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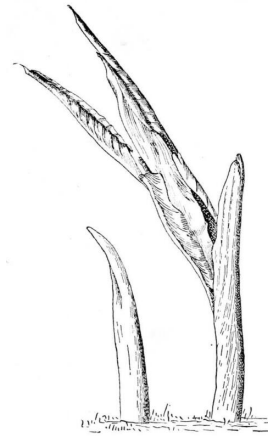
Plant Packages

Mrs. William Starr Dana

On your walks through the woods these spring days I want you to notice the neat and beautiful way in which plants do their packing; for the woods now are full of plant packages,—little bundles of leaves and flowers, done up with the greatest care.

Some of these have just appeared above the ground. Others have burst from the branches of the trees and shrubs.

Of course, a plant does not like to send its young, delicate leaves and flowers into the cold world without wrapping them up, any more than your mother would like to send your baby brother out for the first time without a great deal of just such bundling-up.

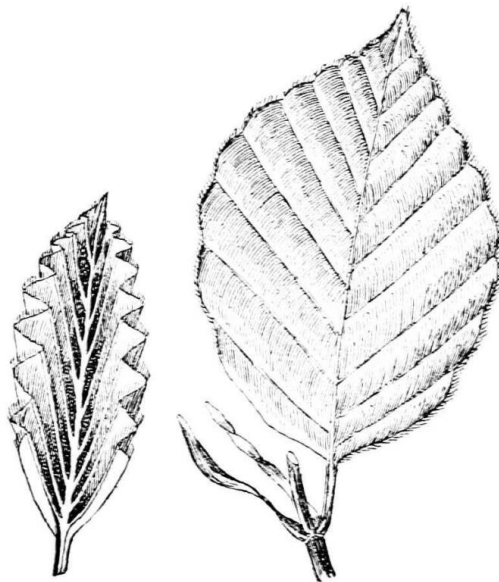


And so well wrapped are many of these plant babies, that it is not an easy matter to guess just what they are, what kinds of leaves and flowers will appear when the wrappings have been thrown aside.

Sometimes the package looks like the sharp-pointed object in the picture at the head of this chapter. Soon the leaves push their way out of their papery envelope, and before long our friend Jack-in-the-pulpit himself appears.

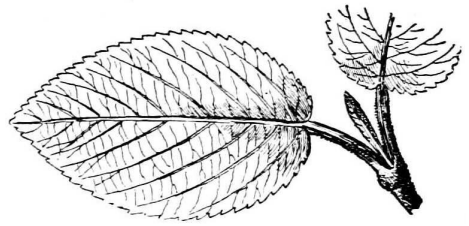


Sometimes it is such a woolly roll as you see in the next picture. This roll soon uncurls into a pretty fern.



The beech tree folds its leaves like fans. The preceding picture shows you how carefully and cleverly the hobblebush packs its young leaves.

During their babyhood many leaves wear a hairy coat as a protection from both cold and heat; but when their green skin becomes thicker, they throw this off.



Most of these plant packages are very interesting and beautiful, and well worth your attention. I wish that during these weeks of early spring the country schools would hold exhibitions of these babes in the woods, asking each child to bring what he considers a good specimen of a plant package.



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