

# NEW DOMINION MONTHLY.

MAY, 1873.

## JOHN KANACK'S EXPERIENCES.

BY REV. W. W. SMITH, PINE GROVE, ONT.

### LEAFING OUT.

We often think that somehow the seasons, and the very clouds and storms and skies, are different from those of old; but we are wrong. Here in the beginning of March, as I look at the snow—becoming honey-combed and granulated; at the return to life of minute insects found in the woods and among the snow; at the effects of the sun at noon; and at the listlessness induced among animals by the first warmth of the spring sun—it is only old times back again! Whether maple sugar will ever go out of fashion, or whether the early settlers in New England ever forgave themselves for living in America a hundred years without finding it out, I don't know—the first I leave to the future; the last to the antiquaries. But in just such a spring as this, it was one of the supreme delights of farm-life to get out sugar-making. Nothing ever obtained elsewhere, or bought, could equal in sweetness the product of our own "bush," in all its forms of syrup, *taffy*, and hot sugar. Nor did we grudge the portion a neighbor got, who had as sweet a tooth as ourselves, when dropping in upon our woodland sugar-works. With the buds on the maples, the sap ceased to be valuable—in fact ceased running. The little wind-flowers disappeared in the woods; the birds began to take up their pre-emption claims in the trees; and about the first week of May the leaves were so well-developed that the former wide

view over a good many acres of "bush" at a time, began to be shut out. I cannot see any difference now. Nature is ever renewing herself.

Perhaps no farmer's boy exists but has at some time wonderful schemes for the future. The very employment of his waking hours favors the building of airy castles. The old "Number Four" plough would stand alone, when in motion, much better than the long-stilted narrow-footed kind now in use; and when you had got past the big pine stump on your round, you had very little to do till you got to the headland but *think*. I wish I could advise some of the boys to think in *one groove*, more than I did. The thought a farmer's boy may expend during one season, on any one subject, ought to yield him a great harvest somewhere in the future! But it is very easy to fritter it away upon a multiplicity of visionary schemes. My acquaintance with literature was of the general rather than of the special kind. And so my early field-studies did not fit me for a professorship in science, but only to be a lover of books in general.

A little man, who wore a very short coat, had started the first newspaper ever attempted in the village of Gorton. He met—it must be confessed—with somewhat of discouragement, in "feeling his way" around Gorton. One old farmer, who was a kind of an oracle in the neighborhood, put in a vigorous protest: "No, no!" said he, "you have quarrels enough already,