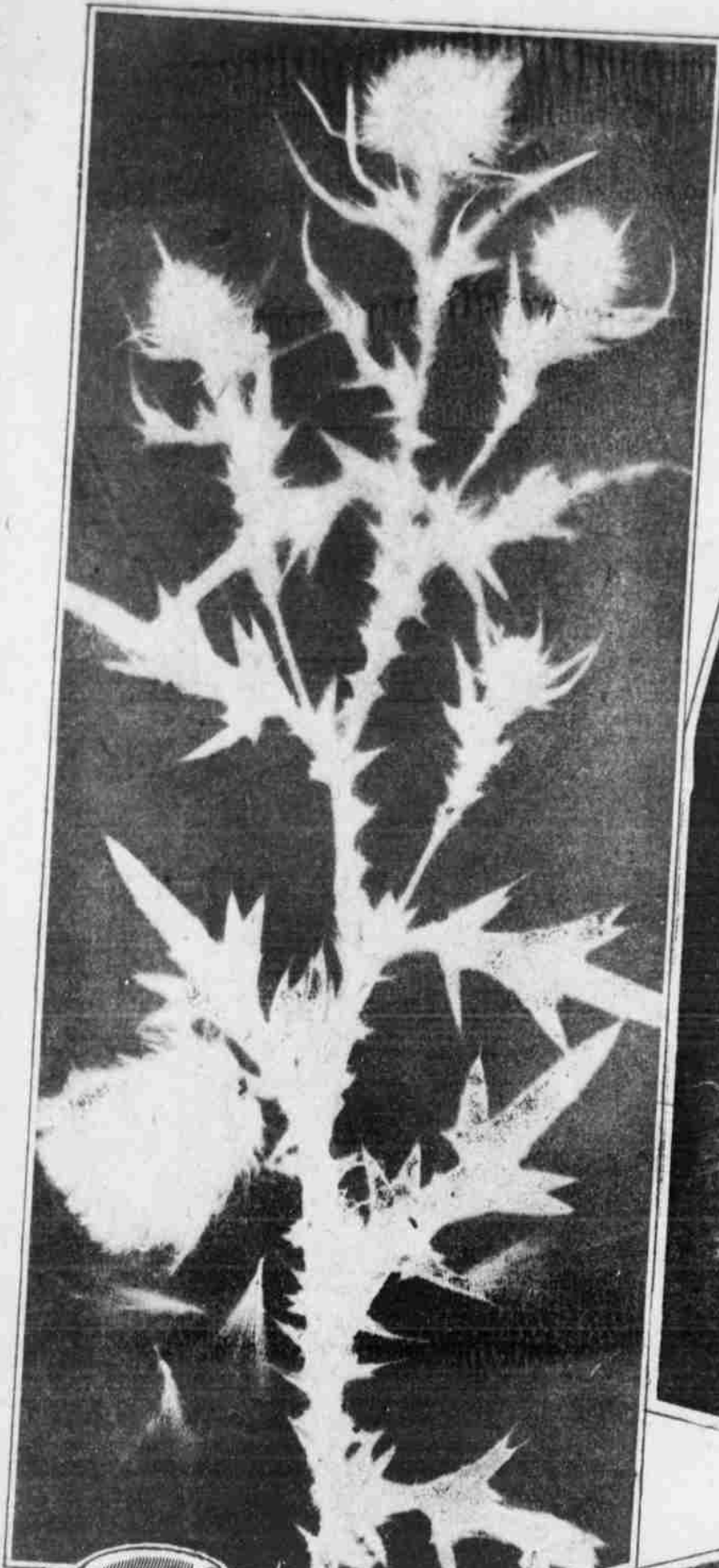


A New Way to Preserve Wild Flowers In all Their Fragile Beauty



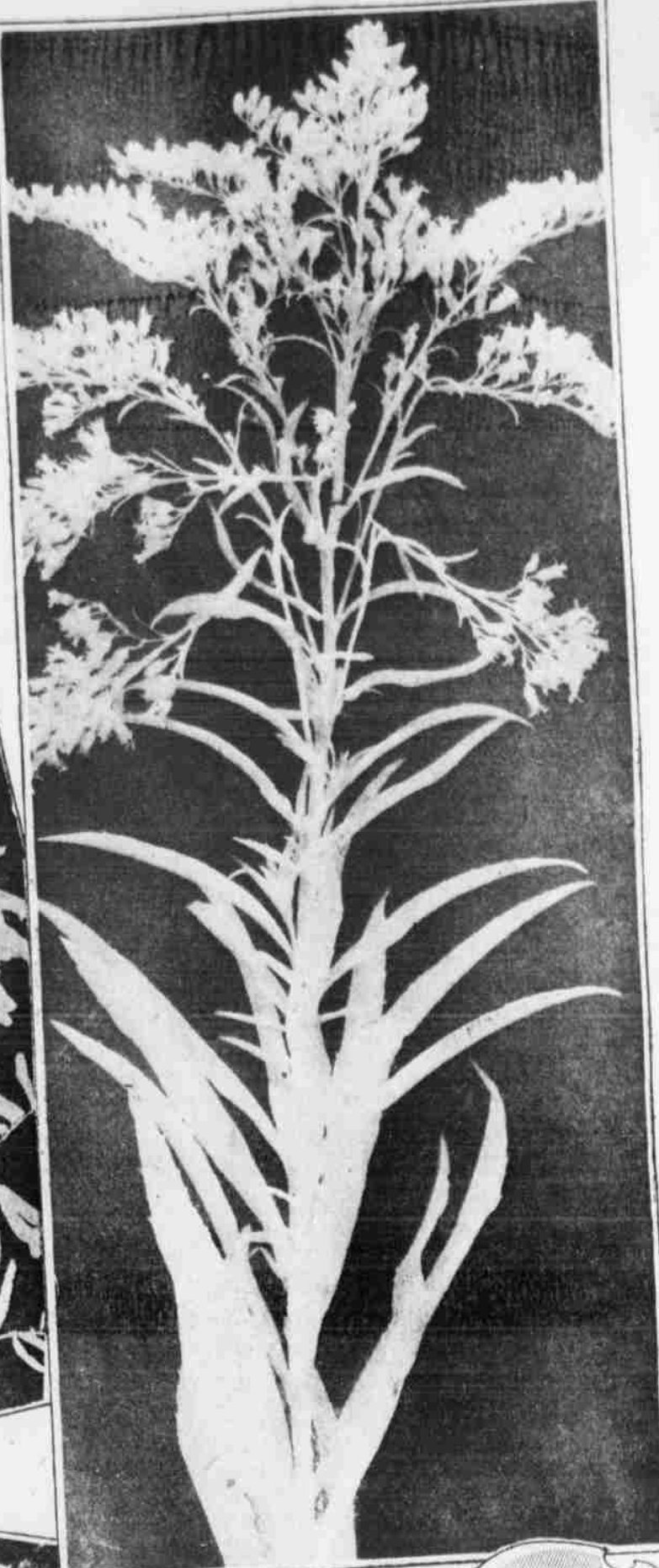
Thistle



Turkey Feather



Vetch



Goldenrod Plumy Variety



DEAR! They were so lovely I couldn't resist the temptation to pick them but I'm sure I don't know what to do with them, now I've got them home!"

This is the annual autumnal wall of the flower and nature lover who, happily toiling all summer long to collect and press and preserve special floral treasures, toiling still further, though less happily, in the task of transporting them homeward, each year indulges dimly in the mournful plaint suggested. It is one thing to pick and press the dear wild leaves, and blossoms, and grasses, as every one who has ever performed such delightful operations is aware; quite another to make proper permanent disposal of these treasures. In the end the pretty things are usually packed away in a box all winter; regretfully tossed to the rubbish heap or furnace in the spring.

A Chicago artist, however, Mrs. Bertha E. Jaques, and a real benefactor of her flower loving fellows, has recently evolved a simple yet brilliant plan whereby the summer wild flowers may be not only preserved indefinitely but put to charming uses. The plan calls for but the flowers themselves, a photographic printing frame of whatever size desired, some sheets of blue print paper, love of the blossoms, and a little time. Better still, the work may be done at will, as autumnal occupations and interests allow time for the charming diversion, may be carried along steadily or indefinitely deferred, the only necessity being in the temporary disposal of the flower subjects. The finished results will provide undying pleasure, enjoyed in a variety of ways.

Blue Print Keeps Dainty Beauty.

The pretty plan of Mrs. Jaques came into life partly as the result of an accident, partly because of the artistic promptings that each summer impel the planner, widely known for her clever etchings, bookbinding, metal work, and other successful "handcraft" efforts and accomplishments, into untrodden artistic fields. She wished to preserve the peculiarly graceful and elusive charm of a special thistle-down darning, yet cared not to photograph it in regular fashion. So the fragile beauty, floating, half detached particles of almost impalpable "star dust," was reproduced on a deep blue background. The resultant picture was more than sufficiently beautiful to warrant further experiments. Many other similar experiments were immediately tried.

Nature "Prints" Show Odd Freaks.

Dandelion "blows," sweet pea blossoms and tendril, grasses in almost incredible variety, grains, leaves, all manner of dainty and charming floral creations were perpetuated by means of the blue print paper, the printing frame, and the cold bath. The unique "pictures" were in many instances composed entirely by nature, the pretty sprays being simply laid in position. In others the "composition" of the picture came true in a double sense, parts of several plants or blossoms being needed to perfect the finished representation—so arranged as to show complete development of the plant or blossom.

Many interesting and little known facts, scientific and semi-scientific were acquired during the process of making the beautiful reproductions. One of the most fascinating side studies—of quite accidental origin—was that of the varying degrees of light reflection and resistance to be found in flower petals of apparently identical tint and texture. A dainty shading would in many cases reveal an unexpected thickening of the flower tissues; or show minute apertures or openings in petals seemingly quite solid and opaque. Another charming and ever increasing interest was furnished by the inevitable uncertainty attending the slight oxidation of stem and leaf juices that occasionally softened the print into new and even more delicate beauties—or spoiled the whole picture. The speedily discovered fact that certain leaves and flowers were extremely difficult to handle successfully, while others betrayed a pleasingly unexpected ductility, added continual new elements of surprise and delight.

Opens New Decorative Field.

Goldenrod, at first thought a trifle heavy and dense for this mode of treatment, yielded results almost incredibly lovely, the plumy variety being especially charming. Dog fennel, woodbine, delicate ferns, and rosette-like wood blossoms were alike satisfactory. The common purple vernaline, to be found all over America, became in the hands of the clever artist a dream of delight. Other colors and mediums of printing are no less successful and potent of beauty than the blue print paper, though needing more careful handling.

For many purposes of artistic design and reproduction will the photographic frame process—far more desirable and perfect, in point of truth, color value, reliability, and exactitude, than regular photography—be this winter used. A goldenrod frieze or dado, worked out in soft browns and yellows, book covers, daintily framed panels of certain leaves, and sprays, and blossoms—these convey but slender hints of all that is to come.

May Be Applied in Many Ways.

In regard to other delicate objects and textures, moreover, Mrs. Jaques has already proved the usefulness and beauty of the "wild flower printing." A simple barnyard feather, graceful in shape and outline, becomes a most alluring design for decorative or semi-utilitarian purposes when "worked out" in this manner. Shapes and fragments of frostlike lace, so treated, are not only transformed into exquisite designs but are also preserved indefinitely as to pattern and mode of working. A fine lace butterfly "sun transferred" to a pale blue background constitutes a most attractive subject for fan or cover design. The artistic possibilities of her new fancy are declared by Mrs. Jaques practically limitless and widely diversified in application and order. Artistic workers will need but the mere basic suggestion to divert them to still other ends.

But best of all, perhaps, in point of general usefulness, is the charming manner in which the summer spots may be thus preserved for all the year round enjoyment. Mounted in albums, framed in groups or panels, used as room or wall decorations—a dainty Michigan summer cottage probably will be next year decorated in this manner with the flora of the surrounding region—the fairy pictures are unflinchingly artistic and delightful. The small financial outlay necessary to produce them adds still another item to the already long list of desirable attributes and qualifications. And scientifically the pretty things are of indubitable value because of the minute detail and absolute fidelity with which each line and curve and fold is reproduced.



Sweet Peas

Goldenrod Single Spray



Indian Pipe

Dandelion Blows