

I have been impressed this spring with the profusion of flowers produced by *Viola ovata*, the plant known to students of Gray's Manual as *V. sagittata*. The tendency of the plants is to grow in clumps and their numerous blossoms make each clump noticeable from a long distance. Out of curiosity I took up a plant at random, and found that it possessed seven small leaves, and sixteen flowers and buds.—*Willard N. Clute, New York.*

The National Herbarium recently received specimens of a hermaphrodite willow from Mr. C. C. Kingman, of Reading, Mass. The twig presented not only well developed staminate and pistillate catkins, but in several instances combinations of stamens and pistil within the same ament. Cases of this kind are not rare, and have been hitherto recorded, but it would be interesting to observe in how many species the anomaly occurs. These specimens were evidently *Salix Bebbiana* Sargent (*S. rostrata*). Mr. Kingman observes: "The shrub is an old and weather-beaten affair, and has suffered much from the attacks of insects, so that it has but little vitality. It is staminate on the whole, the variation occurring on certain branches, while sometimes a small twig will show both staminate and pistillate catkins or a mixture of the two in the same catkin."—*C. L. Pollard.*

. . . BOOK REVIEWS . . .

LIVING PLANTS AND THEIR PROPERTIES. By J. C. Arthur and D. T. MacDougal; 12mo, pp. 242. New York: Baker & Taylor, \$1.25.

It might be supposed from the title of this book that it was a technical treatise on the physiology of plants, but the reader will not find it so. It is a collection of delightfully written essays on certain of the more important and interesting features of living plants in the broadest sense. It is impossible in this connection to attempt an adequate review of the work, but some idea of its scope may be gained from the following partial list of subjects: Distinctions between plants and animals; Special senses of plants; Development of irritability; Wild Lettuce as weed and compass-plant; How cold affects plants; Chlorophyll and growth; Leaves in spring, summer, and autumn; Significance of color, etc. The facts set forth are in all cases the latest results of investigation in the various lines, and the language is simple and strictly non-technical. The idea that scientific investigators are unable to write in popular language is abundantly disproved by the present work. It is a delight to read it, and it should find a wide sale, not only among professional botanists, but especially among plant-lovers. Let us hope that it is the forerunner of others of its kind.—*F. H. K.*