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J. BRETLAND FARMER

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No. 71

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PLANT LIFE

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PREFACE

I HAVE not attempted in this little book to cover the whole ground indicated by its title. My object has rather been to try to place before the reader a few of the salient features of plant form from the point of view of function. In this way, as I think, it is less difficult to keep in mind the general nature of the causes which have been operative in bringing about the marvellous beauty and adaptedness of form which is so apparent in every branch of the vegetable kingdom.

The task of selection has not proved an easy one, and nobody can be more fully alive to the imperfections of treatment, and other sins of commission and omission, than I am myself. Some, at any rate, of the last-named defects are attributable to the limitations of space.

I have deliberately touched, though with enforced brevity, on certain of the more difficult problems which are even now confronting us, and I have endeavoured to present them with as little technicality as possible, but whether I have been successful in this I must leave to the judgment of others.

It is not impossible that some readers will expect to find much that is absent from this little book—but it seemed better to utilise the space at my disposal by devoting it to matter not so generally discussed in a volume of this size, than to attempt to say again what has already been well done in other works of this scope.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Tabor and to Mr. Trowbridge for the assistance they have kindly given me in the preparation of nearly half the illustrations.

J. B. F.

Gerrard's Cross,
Feb. 20, 1913.

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