The Redwood Forest.

In size of individual specimens, the Redwood (Sequoia sempervirens) ranks next to its relative, the Big-tree of the Sierra Nevada (Sequoia gigantea) and the Eucalyptus of Australia; but if we take the average size of the trees and the density and extent of the forest into consideration, the Redwood is the grandest of the world's forest-trees. It belongs to a region of northern California. A few logging groves only are to be found below Monterey Bay, and it does not extend far into Oregon. The largest body commences at the mouth of Russian River and extends into Oregon. Another habitat lies south of it towards the San Francisco and Cruz County. The widest portion of the great or northern body of Redwood timber lies in Mendocino County, between Ukiah and the ocean. Here it is by air line twenty-five miles wide. The western edge of the forest which extends inland is cut off by the cations. The peculiarity of the Redwood is its love of moisture, which means here fog. The fog banks rise from the Pacific inland along the great level sea of vapor. The lower mountains next the coast are enveloped, and then on it falls the cations, leaving the high mountains to rise like islands out of it. Still further inland only the lower portions of the cations are filled with fog. At times the sea of fog will rise so high that it engulfs nearly the whole section back to the high dividing range of mountains which is the watershed between the streams running directly into the ocean and those which flow into the Russian and Eel Rivers, which extend for a long distance parallel to the coast line. Then the fog goes pouring through the passes in actual rivers of vapor, which run down the cations toward the interior. Strangely enough, it always returns to the coast.

Now, with this sea of fog in mind one can locate the Redwood belt most accurately. Near the coast on the lower mountains is the coast forest, and on the lower mountains and in the cations at the same height. Redwood forest is still on all the mountains, but as one ascends the weather becomes colder and the vegetation more low and mixed with Douglas Spruce (Pseudotsuga taxifolia) and the Tan Bark Oak (Quercus densiflora). Still farther inland near the watershed the vegetation is broken of before, Redwood only grows in the cations, and the mountains are either open grazing-land, covered with Oak and Fir, or with that dense low growth known as Chemical (Adenostoma fasciculatum). Over the watershed, down those cations where the fog pours over, there are groves of Redwood, well continued to the moist banks close to the courses of the streams; while up the broad cations of Eel and Russian Rivers the fogs roll and nourish the life of the grandest of all the Redwoods till they are held back by the limit of the interior.

The Redwood is not only a lover of moisture, but, to an extent hardly to be believed unless seen, a condenser and preserver of moisture. Their tops reach high into the sea of vapor, and a constant precipitation from them like rain takes place. Last summer I was on the coast during a foggy time, and received from the roofs of the roads dry and dusty, in the clearings under the Redwoods the water had been precipitated till it stood in puddles and formed mud holes. This abundance of moisture causes the denest of undergrowth, while even the mosses and heather are thick and make a floor a perfect tangle in the moister portions. The list of bird-life is here not large, but they are delicate and beautiful. The glossy leaves of Vaccinium haxandra form dense masses; an Orchid, Coelogyne Musziera, is common in the spring; Trillium ovatum and the Erythroniums are plentiful and so is the lovely Chlotonias.

Of small Ferns, only the beautiful Adiantum petraeum, the Mahon-hair, is common; there are but few species of Aspidiaceae around the Woodwarding and Drake is everywhere, making in the cleared forest a solid mass four or five feet high. Not one of the seen acres of the Drake seven or eight feet high. Where a man could only crawl through the tunnelt-like paths. Every year of growth the mosses are grown over, and in the spring up again with renewed vigor. The Redwood, unless very young, is not injured by fire. Its thick bark protects it, and it has been seen trees which had every limb stripped by the fire putting out a mass of foliage from top to bottom. No name could be more appropriate than Semprevirens, for it possesses wonderful vitality. A tree cut throws up hundreds of foot sprouts, and in a few years is as big as the original.

Vegetation in Central Pennsylvania. The unusual mildness of the past winter, coupled with the excessive rains of the summer, have had a marked beneficial effect on many of our fruit and ornamental shrubs and trees. The poverty of bloom and general backwardness are conspicuous everywhere. Only the cherries promise better than many of the ornamental shrubs. Their blossoms are thin and scattered; and one looks in vain for a single tree—even a Morello—which presents the usual and showy form and coloring. On the other hand, some of our finest trees is thickly strewn with the large flower-buds, each of which when opened shows the tell-tale black spot in the centre, although the scales and outer parts have enlarged and spread. The apples, pears, cherries, and peaches, have either succumbed entirely, or have lost a large part of their blossoms, while the young trees show vigorous buds only here and there, the others having so swollen during the mild weather of January that they fell an easy prey to the few cold days of early March. The Peach is no doubt our most unreliable tree. It grows vigorously for a few years, but is strongly inclined to overbear, and unless this is checked by thinning the young fruit—which ought never to be neglected, although it generally is—it succumbs a few years later. Plums are in much better condition, but the blossoms are practically gone.

Pears show the effect of the winter most plainly, since their large flower buds are easily distinguished, and still remain (May 7th) upon the trees, though shriveled and dying. The large-budded and vigorous growing, Asian varieties, Milled, Sha Tea, etc., of our Pear-orchard, are especially marked. They set fruit buds abundantly, but I do not think one single one of the bitters is in the slightest degree alive. Not enough of the quality of the fruit, these varieties have much to commend them in the beauty of their blossoms and beautiful leaves and flowers, but the large, easily coaxed out buds must make their fruiting quite uncertain. The apples have also suffered, but I do not see any great loss. The past few days. A considerable proportion of the trees are without flowers, and notably of such reliable kinds as the Crab, which seldom fail. But the general outlook at present is much better than for any of the other large fruits, and favorable weather and absence from insect attack may fully make up for the scanty bloom.

Of flowering shrubs, the Forsythia, which we have been at some pains to recommend and disseminate from our nursery, present a curious sight. Instead of the profuse bloom which makes it the most conspicuous of our spring shrubs, it has only here and there a single flower, and it is not nipped in the bud. Akebia, our prettiest twiner, holds its leaves last year much longer than usual, and until the time the flower buds generally begin to swell, but for some weeks thereafter not a sign of life was visible. Now, the first week in May, when it should be full of flowers and the delicate, five-fingered leaves rapidly expanding, there is but a trace of life at wide-scattered intervals, and these leaf-buds are only slowly waking to the work that is thrown upon them. Early in February its flower-buds were expanded so far that the flowers could be seen. A month later they were dead. The Women's Clergium, which I thought was doing so well, had grown an inch and a half long. Tartarian Honeysuckles were also very forward through January and February; but they do not seem to have expended all their stock of buds, and are only just delayed, though the Honeysuckle promises but little bloom.