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IMAGINATION OVER KNOWLEDGE

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A Cousin Of The Strawberry

The strawberry is a member of the great Rose family. Among its many cousins we find the blackberry and the raspberry.

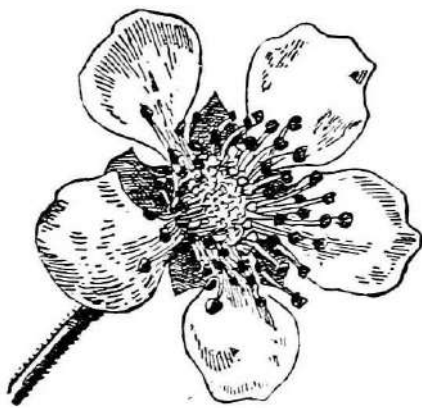
The blackberry blossom also has five white leaves, and a center made up of pistils and stamens.

When its white flower leaves fall, and its empty dust boxes wither, we see the blackberry begin to take the place of the blossom, just as we saw the strawberry take the place of the strawberry blossom.

But now we are about to discover the way in which the blackberry differs from the strawberry.

Cannot some boy or girl tell me in what way they are different?

“One is black, and the other is red.”



But that is not the answer I want. Perhaps it is hardly likely that any child could guess what I have in mind. Still a little exercise in guessing is as good for your brains as gymnastics are good for your bodies.



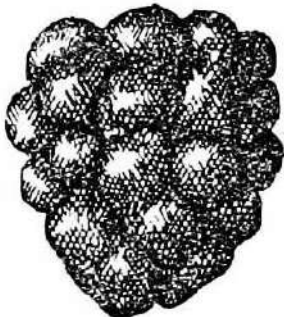
Now I will tell you what this difference is; and I want you to try and understand it clearly, so that you will be able to explain it to others, for I doubt if the grown-up people could give any better answers than you. I think your fathers and mothers will be both surprised and pleased when you show them some summer day how truly different are these two berries.



You remember that in the strawberry we saw plainly that it was the flat flower cushion which swelled into the ripe strawberry,—the cushion which was quite hidden by the many pistils; and though these pistils were scattered thickly all over the ripe, red fruit, these little pistils with their seedboxes were too small and dry to add flavor or richness to the berry.

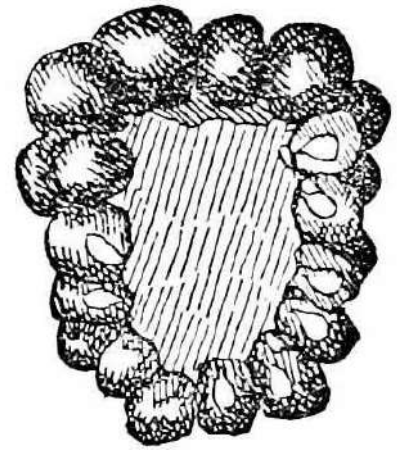


But if we watch the growth of this blackberry, we see that things are different.



We see that the pistils of this fruit do not remain small and dry, as with the strawberry. No, indeed! their little seedboxes grow bigger and juicier every day, and they turn from green to red and from red to black. They do not remain hard to the touch, but become so soft that a slight pressure will

bruise them and stain your fingers purple. And we enjoy eating the full-grown blackberry because a quantity of these juicy seedboxes are so packed upon the juicy flower cushion that together they make a delicious mouthful.



The flower cushion of the blackberry is long and narrow, not broad and flat like that of the strawberry.

So do not forget that in the strawberry we enjoy eating the ripened flower cushion, while in the blackberry the juicy seedboxes give to the fruit more of its size and flavor than does the flower cushion.

