

THE EXOTIC ELEMENT.

For details of the exotic element in the present vegetation of St Helena, we are almost wholly indebted to Melliss, who enumerates about 970 species, supplemented by remarks on their distribution, &c. Upwards of half of them are only cultivated, or are rare in a wild state, while others are only common in certain localities. The residue of thoroughly naturalised species is made up of plants from the most distant countries, the curious mixture reminding one more of a botanic garden than anything else. From the following list of the commoner species, it will be seen that European plants figure prominently in the scenery:—

Ranunculus sceleratus, *Argemone mexicana*, *Fumaria capreolata*, *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, *Nasturtium officinale*, *Senebiera didyma*, *Hypericum hircinum*, *Cerastium glomeratum*, *Althæa officinalis*, *Malva sylvestris*, *Malva parviflora*, *Melia azedarach*, *Erythrina caffra*, *Medicago denticulata*, *Ulex europæus*, *Acacia longifolia*, *Acacia lophantha*, *Rubus pinnatus*, *Opuntia vulgaris*, *Ageratum conyzoides*, *Helichrysum bracteatum*, *Gnaphalium luteo-album*, *Senecio vulgaris*, *Cryptostemma calendulaceum*, *Hypochæris radicata*, *Sonchus oleraceus*, *Plantago major*, *Buddleia madagascariensis*, *Brugmansia suaveolens*, *Datura tatula*, *Datura fastuosa*, *Physalis peruviana*, *Solanum nigrum*, *Gomphocarpus fruticosus*, *Atriplex capensis*, *Chenopodium murale*, *Amarantus blitum*, *Achyranthes aspera*, *Cluytia pulchella*, *Euphorbia peplus*, *Ricinus communis*, *Urtica dioica*, *Quercus robur*, *Populus alba*, *Salix babylonica*, *Pinus pinaster*, *Richardia æthiopica*, *Coix lachryma*, *Paspalum scrobiculatum*, *Stenotaphrum americanum*, *Panicum maximum*, *Setaria verticillata*, *Gymnothrix caudata*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Poa annua*, *Cynodon dactylon*, *Eragrostis poæoides*, *Festuca bromoides*, and *Bromus vestitus*: total, 59 species.

We have probably omitted a score or two of species that are equally as common as some of those we have enumerated; but our object is fully served by the selection given. Particulars respecting a few of those that are most striking in the landscape, and constitute the physiognomy of the vegetation, may be interesting.

Ulex europæus.—The English furze is perhaps the commonest shrub in the island, covering acres of the outskirts of the high land. It is used for fuel, and many natives make a living by cutting it and taking it into the town.

Rubus pinnatus.—A native of Africa and the Mascarene Islands, introduced in 1775,¹ and now exceedingly common everywhere above an elevation of 1500 feet.

Hypochæris radicata.—Europe, &c. Melliss says this plant is the dandelion of St Helena, where in meadows its yellow flower-heads are as thick as daisies in English meadows.

¹ On the authority of Melliss. Roxburgh states that the inhabitants regarded it as an introduced plant, though they disagreed as to its origin.