

## ART. IV.—NEW AND RARE PLANTS.—BY DR. SOMERS.

(Read November 9, 1885.)

I WISH to make a record in the Transactions of some few plants sent to me during the past year.

1. J. M. Jones, Esq., forwarded a specimen of Swamp Thistle, *Cirsium Muticum* Mich, presenting all typical characters of the species. Though common in U. S. I find no previous record of it in our list.

2. Miss S. Gossip, of the Brunswick Street School, found a plant of the Low Ladies Slipper, having a purely white flower, that is, the Labium or showy part of the flower of this plant, instead of being of pink color streaked with darker lines of pink, was pure white. Miss. S. Gossip tells me she had found a similar plant some year or two ago in the same situation. The locality of this plant of Miss Gossip's is one much favored by the colored plant, viz., on Ironstone or Gneissoid soil, overgrown with white pine and tolerably clear of underbrush. The recurrence of the white flowered plant might induce us to look for a form of variation which may become permanent. It is any way an example of that Dimorphism or variation so common in some forms of plant life which fills our books with descriptions of species that are nothing more than varieties, and of varieties that deserve no permanent record of their existence. Witness the *compositæ*, wherein very many genera and species might with harmony and greater scientific accuracy be reduced to fewer typical forms. We find however in the species of plants now presented, at least speaking of the indigenous, but little tendency to vary from their type. In Gray's Manual, 5th edit., 72, *Cypriped acaule* is described just as we find it about Halifax (with rarely white). In Wood's Class Book, ed., 73, no mention is made of its being ever white-lipped; however, I find in Amos Bartar's Manual, 6th edition, 1833, W. & B. are placed before its description, but I am inclined to think he refers to mixed white and purple colours in the lip of the ordinary plant, and not to a purely white

specimen. Miss Gossip has kindly engaged to seek for the plant in the same locality during next season, and I think it a commendable object for others to seek for the same in other localities. I may say for myself that in my botanical excursions, extending over several years, I never found a white specimen of *C. acaule*.

I here present you an unusually large specimen of ground-nut, kindly sent me by Mrs. W. Stairs; it was dug up in her garden, weighed 3oz. when fresh, measures six and one half inches around its smallest diameter and 8 inches in its larger. The plant producing this tuber grows abundantly in the Southern and Middle States, is a favorite food of hogs and burrowing rodents. I think it is not indigenous with us. The remarkable thing about our specimen is its size. As it is edible, it has been sometimes proposed to cultivate it like the sweet potato. It belongs to the Leguminaceæ. Linnæus named it *Glycin Apios*, but American botanists have named it *Apios tuberosa*, erecting it into a new genus.

It is cheering to us in our work to find ladies coming forward to aid in any department of it, and the least we can do is to encourage their good will, and endeavour to attach any who may feel inclined to the work of the Institute.

I found, during last September, *Solidago sempervirens* L. growing very abundantly and well developed on the borders of the salt marsh a little back from Navy Island Cove, Bedford Basin, leaves dark green, smooth stems, fleshy, broadly lanciolate slightly clasping heads, dense flows, beautiful golden yellow. I don't remember of its being mentioned in our list, I have not had time to look. I will here record also the finding of *Polygala Sanguinea* L. growing in moderate abundance in the dry soil covering a ledge of clay slate exterior, running from the swamp back of Block-House Pond through George Deal's farm to the old Marg. Bay Road; the only locality, so far as I know, where it is found hereabouts. It has not been reported from other places in the province; whether this is its original site, or that it has been brought here in an extraneous manner, I am not prepared to say.