

General conclusions are drawn which indicate that in all the provinces large tracts of untilled land exist that would rank with the fertile soils of other countries and, further, it is shown that many Canadian soils are possessed of most abundant stores of plant food—stores so vast as to allow of their most favourable comparison with the richest soils of which we have any knowledge.

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### THE POISON OF POISON IVY (*Rhus radicans*).

In the Year Book of the United States Department of Agriculture for 1896, recently issued, there is a very interesting chapter entitled: "Some Common Poisonous Plants," written by Mr. V. K. Chesnut, of the Division of Botany, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Among the plants described and illustrated, the Poison Ivy, "as the principal poisonous plant of America," receives attention. After an account of its habitat and botanical characters, in which the writer points out how it may be distinguished from non-poisonous plants that bear certain resemblances to it in the form of their leaves, &c., there follows a discussion regarding the nature of the poisonous principle—a question over which there has been much dispute. As this is a matter of no little interest and practical importance, we shall quote at some length this part of the author's article:

"Poison ivy has long been regarded by the ignorant with a degree of awe akin to superstition. No one was able to tell how it produced its effects, and why it attacked some people and not others. Mysterious principles were relied upon to explain the phenomena, and up to the present time the common belief has been that the poisonous constituent was really an exhalation from the plant. In the latter part of the last century it was so regarded by the export; then, as our knowledge of