

in Tristan da Cunha; we found them also, and besides an lulus was very common, and several spiders.

From what the Germans told him, Von Willemoes Suhm concluded that there were two butterflies, a *Vanessa* and an *Argynnis*, in the island; if so, these may no doubt be attracted by the scarlet blossom of the *Pelargonium*, so abundant in the island, and fertilize it, and act as a stimulus to the preservation of its colour, and to some extent account for this.

Otherwise one must regard this case as an instance of the survival in an island, where it is now without function, of a flower the bright colour of which was developed originally in the progenitors of the plant on a continent amongst numerous insects.

Though some of the plants in the Tristan da Cunha group appear to flower all the year round, others have their regular blooming season. This is the case with the *Pelargonium* and the Tea plant. The *Pelargonium* blossoms, according to the Germans, in the middle of summer. Large numbers of the plants come into blossom at the same time, so that the beach is thickly strewn with the coloured petals fallen from the cliffs.

The Tea plant was nowhere found in blossom in October, though it was abundant. The *Phylica* trees were all in the same stage of development, bearing fully formed but green fruit.

The existence of the Cape Horn current sweeping up to the islands, may account for the presence of many South American plants in them. The part of the Brazilian current which turns from the coast of South America, and runs across to the Tristan group, brings with it many seeds to the islands, but these, being tropical, do not germinate. The seeds are cast upon the beach at Tristan, and are familiarly known amongst the islanders as sea beans, from a belief that they grow at the bottom of the neighbouring sea.

Two of these seeds were shown to me; one of them was a bean of a tropical American tree, the other was the seed of a *Guilandina*,* also tropical, which seed, singularly enough, is also cast up sometimes at Bermuda, and is there called a sea bean, and worn on watch chains as a curiosity, and I believe as an antidote to drowning.

Sir Joseph Hooker, in his lately published account of the Botany of Kerguelen's Land,† writes: "The flora of Tristan da Cunha, Nightingale and Inaccessible Islands, is essentially Fuegian, with an admixture of Cape genera, but with none of those characteristic of Kerguelen's Island. Of Cape types it

* See page 15.

† Transit of Venus Expedition, Botany. "Observations on the Botany of Kerguelen's Land," p. 8. By Sir J. D. Hooker, P.R.S.