

HERB GATHERERS.

HOW SOME NORTH CAROLINA PEOPLE MAKE A LIVING.

Collecting Medicinal Plants, Roots, Barks and Berries—The Largest Herb-Collecting House in the World, Etc.

In a letter describing the industrial growth of Statesville, N. C., a correspondent in the New York *Commercial Advertiser* says: Besides the many stores carrying considerable stocks, there are five tobacco factories in operation and one under construction, three tobacco warehouses, two tanneries, a spoke and shuttle block factory, and two large establishments for the collection of medicinal herbs, roots, barks, gums and berries. One of these, the largest house of the kind in the world, does a business of \$100,000 annually in these goods, of which it handles more than 2,000 varieties, weighing upward of 2,000,000 pounds. This concern began business in a small way in 1859, but was broken up by the war. Soon after it ended the firm of Wallace Brothers was formed and the business resumed. At first they dealt in few articles except ginseng, but after awhile they added to their variety such things as druggists called for until their catalogue contained the names of nearly 2,100 articles. Professor Gray, of Cambridge, has said that there are more medicinal plants in western North Carolina than in any one place in North America, and the business of this firm confirms his statement.

The system employed is simple enough, but it required executive ability of no mean order to establish it and to keep it in successful operation. The Wallaces were country merchants doing business with people who had little or no money. The little crossroad traders came to them for goods, and paid their bills with such produce as they could get from their customers. Ginseng was the most marketable article. China never gets too much of it, and has, when it was scarce, given its weight in gold for it. Seneka snake root was another equivalent for ready cash. The Wallaces encouraged their customers to get all of these things. They in turn sold their stocks to exporters and druggists, and through the acquaintances thus made they learned what the trade would buy and at what prices.

After a time they concluded that if they could secure the services of a thoroughly capable botanist they could increase their business and consequent profits. Then in they wanted was living at Marion, in McDowell county. Professor M. E. Hyams was born in Charleston, South Carolina, received a preparatory education there, and graduated at the State University in Columbia. When seventeen years old he began his botanical studies, which soon became his ruling passion. At the age of twenty-five he made the collection of botanical specimens his business. When the Wallace Brothers found and hired him he knew more of the flora of Western North Carolina than any one had ever known before. His duties were those of an instructor. The women and children in the mountains were taught where to look for plants they had never gathered before, when to pluck them, and in what condition to deliver them at the stores. The merchants who received them were then instructed, and finally the heads of the firm and their chief employees. It was a long task; there were collectors and stores in some thirty counties to be visited. During all that time and for years afterward the Professor explored the mountains in search of new botanical specimens, or of fresh fields in which the more valuable herbs grew.

While in one of these botanical quests in 1878 the Professor found in McDowell County a plant. The discovery of a mate to the Kohnoor would not have elated him so highly. It was the *shortia galacifolia*, a rare plant once found and described, then lost to botanists for seventy-five years. He could scarcely believe his eyes, but there it was beyond mistake. So carefully gathering a few specimens from the very small number that grew there, and noting well the surroundings that he might find it again, the Professor left the wilderness and put himself into communication with Professor Gray and other eminent botanists. They were almost as excited as the discoverer, and Professor Gray left his beautiful garden at Cambridge and made haste to the mountains that he might see for himself this long-lost and rare plant. There is not much of it, certainly, and to the

untrained eye there is nothing attractive about "Hyam's sparkling shortia," the name popularly given it, but it placed the professor's name on the scientific roll of honor, and he and his children to the latest generation will have an affection for all plants of the natural order of galacinea to which this shortia belongs.

There is a phase of this botanic business of interest to both philanthropists and political economists. The collectors are usually women, children and maimed or broken down men. Most of them have no other means at command for getting store goods. They live, as a rule, remote from all villages or from places where they can earn wages. Were there no wild fruits to dry and medicinal herbs to gather they would be destitute indeed. Time is of no account to them, because there is nothing in their lives to give it value. They will therefore spend hours in gathering a few pennynorths and preparing it for the store. Later they will walk barefooted ten, twelve and sometimes twenty miles, to trade off their little stock for such things as they need. Between four hundred and five hundred country stores deal with the Wallaces. All of 40,000 persons collect the stock. Here in a small way is a great beneficence.

A Romance of the War.

A recent copy of an Indiana paper contains the following paragraph:

Married.—By the Rev. Dr. Turnbull, George A. Dawson, of Louisiana, to Miss Alice Lemon, of Washington, D. C.

This marriage is the sequel to an unusually romantic story. George Dawson, a young Captain in the Confederate army, lay seriously injured in 1864, a prisoner of war, in the United States Hospital at Indianapolis. One of the ladies who visited the hospital frequently and administered alike to the wearers of the blue and the gray was a Mrs. Gray, the wealthy widow of a Union officer. In these visits Mrs. Lemon was usually accompanied by her daughter Alice, then a little miss of ten years. A fast friendship sprang up between the young Confederate and the little Union girl, which continued some months until the former was exchanged and sent back to his regiment.

Seven years ago Mrs. Lemon died, and Miss Alice, through the efforts of her friends, secured a clerkship in one of the Washington departments. Her health gradually failed, and last October she resigned her position and went West to reside with relatives. The announcement of her resignation was printed in one of the New Orleans papers, where it met the eye of Captain Dawson, now a dignified bachelor of middle age and one of the richest planters on the lower Mississippi. Captain Dawson immediately wrote Miss Lemon and asked her if she was his little sweetheart of former years, and if so by what caprice of fortune she had been thrown upon her own resources. Miss Lemon answered the Captain, detailing their financial losses at the time of the Jay Cooke failure and the subsequent death of her mother. Captain Dawson thereupon mailed the lady a check for \$1,000, which he begged her to accept as a slight recompense for her mother's kindness to him while a prisoner of war. Miss Lemon returned the check, saying that under no circumstances could she receive it.

Captain Dawson then came North to see if he could not personally prevail upon the lady to accept his assistance. He went to Indiana, intending to stop only a couple of days, but he remained a month, and when he returned he carried with him a Northern bride to grace his Southern home.—*New York Herald.*

Invention of the Lock.

This is not a modern device. Among the ruins of the great temple of Kunak its general principles have been discovered. From this we gather that it is at least forty centuries old. The locksmiths of China, we are told, had centuries before the birth of Christ, perfected a lock out of which a sharp bamboo then would dart and strike the hand of any one wrongfully tampering with it. The end of this bamboo thorn was steeped in a poisonous decoction, and should the luckless thief escape death he would be maimed for life. But this story is hardly entitled to full belief, for the reason, as the Chinese themselves claim that gunpowder was manufactured by them at that time, a Celestial safe bower could easily render the thorn harmless by the aid of a few grains of powder.

A boy has been born in Kansas with an eye in the back of his head. When he is old he will be able to look back on his past career without turning around.

Betrayed by a Button.

"One of the best laid schemes to do murder," says Mr. A. H. Canby of the Carleton Opera Company, "was a plan that was detected by the merest chance in the Kellogg-Hess Opera Company years ago, when Mr. Carleton was the baritone of that organization. A certain artist playing prominent roles was suspected by a member of the chorus with paying altogether too much attention to the chorister's wife, and the artist was duly warned by his friends to keep a close watch on the movements of the husband. One evening as he was passing across the stage to his dressing-room, he chanced to hear one of the wardrobe women say to another that there were buttons off all the soldier uniforms."

"Now, as the husband was to be one of a file of soldiers whose duty it was to fire a volley of shots at the artist as he made his escape up a rocky pass, the absence of the buttons—little balls of steel—soon awakened suspicion in his mind. Before the curtain went up on the act in which this incident occurred, he went to the property man and insisted on having the charges in the chorister's gun examined. The firearm was taken from the husband's hands, and when the load was drawn one of the buttons was found rammed down under a wad. One button had been cut from every uniform so as to conceal the positive proof that the missile came from the husband's gun. If that shot had been fired and proved fatal, no evidence but the thinnest of circumstantial testimony could have connected the true murderer with the tragedy."

Dr. Morse, physician at Marine Hospital, Baltimore, Md., found Red Star Cough Cure a harmless and most effective remedy in the cure of coughs. He recommends it especially for children who are irritable and obstinate, as he can take it at once in its effect. Price, twenty-five cents.

Dentist, who was formerly a photographer (to patient)—Take a seat, please. Now turn your head a trifle this way—that's it. There! Look right at the knob on that door, and assume a pleasant expression. Now keep perfectly still, and I'll be through in a moment.

"A most extraordinary and absolute cure for rheumatism and other bodily ailments is St. James Oil," says Hon. J. James Harlan, ex-Vice-Chancellor of Louisiana.

A photographer telegraphed to a friend whose portrait he was engaged to take, "Expect artist to-morrow." The clever telegraph operators had it, "Expect arrest to-morrow;" and when the artist reached his friend's house he learned that he had gone to Canada.

"What we learn with pleasure we never forget."—*Admiral Merrett.* The following is a case in point: "I felt out hundreds of dollars without receiving any benefit," says Mrs. Emily Richards, of Melrose, Mich. "I had female complaint, especially 'dragging down,' for over six years. Dr. R. V. Pierce's 'Favorite Prescription' did me more good than any medicine I ever took. I advise every sick lady to take it." And so do we. It never disappoints its patrons. Druggists sell it.

It looks as if somebody would have to be put on the Bulgarian throne and held there.

Stranger than Fiction are the records of some of the cures of consumption effected by that most wonderful remedy—Dr. Pierce's "Golden Medical Discovery." Thousands of grateful men and women, who have been snatched almost from the very jaws of death, can testify that consumption, in its early stages, is no longer incurable. The Discovery has no equal as a purgative and a laxative, and the most obstinate affections of the throat and lungs yield to its power. All druggists.

The wind is not evidently tempered the shorn Wall street lamb.

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If every man was as big as he feels there couldn't be standing room in his country.

Daughters, Wives and Mothers. Send for Pamphlet on Female Diseases, free, securely sealed. Dr. J. B. Marchesi, Utica, N. Y.

An exchange has an article on "Why Bees Make Honey." They make it to eat.

Ask your retailer for the James Means' \$3 Shoe. Caution! Some dealers recommend inferior goods in order to make a larger profit. This is the original \$3 Shoe. Beware of imitations which acknowledge their own inferiority by attempting to build upon the reputation of the original. None genuine unless bearing this Stamp. **JAMES MEANS' \$3 SHOE.** For Gentlemen. Made in Button, Congress and Lace. Best Calf Skin. Unexcelled in Durability, Comfort and Appearance. A postal card sent to us will bring you information how to get this Shoe in any State or Territory. **J. Means & Co.** 41 Lincoln St., Boston, Mass.

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