

A BIBLICO-BOTANICAL PROBLEM

DMITRI A. BORGMANN
Oak Park, Illinois

Here is a word problem which should remind you, at least vaguely, of a popular form of word puzzle featured for many years in a well-known, nationally circulated magazine. Whether or not it does, it will keep you busy for quite some time, if you really apply yourself to it.

The problem consists of two separate parts:

- (1) Select a complete verse consisting of not more than 60 alphabetic letters from any standard version of the Bible, such as the King James Version, the Revised Standard Version, or the Douay version.
- (2) Rearrange all of the letters in the verse you have selected to spell the names of at least 22 trees and/or shrubs. All names of trees and shrubs must be found either in Webster's Second Edition or in Webster's Third Edition.

As far as Bible versions are concerned, you need not limit yourself to one of the three versions mentioned above. For example, the American Standard Version, the Confraternity Version, and the text of the Holy Scriptures as published by The Jewish Publication Society of America are equally acceptable for the purposes of this problem.

In the case of trees and shrubs, no particular name may be used more than once, and each word must be defined as a tree or a shrub, either directly or indirectly. As an example of an indirect definition, consider the word HOT. Webster's Second Edition defines HOT as a variant of HURT; HURT as a name for the HURTLBERRY; HURTLBERRY as a name for the WHORTLBERRY; WHORTLBERRY as a kind of BLUEBERRY; BLUEBERRY as a plant of the genus Vaccinium; and VACCINIUM, finally, as a genus of shrubs.

The highest score theoretically possible is 23. Our own solution, scoring 22, is given in the Answers and Solutions at the end of this issue. If you succeed in topping our solution, please let us know.