

old garrison, at its western end it is broad and studded with numerous small bays and lakes, the resort of many varieties of wild fowl. At the eastern extremity is a large marsh, which renders that locality famous for its fevers and agues. Many years ago the Island as it is called, was covered with forest trees, but these have been nearly all cut away—a fact to be deplored for two reasons: firstly, had the trees been left the sands which sweep and drift across, to and fro, from Lake to Bay and from Bay to Lake, would be in a great measure arrested, and the ponds in the broader portion of the peninsula gradually filled up, converting the whole into a large and beautiful natural park, which would be a resort at all seasons to the weary citizen who, tired of the hot and dusty streets of the town, would seek refuge for a few hours in this cool and shady spot. Secondly, the peninsula in its weakest parts would be strengthened and enabled better to resist the storms of the Lake.—Nature is ever the best architect, and we must be careful when we attempt to improve on her, lest our presumption be punished by destruction. The hollow stalk of straw has taught the builder a most important lesson, and the bee has solved a problem that puzzled our most acute mathematicians for years! Yet no one can say that the nature of the straw, or the instinct of the bee is superior to the organization or the intellectual endowments of man. We must beware, lest placing too much confidence in ourselves and our own opinions, we fall into error, and so allow the humble insect or a common plant to excel us in the adaptation of a means to an end.

But to return to our harbor. Bouchette says, "It fell to my lot to make the first survey of York (Toronto) Harbor, in 1793. I was at that period in the naval service on the lakes, and the survey of Toronto Harbor was intrusted by his Excellency to my performance. I still distinctly recollect the untamed aspect which the country exhibited when first I entered the beautiful basin, which thus became the scene of my early hydrographical operations. Dense and trackless forests lined the margin of the Lake and reflected their inverted images in its glassy surface. The wandering savage had constructed his ephemeral habitation beneath their luxuriant foliage, and the bay and neighboring marshes were the hitherto uninvaded haunts of immense coveys of wildfowl: indeed, they were so abundant as in some measure to annoy us during the night."

Before the war of '12, '13 and '14 the government erected a blockhouse on Gibraltar Point, also some storehouses for the storage of implements of husbandry sent out by the home government, for the use of settlers. The storehouses were encumbered with these tools for years, not one of them having been used or disposed of as intended. During the war

our American neighbors quietly took possession of them, and burnt the useless houses; they doubtless served a better purpose in their hands than ever they did in ours.

Another incident we must relate in the history of our Peninsula,—two gun-boats, large and handsome vessels they were, were built at the mouth of the river Humber; one fine afternoon they were rowed over to Gibraltar Point, in ten minutes hauled up on the sand, a small shanty built over them, and there they were left till they rotted. They served, however, one good purpose,—many were the picnics held in those days on this Point, and the young ladies and their attendants always found a pleasant little habitation to lunch in during the heat of the day, or to retreat to from a passing shower.

We will now give Sir Richard Bonnycastle's first impressions on landing in Toronto; perhaps his remarks, though written more than ten years ago, may not be inapplicable to the present state of affairs:—"When we first approach the capital of any strange country, our imagination, notwithstanding the *nil admirari* which travel more or less imparts, naturally pictures forth all sorts of ideas; and when we consider that, in visiting Toronto, we come to a city which has started into existence within thirty years, we are naturally eager to examine it and its history closely. Accordingly, I watched the shores of its great pear-shaped bay, or harbour, lined with buildings on the north, and a barren sand on the south, finished by a stagnant marsh on the east, with intense interest, as the steamer wended its way to the inconvenient wharves, placed almost at the extremity of the port.

"Our landing, on a narrow decaying pier, jostled, as it were, almost into the water, by rude carters plying for hire on its narrow bounds, and pestered by crowds of equally rude pliers for hotel preferences, gave us no very exalted notions of the grandeur or the police of Toronto. * * * Piers of rotten planks, nearly on a level with the water, and without gas, or any other lights, must create, as they indeed do, not merely great inconvenience, but loss of life."

LAIRD.—What wee book is that at your elbow, Crabtree, dressed in green, like ane o' the "good people?"

MAJOR.—An exceedingly modest and readable *Journal of an African Cruise*, written by Horatio Bridge, U.S. Navy, edited by Nathaniel Hawthorne, published by George P. Putnam, and vendid by Thomas Maclear.

DOCTOR.—It is readable, you say?

MAJOR.—Eminently so. The author is refreshingly free from the disease of "fine writing," and tells history in a simple, common-sense manner, which contrasts creditably with the florid tone, too frequently aped by literary blue jackets.