

diffusion of more correct ideas—of more accurate knowledge of it, especially in the mother country. Conscious, as we may well be, of our growing strength and rapid advancement, it is, nevertheless, true and, perhaps, a little mortifying, to find much misapprehension—I had almost said ignorance—respecting even the very geography of the Province, existing in England. Were this confined to the less educated classes we should not so much wonder, and were the instance of it of an early date, and before correct information was easily attainable, we should not have any right to complain; but the fact is otherwise, as two instances I shall select will abundantly show. Half a century had elapsed from the time that Burke spoke of the “bleak and barren regions of Canada,” before the publication of the last volume of that highly esteemed and valuable work, Alison’s History of Europe, and from that volume I make the following extract:—“The first operations of the campaign in Canada proved singularly unfortunate to the Americans. In the end of January, Gen. Winchester with a thousand men, crossed over to attack Fort Detroit, in the Upper Province, and before any force could be assembled to resist him, made himself master of French Town, twenty-six miles from that place. General Proctor, however, who commanded the British forces in that quarter, no sooner heard of this irruption than he hastily assembled a body of 500 regulars and militia, being the Glengarry Fencibles, and 600 Indians, and commenced an attack upon the invaders two days afterwards in the fort of Ogdensburg.” To those acquainted with the events alluded to, or with the places mentioned, it is unnecessary to point out the errors which this passage contains. To some it may be useful to explain that General Winchester’s advance upon Detroit was made in the (now) State of Michigan, which, though at that moment in the British possession, was nevertheless American territory,—that Fort Detroit, not long before captured by Sir Isaac Brock, is in Michigan, on the same side of the river—which there forms the boundary of Upper Canada—as General Winchester was marching on,—that Fort Detroit is nearly at the western extremity of Lake Erie, in which part of the country Colonel Proctor then commanded the British forces,—while the attack in which the Glengarry Fencibles bore so distinguished a part, and which resulted in the capture of the American position at Ogdensburg, was under the command of a different officer,—and that Ogdensburg is situated on the river St. Lawrence, at a distance exceeding the whole length of both Lakes Erie and Ontario from the scene of General Winchester’s capture. A reference to the Annual Register for 1813, which is cited in the work as the authority for this passage, shows clearly enough that this error has arisen from blending into one, as if relating to the same events, two entirely distinct transactions, and, no doubt, rests with some transcriber employed by this eloquent and usually accurate historian.

Again, in another work, the second edition of which was published as late as 1845, by a gentleman who now holds the rank of Queen’s Counsel, and whose pen has acquired for him a deserved reputation in works founded on other than professional subjects. The following passage occurs:—“Thus the waters which might at first have been seen forming part of the magnificent confluence of Niagara, and then precipitated amid clouds of mist and foam down its tremendous falls, and after passing over great tracts of country through innumerable channels and rivulets, serve at length quietly to turn the peasant’s mill.” A passage which, however well written, is nevertheless, a complete inversion of the facts since the waters which are precipitated over the Falls of Niagara flow onward, gathering as they go through Lake Ontario and the River St. Lawrence, the additions of many a tributary stream, but never diverge into any other channel in their downward course, until they expand into the Gulph and become mingled in the wide Atlantic waves.

It would be easy, especially if account was taken of the mistaken ideas respecting Canada, of individuals of less standing and pretension, to multiply such instances, but enough has been said to show the necessity of diffusing more accurate information as a corrective of the past, and as a means of prevention for the future.

I cannot quit the subject without availing myself of this fitting occasion to express what I am sure is equally felt by all present. My sense of the obligations we owe to our President for his active exertions in support of, and his valuable contributions to the proceedings of the Canadian Institute. In leaving Upper Canada, he will, I am certain, carry with him our best wishes for his happiness and prosperity, not unaccompanied with the hope that we may be able at some future period to welcome his return among us, and to benefit by the renewal of his co-operation in the proceedings of the Society. Convinced of the excellence of the objects of the Canadian Institute, I rejoice at its present success and its future prospects. A diligent pursuit after, and a fitting employment of knowledge here gained, cannot fail to exercise an elevating influence in our relations to each other, and to lead to just conceptions of our respective duties in the various walks of life. We shall more practically feel that it is not for ourselves only, but for our fellows, that we are called upon to think and act, while we strive for our individual improvement. We shall strive also to communicate to others the benefit of what we attain, thus approximating the lofty character of those who,

“With God himself  
Hold converse, grow familiar day by day,  
With his conceptions, act upon his plan,  
And form to his the relish of our souls.”

**On the Poisonous Plants which are indigenous to, or which have become naturalized, in the neighbourhood of Toronto, by Edward M. Hodder, M. C., & M. R. C. S., Professor of Obstetrics, &c., in the University of Trinity College.**

(Continued from Page 204.)

(Read at the Annual Conversazione of the Canadian Institute.)

17th. Lobelia Inflata.....Indian Tobacco.  
Class Pentandria.....Order Monogynia.

This pretty plant varies in height from six inches to two or three feet.

The stem is erect, angular and hairy; the leaves scattered, oval sinuate, veined and hairy. The flowers in spikes, corolla bluish purple, the tube prismatic and cleft above, the segments spreading, two above lanceolate, the three lower ones oval.

The whole plant operates as a violent emetic.

The last three plants are exceedingly pungent to the taste, and in large doses are narcotico-acrid poisons. It is said that in teaspoonful doses of the powder, they have proved fatal in five hours, where vomiting has not been produced. When chewed incautiously, they produce an insupportable sense of burning and distension, which extends down the gullet; nausea ensues, and vomiting generally follows, accompanied with oppressive prostration, languor of the pulse, and sweating.

Their acrid taste and emetic qualities, however, prove their safeguard; for, it is impossible to eat the plants in sufficient quantities to produce death, and which can only be occasioned by an extreme dose taken by mistake.

18th. Dracontium Fœtidum, or Setodes } Skunk Cabbage.  
Fœtidus. }  
Class IV.....Order I.