WAYSIDE FLOWERS

(Continued from page 33.)

their delicacy unable to endure the fervid sun's rays. This so-called flower, like several already noted, is in reality a colony of miniature flowers like the white ray flowers of the daisy. Its color of heaven's own blue and its sensitive nature appear well adapted to typify the old German legend of its origin: "A blue-eyed maiden, weary of watching for the promised return of her betrothed, at last sank exhausted by the wayside, and when the lover returned, naught remained at this spot but an unknown flower which had just sprung into being, and which the peasants christened "wegewarte orwaier by the way."

After a roadside ramble under the fervor of the sun, happy is one who espies a sheltered lily pond. Tremulously the ivory-petaled, golden-hearted blossoms rest upon the breast of the water; their purity accentuated by the broad green leaves, their rare beauty well exemplifying the old German fable that they are nymphs who loving to bathe in the water quickly assume this disguise when the eyes of mortals gaze upon them.

The origin of the water lily is prettily told in an Indian legend which states that in the early days of America the Saranac Indians dwelt upon the rocky banks of the Lake of the Clustered Stars, now prosaically known as Tupper's Lake. The chief of the tribe, Wayotah, Blazing Sun, loved Oseetah, the Bird, a most attractive maid. Although his love was reciprocated by Oseetah, in deference to her parents' wishes that she wed another brave, she endeavored to check the ardent wooing of Wayotah. One day, when he followed her in a canoe across the lake and sought to embrace her, with one fleeting backward gaze revealing her affection, she lithely scaled a rocky promontory and flung herself into the water. Wayotah sprang into the lake but could find no trace of his beloved, and after a weary vigil he returned to the village. The following day a hunter came to the settlement and cried "Flowers are growing in the water." Jumping into their canoes, a number of Indians pushed out into the lake, and there by the jutting rocky headland was the crystal shell hidden under white and gold blossoms. Quickly they summoned the seer of the tribe, asking him to interpret the miracle. A moment's revery and then the answer came: "This bed of flowers is Oseetah changed in death to these forms of life. Her heart was as pure as these ivory petals; her love glowed like the burnished gold they encircle. Watch, and you will note that the flower unfolds in the warmth of the sun, and when it sets it will close its petals and sleep upon the bosom of the water."

Resting by this lily pond, it is pleasant to muse upon the love ways of German nymphs and Indian maidens. Every one is familiar with the poem in which the poet questions the water lily as to its origin. When the poet asks if it fell from some heavenly place, the lily replies: "White souls fall not, oh my poet; they rise from the lowest place."


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