant be re-discovered by some member of this society.

Passing over Derby to the meadows about Normanton, we find there the Green-winged Orchis (*Orchis Morio*, *Lin.*) and the Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*, *Lin.*), distinguished from the other saxifrages by the granules of its root, hence its specific name.

Sinfin Moor I found to be a most disappointing tract of country, the only plants I noticed there being the common ones that are invariably found upon cultivated land. At Swarkestone Bridge, in the pools there, an abundance of aquatic plants grow, such as *Helosciadium inundatum*, *Koch*; *Cenanthe fistulosa*, *Lin.*; and *Phellandrium*, *Lam.*, the Horsebane; and the Great Grass (*Glyceria aquatica*); but unfortunately I failed to find two

other plants which grew there many years ago—the Madder-wort (*Utricularia vulgaris*, *Lin.*) and the Golden Dock (*Rumex maritima*, *Lin.*); though I did find there the Great Water Dock (*R. Hydrolapatheum*, *Huds.*).

Such are some of the principal plants which grow in the neighbourhood of Derby, the list of which might be greatly extended; but I trust that the mention of these may be sufficient to stimulate some of the members of this Society who have hitherto shrunk from botanical pursuits to hesitate no longer, but rather to join the ranks of those who delight in studying the “flowers of the field,” which manifest the wisdom, and love and care of Him who has created them for the well-being and happiness of man, and who thus reveals Himself in the Book of Nature as an all-wise and all-powerful Creator and Preserver.