

early winter may proceed from the poison of the leaves of *Kalmia* which are eaten by the partridge. He experienced the symptoms of poisoning himself, and maintains that his symptoms were those of *Kalmia* poisoning. The crops of partridges should always be examined, to discover the nature of their food, and also at the same time the cause of reported poisonings.

INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE.

will meet in the Provincial Museum, Halifax, on Monday, the 10th inst., at 8 p. m. To be read:—1 "Report of Martin Murphy, C. E., delegate to the Royal Society of Canada." 2. "Retrospect of the Institute's Proceeding from its commencement.—By Wm. Gossip.

ALEX MCKAY,

Secretary.

New light is slowly dawning upon the important matters of plant physiology and chemistry. It now appears that plants have a new function which is affected by certain cells acting as a ferment, and producing nitric acid as the result of their action. We have long known that cells of fruits play the part of yeast in developing alcoholic fermentation, but it is new to learn that nitric acid is formed in plants through a similar agency. It is probable that the nitrates are universal in the vegetable kingdom, and that the stem is the principal seat of their production.—*Popular Science News*.

A large amount of brush was burned one night in the vicinity of Providence,

which attracted birds from a swampy piece of woods near by. The birds are reported as flying into the flames in considerable numbers. Some were also attracted by the lights in the windows close by, and flew at the windows and some being opened, a few birds entered and were caught. Five were brought to us the next day, four of which were alive, viz, one scarlet tanager and three Connecticut warblers one of the latter having the adult plumage. The dead bird was a Maryland yellow-throat. — *Random Notes on Natural History*.

Cicuta Maculata. Not long ago we noticed the poisoning of a number of boys in Kentucky, U. S. A., by the eating of the root of the *Wild Hemlock* or *Wud Parsnip*, as it is called. On Saturday, Oct. 18th, Mr. Archibald Stuart, proprietor of the hotel at Porter's Lake, Halifax Co. N. S., was fatally poisoned by eating some of these roots, which he had mistaken for Sarsaparilla. A boy, Murphy, who was with him, was also poisoned but recovered after a prompt emetic. He did not eat so much of the root, as Mr. Stuart, who stood the action of the poison but for a short time. The plant is *Cicuta Maculata*, of the umbel-bearing family, and bears a resemblance to the parsnip, after which it is named and to the family of which it belongs. A few years ago a fatal case of poisoning from this plant was reported from Cumberland Co. N. S.