

tends as far as Greenland. The Alpine epilobium is one of the few White Mountain plants that have attained the bad eminence of being regarded as doubtful species. Gray notes as the typical form, that with obtuse and nearly entire leaves, and as a variety, that with acute and slightly toothed leaves, which some other botanists seem to regard as distinct specifically. Thus we find that this little plant has been induced to assume a suspicious degree of variability; yet it is strange that both species or varieties are found growing together, as if the little peculiarities in the form of the leaves were matters of indifference, and not induced by any dire necessities in the struggle for life. Facts of this kind are curious, and not easily explained under the supposition either of specific unity or diversity. For why should this plant vary without necessity? and why should two species so much alike be created for the same locality? Perhaps these two species or varieties, wandering from far distant points of origin, have met here fortuitously, while the lines of migration have been cut off by geological changes; and yet the points of difference are too constant to be removed, even after the reason for them has disappeared. If this could be proved, it would afford a strong reason for believing the existence of a real specific diversity in these plants.

I have said nothing of the grasses and sedges of these mountains; but one of them deserves a special notice. It is the Alpine herd's grass (*Phleum alpinum*), a humble relation of our common herd's grass. This plant not only occurs on the White Mountains, in Arctic America, in the Canadian Mountains, from the summit of Mount Albert, in Gaspé, to the mountains of British Columbia, and on the hills of Scotland and Scandinavia, but has been found on the Mexican Cordillera and at the Straits of Magellan. The seeds of this grass may perhaps be specially suited for transportation by water, as well as by land. It is observed in Nova Scotia that when the wide flats of mud deposited by the tides of the Bay of Fundy,