

orchards and fields. The plants of northern climes are at home in our severe winters: while our bright if brief summer allows us to cultivate many things that belong almost to the tropics.

A strange history has the handful of common earth that you may pick up at your feet. It has existed for ages before your birth or the creation of the first man. Some particles of it have been in the rock, worn away by waters, carried about by winds, or crushed by some mighty convulsion of nature. It may have been upheaved by earthquakes from the bowels of the dry land or the depths of the sea, washed down again by the rivers, and again lifted up into the air. The plants of long ago, when dying, have, with filial gratitude, bequeathed fertility to it; the very worm has kept it open and pervious to heat, light, air and moisture. The suns of summer, the frosts and snows of winter, and the rains of all the year have practised their chemistry upon it. Every atom in that handful has its long and wondrous story, could it speak. And how little *man* has had to do with it! He has touched it now and then with his implements, he has given it the opportunity to show what was in it,—and that is all! Then, as we look on the broad acres and well-filled garnerers of our country, let us praise God—for “the earth is full of His riches,” and “He giveth us the finest of the wheat.”

Recent discoveries have shown that not all the wealth of our soil is to be found upon its surface. Though coal is denied us (in Ontario), we have the precious iron ore, copper, ay, and gold and silver! “The rock pours out rivers of oil.” Nor are these the whole of our mineral resources. But all that man does with these, is to find them in their place and take them away. Who put them there? Who ought to be thanked for them?

2. We have spoken of the soil of our country—now let us turn to its *waters*. Truly we may say of it, as of Canaan of old, “It is a land of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.” Pierce the soil almost wherever you will, and you have a well of living water. The whole country is intersected by a network of larger and smaller streams, which supply almost every house and every field.

And how can we describe the magnificence of our navigable rivers and inland seas, leading from the very heart of the continent thousands of miles to the open ocean, and so bringing the markets of the whole world to every man's door? The sublimity and beauty of Niagara and the St. Lawrence go far to compensate for monotony of our landscape, while the value of this chain of water-communication will appear more manifest each succeeding year, as the great west and north-west fill up with enterprising settlers, and their immeasurable produce passes by us to the sea!

All this we owe to Him who “holds the waters in the hollow of his hand,” scoops out the lake, digs the river channel, marks the path of every streamlet, and distils the rain upon the earth. Here and there we have made an artificial