

**THE VEGETABLE
KINGDOM:
ILLUSTRATED**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649524808

The Vegetable Kingdom: Illustrated by Anonymous

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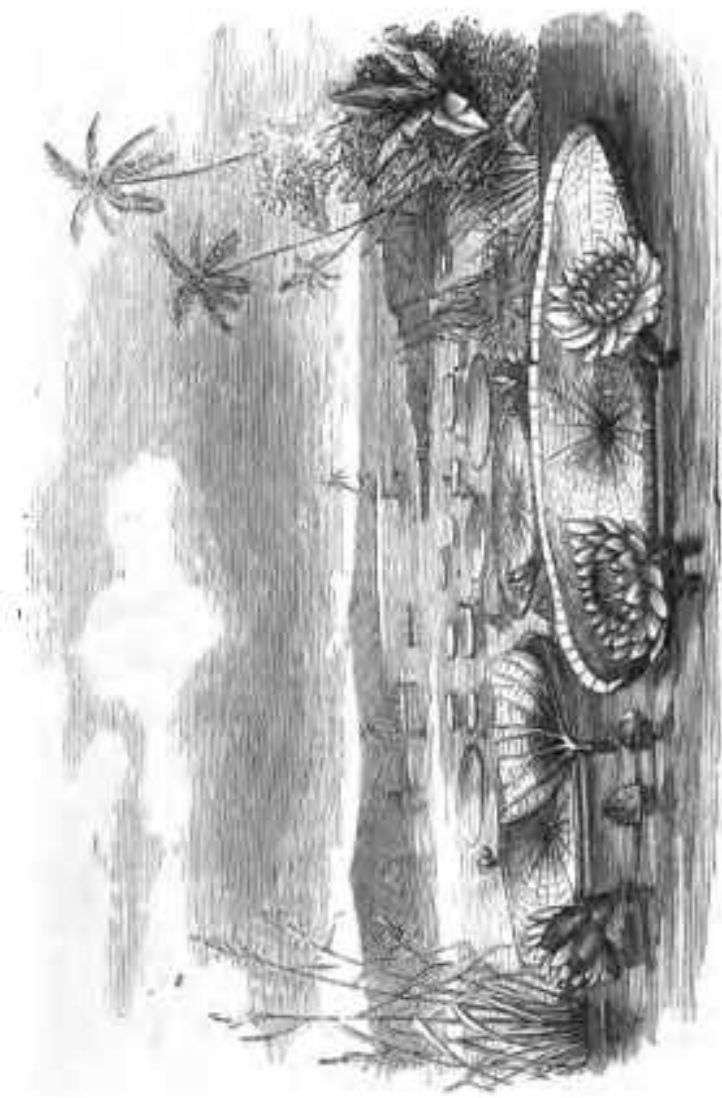
Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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ANONYMOUS

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VICTORIA REGIA.

THE

VEGETABLE KINGDOM

ILLUSTRATED.

*"From the lovely violet sod
Links are lengthened unto God."*



PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED BY THE
ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS FOR THE DIFFUSION OF RELIGIOUS
AND USEFUL KNOWLEDGE,
No. 109 NORTH TENTH STREET.
1859

P R E F A C E.

THERE are few recreative pleasures to which the minds of children can be turned with more real advantage, than to the close observance of the beauties of the creation. We are everywhere surrounded by objects of deep interest, which attract but little attention because their appearance is so familiar. But it certainly is an evidence that we do not sufficiently appreciate the blessings which our Heavenly Father has conferred upon us, when we look with indifference upon the beautiful adornments of that world which his own hand hath created, and whose every charm he hath so evidently designed for our enjoyment.

How elevating are the thoughts which are begotten by the contemplation of these objects!

how soft and gentle are the influences which take possession of the mind, when it turns the channel of its musings from the bright world around it, to the great Fountain and Source and Creator of all.

There is probably no time in life when a fondness for the study of Nature may be more safely cultivated than in early childhood. It is then that the mind turns with true simplicity from the visible objects of its admiration, to the adoration of the Invisible who created them; and what more happy moment than this to instil into the mind of a child the great truths of that religion, whose sublime doctrines are so abundantly illustrated in Holy Writ by direct references to objects in the outward world? Our Saviour, in his teachings to his disciples, frequently alludes to the beauties of his Father's creation: "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

The object of these pages is not so much to attempt a description of rare and curious

plants, as, by presenting some of the leading principles of Botany in a familiar manner, to beget in the reader an interest in a study which will at once prove a profitable pleasure and a wholesome recreation. The flora of our own land possesses attractions to all classes, inasmuch as it lies within the reach of all. The schoolboy may gather, as he goes, gems from the grassy roadside, which, if they be but the simplest of flowers, will bear the impress of a Divine finger, and convey a lesson of deep instruction. Let us not then undervalue the least of His works, who created nothing in vain, but who,

With consummate skill devised the plan

That creation's every voice should whisper

Words of peace, and joy, and hope to man.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no time in the day better suited to the study of Nature than the early hours of the morning. Every thing is bright and fresh and beautiful; the sweet little songsters are warbling their sprightliest notes; the lambs are skipping merrily over the soft green sod, from which the morning sun has not dispelled the sparkling dew; the tall trees wave their heads majestically to and fro; the babbling brook murmurs its softest melodies; while upon the gently blowing gale is borne the rich fragrance of many a fresh opening flower.

The whole creation is exhilarated by the rest of the night; and the mind, as well as the body, being refreshed by repose, becomes more capable of enjoyment; and if we can go forth with our hearts laden with gratitude to our Maker for his blessings, we shall be able to see in all his works, the evidences of a superior wisdom, so adapting one part to another,

that each seems to minister to the wants and the happiness of the other.

There are many objects of great beauty and interest, which can only be observed to advantage in the morning. There are thousands of beautiful birds, which are active and busy in hopping about the trees, and sometimes about the very doors of our houses, early in the day, that retire to the deep shade of the forests, and pass the sultry hours of noon in the tops of the tallest trees, and there remain so quiet that few are aware of their existence.

Most flowers also open their petals to catch the first glimpses of the morning sun, at which time their colors are most brilliant, and their fragrance the sweetest. If, then, you would study Nature to advantage, you must devote to it the earliest hours of the morning.