

NOTES.

Extract from "The Trees of Great Britain and Ireland." Elwes and Henry. Vol. III., pp. 559, 560, 561, 562, 563.

Arbutus Unedo. Linnæus.

A small tree, attaining in Ireland 40 feet in height and 10 feet or more in girth, usually a shrub in the Mediterranean region.

This species is widely spread throughout the maritime regions of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, occurring in Spain, France, Corsica, Sardinia, Italy, Istria, Herzegovina, Dalmatia, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Algeria and Morocco. It is also met with in the maritime belt along the Atlantic from Portugal to Kerry in Ireland. It occurs either as an undergrowth in forests, when in favoured situations it reaches the dimensions of a small tree, or is one of the shrubs com-

posing the *maguis* or heaths, which spread over large tracts of siliceous soil that have been denuded of trees in past ages. It is apparently only in Ireland that the *Arbutus* grows to be a forest tree, moderate in size, but equalling in height and girth the trees of other species with which it is associated.

The *Arbutus* is unquestionably wild in the south-west of Ireland, where it is associated with other plants, which like it are Mediterranean in type and not indigenous to other parts of the British Isles. It has been known to the Irish since early times, and is called *caithne* (pronounced *cahney*) in Kerry, and *cuince* in Clare. The former name occurs in several place-names in Kerry, as Derrynacahney, the "oak-wood of the *Arbutus*," two miles south-east of Crusheen; Cahnicaun Wood, near the Eagle's nest, Killarney, which is *coill caithneacan*, the "wood of the little *Arbutus*" in Irish; Ishnagahinny Lake, five miles south-east of Waterville, which is *uisge-na-geathne*, "*Arbutus* water" in Irish.

The Clare name, *cuince*, is supposed to occur in several place-names, anglicised as *quin*, which, however, often represents a family name of another signification. Cappoquin, in Waterford, means the field of the *Arbutus*, and Feaquin, in Clare, the wood of the *Arbutus*. The occurrence of names like Quin, a parish in Clare, and Quinsheen, one of the islands in Clew Bay, Mayo, may point to an extension of the distribution of this plant far to the north in ancient times.

At present, *Arbutus* *Unedo* is restricted in Co. Kerry, the extreme south-western part of Co. Cork, and Sligo. In Co. Cork it is thinly scattered through the woods in the vicinity of Glengariff, growing in company with oak, birch, holly, hazel, and mountain ash, and attaining about 25 feet in height and 3 feet in girth. It is said to grow here and there among the mountains to the west of Glengariff and was seen by R. A. Phillips at Adrigole, ten miles to the west, high up in the mountains among the rocks, and without the shelter of other trees.

The *Arbutus* has its headquarters in Co. Kerry in the Killarney district, being particularly abundant and luxuriant on the islands and shores of the lakes generally, where it forms a considerable part of the natural forest. At the base of Cromaglaun Mountain, near the tunnel on the Kenmare road, there is a wood composed almost exclusively of *Arbutus*, and it is also met with on the Cloone lakes, south of the Kenmare River.

About Killarney the tree is indifferent as regards soil, as it grows on limestone on Ross island, on sandstone on Dinis island, and on slate grit and conglomerate elsewhere. It is much more affected by climate and aspect than by soil, and seeks the most humid and mildest situations. In the Killarney basin it occupies practically the whole northern shore of the northern lake, but does not grow on the exposed islands of this lake. It is absent from the shore itself, when this is marshy or composed of shingle or sand, and grows on the rocky headlands, where it forms a natural wood with oak, holly and mountain ash. It is very common on the long indented promontory of Muckross, and reaches its greatest dimensions on Dinis Island, which is perhaps the dampest and most sheltered spot in the whole district, protected by high mountains on the east and west, but open to the south. It usually does not extend far from the lake shore, but in the very humid and shaded Torc ravine it recedes into the general woodland along the rocky banks of the torrent, and ascends to an elevation of several hundred feet. It flourishes also on the rocky and sheltered islands of the southern lake.

The date of the introduction of the *Arbutus* into English gardens is unknown; but Mrs. J. R. Green has kindly sent me the following extract from State Papers showing that its existence in Kerry attracted in the sixteenth century the attention of the English settlers, who called it *Wollaghan*, a corruption of *ubhla caithne* (pronounced *oolacahney*) or "arbutus apples," a name used for the edible fruits: "You shall receive herewith a bundle of trees called *Wollaghan* tree, whereof my Lord of Leicester and Mr. Secretary Walsingham are both very desirous to have some, as well for the fruit as the rareness of the manner of bearing

which is after the kind of the orange, to have blossoms and fruit green or ripe all the year long, and the same of a very pleasant taste, and growing nowhere else but in one part of Munster, from whence I have caused them to be transported immediately unto you, praying you to see them safely delivered and divided between my said Lord and Mr. Secretary, directing that they may be planted near some ponds or with a great deal of black moory earth, which kind of soil I take will best like them, for that they grow best in Munster about loughs, and prove to the bigness of cherry trees or more and continue long."
