

V.—*John Goldie, Botanist.*

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(Read June 23rd, 1897.)

It is not inappropriate, in connection with the Cabot celebration, to introduce the name of John Goldie, botanist, who, 80 years ago, in June, 1817, at the instance of Sir Wm. Hooker, left Leith and shortly afterwards landed in Halifax to make investigations of the flora of Canada and the United States. His researches were rewarded by the discovery of many new plants, but most of these unfortunately were lost in transportation to Great Britain; and his notes, containing sketches and descriptions of his discoveries, were destroyed by fire at a later date. Sufficient, however, has been handed down to show his great industry in botanical research, and the importance of his discoveries. He had many of the characteristics, too, of the discoverer. Of a hardy constitution, fearless disposition, patient in his investigations, accurate in his judgments, and with a fondness for his favourite science that no fatigue or discouragements could overcome, he is not unworthy of a place among those brave spirits of the old world who became the pioneers of research in Canada.

It is to be regretted that the botanical journal in which Mr. Goldie kept a record and descriptions of the plants discovered, was destroyed. A diary of a journey through Upper Canada and some of the Northern States in 1819 has been preserved, and was published this year (1897) in Toronto. A list of the new and rare plants found by Mr. Goldie during his two years' explorations in America was published in the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal* for April, 1822. This contains a brief account of his journey with descriptions of new plants. To both of these the writer has had access, and with additional information kindly furnished by Mr. James Goldie, of Guelph, Ontario, son of the botanist, and himself a botanist and horticulturist, he has obtained materials for this sketch, which, meagre in regard to scientific information of his researches, may be found to possess some interest to botanical and general students, interwoven as it is, to some extent, with the purpose that brings the society together at this time and place.

During his lifetime Mr. Goldie carried on an extensive correspondence, particularly after he came to Canada to reside, with many prominent botanists of the old world, and especially with his friend, Sir Wm. Hooker. But no permanent record of the results of this correspondence has been preserved, except such as has found its way into the published writings of these botanists, to which, however, no access has been possible in the preparation of this memoir.

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