

The Canadian Journal.

TORONTO, SEPTEMBER, 1852.

In the August Number of the Journal we alluded briefly to its objects, and enumerated in general terms the sources from which we hoped to obtain co-operation and support. We now propose to consider more in detail the manner in which that co-operation may be afforded, not, however, intending to restrict in any way the intentions of our well-wishers, but rather with the view of suggesting subjects of enquiry and observation which some of our readers might consider unsuitable to the pages of this Journal, or the objects of the Canadian Institute.

First, then, we attach great importance to the opportunities for observation and discovery presented by railway operations now in progress in various parts of Upper Canada, and would warmly urge upon the gentlemen engaged in the construction of the different lines the importance of accurately recording the many interesting facts which are daily disclosed. We recently noticed in a local paper* a short account of the discovery of an Indian burying-ground by the workmen on the Great Western Railway, in excavating a bank in the neighbourhood of Windsor. "In the burying-ground were found a large number of Indian ornaments, consisting of silver pins, brooches, bracelets, amber bead necklaces, &c., also, red stone pipes, copper camp kettles, and a variety of articles usually buried with an Indian. The place where these things were found was an Indian burying-ground. A great many skulls, bones and skeletons have been disinterred."

With a view to collect accurate and complete information on such interesting revelations as the one to which we have just adverted, the Canadian Institute, in a circular of enquiry dated June 12th, 1852, proposed (and distributed far and wide) a number of queries which we subjoin:—

Indian Remains.—Although the subject of Indian mounds and intrenchments has of late years received much attention in the neighbouring States, and it has been shewn by the investigations of Mr. Squier and others, that they exist in considerable numbers in western New York—particularly in the region occupying the first and second plateaux round Lake Ontario—Upper Canada, a part of the same region geographically, and peopled originally by the same, or nearly allied races, remains to a great degree a *terra incognita* with respect to this enquiry. The Council of the Canadian Institute deem it one particularly worthy of the attention of those persons who, by their pursuits, are brought into contact with such objects; and from the professedly practical character of their body, one of those also upon which authentic and valuable information may be looked for, at the hands of its members, as an early result of its incorporation.

To one county alone, of the State of New York, (Jefferson County,) Mr. Squier was enabled to discover fifteen inclosures or intrenchments, and he has estimated the total number which formerly existed in that state, at from two hundred to two hundred and fifty. "Were these works," he remarks "of the general large dimensions of those of the Western States, their numbers would be a just ground of astonishment. They are, however, for the most part, comparatively small, varying from one to four acres, the largest not exceeding sixteen acres in area. The embankments, too, are slight, and the ditches shallow: the former seldom more than four feet in height, and the latter of corresponding proportions. The work most distinctly marked exists in the town of Oakfield, Genesee County; it measures, in some places, between seven

and eight feet from the bottom of the ditch to the top of the wall. In some cases the embankment is not more than a foot in height, and the trench of the same depth. Lest it should be doubted whether works so slight can be satisfactorily traced, it may be observed that a regular and continuous elevation of six inches may always be followed without difficulty."

"In respect to position," adds the same writer, "a very great uniformity is to be observed throughout; most occupy high and commanding sites near the bluff edges of the broad terraces by which the country rises from the level of the lakes. When found on lower grounds, it is usually upon some dry knoll or little hill, or where banks of streams serve to lend security to the position. A few have been found upon slight elevations in the midst of swamps, where dense forests, and almost impassable marshes, protected them from discovery and attack. In nearly all cases they are placed in close proximity to some unfailing supply of water, or running streams. Gateways, opening toward these, are always to be observed, and in some cases guarded passages are visible."

To this clear and concise description little need be added. The enquiries proposed by the Canadian Institute, are the following:—

1. Name of township and number of lot in which any Intrenchment or Mound exists.
2. The area and dimensions, from actual measurement, and if possible, a plan, with sections.
3. A general description of the situation and neighbourhood.
4. Are there any trees growing on the artificial earthwork, if so, their size, the number of rings of annual growth in the largest stump to be found? To cut a tree down to ascertain this fact, unless they are numerous, would be to destroy a very valuable standing evidence to the antiquity of the work.
5. Are there still, or were there, previously to clearing, trees of large size in the area of the work?
6. Is the place known to the Indians in the neighbourhood by any name? Have they any traditions respecting it?
7. Are stone axes, arrow-heads, weapons or utensils, ever ploughed up in the vicinity? Is broken pottery common? Have the remains of concealed stores been discovered? Specimens of any of these objects will be highly valued.
8. Are there evidences of the place having been surrounded with posts or pickets?
9. Have utensils or weapons of copper or iron ever been discovered, leading to the inference that the place was occupied since the intercourse of the natives with Europeans began?
10. Specimens of Indian skulls or crania having evidence of antiquity will be valued. But the Council distinctly disown any wish or desire to disturb native burial places of comparatively recent date, and strongly recommend that they be treated with respect.
11. Are there any mounds or tumuli of artificial construction, or any mounds or elevations which from their regularity suggest a suspicion of such an origin, if so, state the same particulars respecting them?
12. Are there any local names of Indian origin in your township or neighbourhood; if so, a list of them, indicating the language to which they belong, their correct pronunciation, their interpretation or meaning, and the local circumstances on which they may appear to be founded, will be highly acceptable?
13. Copies of any noteworthy native drawings or writings, such as those existing on what are called the pictured rocks of Lake Superior and Lake Huron, and generally drawings of any objects connected with the subjects of these enquiries, will be thankfully received.

We solicit the attention of those who are interested in the attractive subject of Indian Remains to the foregoing enquiries. For our own part, we shall at all times be glad to introduce into the Journal wood-cuts of any relic possessing peculiar interest, when transmitted for the inspection of the Institute, or as a contribution to the Museum now in progress of formation.

Another subject of much scientific and economic importance is involved in the collection and publication of accurate descriptions and diagrams of strata, which may be disclosed by deep cuttings, either in the drift formation or in rocks upon which the drift reposes. Fossil remains of large dimensions are not unfrequently found in the drift, and the foundation limestone rocks of the Western part of the Province teem with innumer-

*The Canada Oak.

†Smithsonian contributions to knowledge: *American Journal*, Vol. XII, No. 3^d.
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