

have continued at the same rate? if so, it would have driven the river out of its bed—and many an unfortunate dweller on its banks out of their beds also. There is every reason to fear that the growth is more rapid after it can be measured by feet than while it is confined to inches; and then the question comes, could such a state of things continue for another day? or is there, either in the intensity of the frost or in the volume of icy moss produced by it, an antidote to the evils threatened by them? An all wise and merciful Power prevents our rivers from becoming solid masses of ice by the apparently paradoxical law, that in winter the bottom waters shall not rise to the surface to be cooled, although in summer the great lakes thus temper the intense heat; and may there not be the same beneficent and self-regulating provision by which intense frost—which is but the result of magnetic activity—produces its own antidote? If there is not, the day may possibly come when the St. Lawrence will, for a time, take the direct railway route from Lachine to Montreal, a valley it once occupied, but whether as a winter channel or otherwise geologists must decide.

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AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURAL LAWS WHICH REGULATE THE INTERCHANGE OF COMMODITIES BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND NATIONS, AND THE EFFECTS OF INTERFERENCE WITH THEM.

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BY REV. WILLIAM HINCKS, F.L.S., ETC.

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*Read before the Canadian Institute, March 29th, 1862.*

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THE subject I have undertaken to discuss this evening, is somewhat too extensive for the time I can presume to occupy, and is one upon which I cannot pretend to throw any new light; but it is one of great and general interest, any doubts and difficulties relating to which may certainly be settled by reasonable inquiry; and having a strong conviction myself, which is not, I may safely say, a mere acceptance of the authority of others, however high in public estima-