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INTRODUCED PLANTS OF THE CLEAR CREEK CANON, COLORADO.

BY L. H. PAMMEL.

It is always interesting to note changes in the flora since the advent of man. With this end in view, the writer made some notes on the plants found in the Clear Creek Canon, Colorado.

The first settlement was made in the vicinity of Idaho Springs. A small monument marks the discovery of gold in this region in 1859, on what is known as Chicago creek.* Gold mining has been carried on in this vicinity continuously since.

The first botanist to visit this region was Dr. C. C. Parry†, who explored the region in 1861. Doctor Parry named the twin peaks after the two distinguished botanists, Dr. Asa Gray and Dr. John Torrey. He named a third conspicuous peak Mt. Engelmann; this name is, however, no longer used. These peaks are at the head waters of several little branches of Clear creek. At one time there was a small settlement at Graymont, which is now abandoned. The Colorado Southern Railroad used this as a terminus, but the road between Silver Plume and Graymont was abandoned because of the burden of taxation.

There are some evidences of introduced plants at Graymont and around the mines up the canon, such weeds as shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*), and a few other boreal weeds. However, the list of introduced weeds is comparatively small, nor are there many introduced weeds in the vicinity of Silver Plume: White clover (*Trifolium repens*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*) and an occasional red clover plant (*Trifolium pratense*), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*), are among the common plants. Dr. Parry‡, in his account of the plants collected in this region, mentions only the following plants, which are more or less weedy: Marsh elders (*Iva xanthifolia* and *I. axillaris*), gum weed (*Grindelia squarrosa*), blue lettuce (*Lactuca pulchella*), stink weed (*Cleome integrifolia*), cranesbill (*Geranium Carolinianum*), *Froelichia Floridana*, tumble weed (*Cycloloma platyphyllum*), buffalo bur (*Solanum rostratum*). All these were undoubtedly collected at lower altitudes by Doctor Parry.

*Bull. U. S. Geol. Survey, 285: 36.

†Physiographic account of that portion of the Rocky Mountain Range, at the head waters of South Clear Creek and east of Middle Park; with an enumeration of the plants collected in this district in the summer months of 1861. Amer. Jour. Sci. II, 33:231, 404; 34:249, 330.

‡loc. cit.

In this list of Doctor Parry I do not find a single exotic plant, although there had been some permanent settlements in Colorado some years before. The exotic weeds, as well as the native weedy plants, undoubtedly spread much later.

At Georgetown, having an altitude of about 9000 feet, the common prairie sunflower (*Helianthus petiolaris*), gum weed (*Grindelia squarrosa*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and stink weed (*Cleome integrifolia*), were common. There is an abundance of common timothy, white clover, and an occasional red clover plant, and the little meadows contain much blue grass, probably a native grass. The weedy flora between Georgetown and Idaho Springs contains, in addition to the above plants, Russian thistle (*Salsola kali* var. *tenuifolia*) an abundance of the common western sunflower (*Helianthus petiolaris*), stink weed (*Cleome integrifolia*), yarrow (*Achillea Millefolium*), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*), some pepper grass (*Lepidium* sp), some curled dock (*Rumex crispus*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), plantain (*Plantago major*). The list of the alien weeds is not large, though communication with the plains is frequent.

In the vicinity of Idaho Springs the common marsh elder (*Iva xanthifolia*), a weed originally found on the plains near streams, is not infrequent; stink weed (*Cleome integrifolia*), also a weed of the plains, is abundant. The related stink weed (*Polanisia trachysperma*) also belongs to the plains flora, but it is not common. An occasional mullein (*Verbascum Thapsus*) and the three-flowered nightshade (*Solanum triflorum*), also species of the plains, occur. Evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*), a weed of the Mississippi valley and eastward, was common at the Forks. The prickly lettuce (*Lactuca scariola*) is common everywhere in the region, especially near Golden and in the region adjacent to the foothills. The buffalo bur (*Solanum rostratum*) is abundant, as is the tumbleweed (*Cycloloma platyphyllum*); both are weeds of the open on the plains. Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) is common everywhere in the gardens, as is the common pigweed (*Amaranthus retroflexus*), which has been brought in from the east and south. The Indian hemp (*Apocynum androsaemifolium*) is a weed of irrigation ditches at the mouth of the canon. The following eastern and European weeds were common in the vicinity of Golden: Simpson honey plant (*Scrophularia nodosa*), green foxtail (*Setaria viridis*), pigeon grass (*Setaria glauca*), dropseed grass (*Muhlenbergia glomerata*), cocklebur (*Xanthium canadense*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), everywhere growing under dry conditions, horseweed (*Erigeron canadense*), yellow sweet

Pammel: Introduced Plants of the Clear Creek Canon, Colorado



PLATE XV. Clear Creek Canon near Idaho Springs, Colorado. Photograph by L. H. Pammel.



PLATE XVI. Silver Plume, Clear Creek, Colorado. Altitude 9,000 feet. Photograph by L. H. Pammel.

clover (*Melilotus officinalis*), and white sweet clover (*Melilotus alba*), wild licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*), milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*), common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), sour dock (*Rumex crispus*), greater ragweed (*Ambrosia trifida*), also some small ragweeds (*Ambrosia artemisiaefolia*). The native perennial ragweed (*A. psilostachya*) is much more abundant. The meadow sunflower (*Helianthus grosseserratus*), wormwood (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), smooth dock (*Rumex altissimus*), and Mexican fireweed (*Kochia scoparia*) are everywhere in Denver and Golden. Blue vervain (*Verbena hastata*), morning glory (*Convolvulus sepium*), European morning glory (*Convolvulus arvensis*), parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*), lamb's-quarters (*Chenopodium album*), burdock (*Arctium major*) are common.

Quite a large number of the weedy plants of the valley belong to the region, like the blue lettuce (*Lactuca pulchella*), not abundant except as the plains are reached, *Chrysopsis villosa*, *Gaura parviflora*, *Cirsium ochrocentrum*, stick-seed (*Echinosperra floribunda*), *Mentzelia ornata*, Rocky Mountain poppy (*Argemone platyceras*).

In the vicinity of Denver, only some twelve miles from Golden, there are a great many more exotic weeds. The list can be materially augmented, the following weeds being abundant: Small ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiaefolia*), biennial wormwood (*Artemisia biennis*), buckhorn (*Plantago lanceolata*), smartweed (*Polygonum Persicaria*), doorway knotweed (*Polygonum aviculare*).

It will be seen from the above account of the weeds that Europe has not contributed largely to the weeds of this region, except at the mouth of the canon. It is not an agricultural region. The weeds of the canon are largely confined to gardens, streets, or roadsides.

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