

Grote's History of Greece has been published in England.—The freedom of the City of London has been conferred upon Dr. A. Layard; that of Edinburgh on the Earl of Carlisle (Lord Morpeth).—A project is on foot to connect London and Calcutta by Electric Telegraph!—The health of the two most eminent writers in England and in France, Macaulay and Lamartine, is said to be irrecoverably gone.—It is owing to the exertions of Eliza Cook, the poetess, that £400 have been raised for the purpose of erecting a monument to Thomas Hood.—Jules Janin, called the lobster, "the cardinal of the seas." He never could have seen a lobster except on the table.—Jessi the celebrated Florentine engraver, is dead.—A comet is said to have been discovered at Harvard Observatory, on the 8th ult. by C. W. Tuttle. It is situated about 5 degrees south of the bright star Rigel.—The Hon. Jonathan Phillips has made the liberal donation of ten thousand dollars to the city of Boston, in aid of the public library.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY PURSUITS IN UPPER CANADA.

(From an address before the Canadian Institute, by Capt. Lefroy, F.R.S.)

It is perhaps, too much to expect that there can be, at present, any considerable proportion of papers upon scientific subjects elicited from this Society. Not to dwell upon the fact that the production of such papers pre-supposes the existence of acquirements and of pursuits which we know to be the characteristics of a different state and stage of society from that existing in Upper Canada at present, and which it is our hope and aim to develop, rather than our pretension to embody, we labor under several special disadvantages. For instance, the simplicity and sameness, over great areas, of the geological formations of this peninsula,—their comparative poverty in fossils, the absence of mountain ranges,—the limited catalogue of its mineral productions; all undoubtedly combine to deprive that delightful study of many of its attractions, and to deprive societies like ours of an allurements and stimulus to individual exertions. The same physical peculiarity limits to a certain extent, I presume, as compared with other geological provinces of this continent,—the field of the naturalist and botanist, at least in some departments; from entomology and probably ornithology are exceptions. But we should be very wrong to infer from hence that there is nothing for the cultivators even of those branches of science to learn, nothing which they may contribute to the knowledge of the world. It was a keen eye in Mr. Hunt which detected in the coarse-grained silicious sandstones of the River Oualle, belonging to the Lower Silurian formation,—those few, scattered, anomalous foreign substances,—the longest fragment about an inch and a half long, and one-fourth of an inch in diameter, whose chemical constitution, revealed by his skilful analysis, sustains a supposition which even geology, habituated as it is to have its landmarks carried further and further back into the bosom of the eternity behind us, seems almost too extravagant for belief. These bodies consist in great part of phosphate of lime; and everything about them, save only their startling antiquity, leads him to the belief,—shared also, there is reason to think, by geologists of great eminence, that they are the bones of vertebrate animals, and that certain nodules of similar constitution accompanying them, are coprolites: thus actually revealing not only the existence but the carnivorous character of the races of the animal kingdom which have been heretofore supposed to have had no existence on our globe until a much later period. I do not, however, allude to this discovery—on which Mr. Hunt observes becoming caution, and which the distinguished director of the geological survey has not, that I am aware of, supported as yet with his own authority,—as if it were established; but refer to it simply as a recent illustration, furnished by a Canadian geologist, of what close observation, prompted by a spirit of enquiry, and sustained by sound knowledge, may detect in an apparently unpromising field. Mr. Abraham's interesting discovery of crustaceous footprints in the argillaceous schist of Beauport, L. C., is another case in point. We might come much nearer home. How many of us have made our daily walks in this busy neighbourhood subservient to the same study? Study Paleontology, collect fossils at Toronto! I can imagine some one to say, as if the idea were preposterous; yet one of our members, has found a large proportion of those of the Hudson River group, figured in that magnificent work, the Paleontology of New York,—I believe some fifty or sixty at least, and some which are apparently undescribed there, no further from hence than the banks of the Humber Bay. At the late Provincial Fair, held in this city, was there not one thing exhibited, where we should have least expected to meet with it, which suggested to every one who saw it the happiness of a love for natural history, and the astonishing richness of the humblest section of that wide field? I allude to the curious collection of objects illustrating insect architecture, gathered by Mr. Couper, of this city,

which accompanied his entomological collection. And it needed but close observation and a love of nature to find the works of instinct, varied to meet a thousand needs, in which the humble yet Divine intelligence of the architect lived before us, where most of us, perhaps, have found only the pests of our gardens. I know that a military officer, recently in this garrison, who combined the naturalist with the sportsman, formed an extensive ornithological collection, while actually performing his duties here; and most of us have contemplated with interest and instruction the collection of birds, shot, I believe, entirely in this neighbourhood, which Mr. Doel has exhibited on various occasions. It cannot be said that there is not ample scope for pursuits of natural history even in this neighbourhood. It may require an Agassiz to detect in the *Lepidosteus* or gar-pike of our lakes, that remote reptilian character which distinguishes it from every known fish, and stamps it as the last and only representative of the gigantic race of fish-lizards of the secondary epoch; but we need not such confirmation of the truth which probably no one will question, that our streams, our lakes, our woods, our fields, all, beyond a doubt,—present, in their inhabitants or their productions, a full proportion of those nice and narrow distinctions from similar objects elsewhere, which form the peculiar study of the naturalist, and are so often connected with the broadest and most important enquiries raised in the progress of science.

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I see no reason why, in a few years a Canadian society should not rank with those of the highest character on this continent. Already have our great public works created a demand for the highest science of the engineer. Railroads, with their long train of applied arts and sciences; processes of manufactures, which science first divulged, and science alone can direct, are obeying the attraction of profit and naturalizing themselves on this new soil. With practical sources of support, and with five or six universities or colleges, including a very numerous professional body, it is surely something beyond a provincial standing to which a society in Upper Canada may ultimately aspire.

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It is with great pleasure, Gentlemen, that I am permitted to announce that the Council has decided to offer two medals for competition in the session of 1853-4. One medal of the value of £10, for the best essay or paper on the Public Works of Canada, their commercial value and relations to a general system of American Public Works, their characteristics in an engineering point of view, cost and other particulars, to be illustrated by all necessary maps, plans, or drawings. And, one medal of the value of £10, for the best essay or paper upon the physical character, climate, soil and natural productions of Upper Canada, to be also illustrated by all necessary maps or diagrams.

ECLIPSES FOR 1853.—There will be two eclipses of the sun and one of the moon during 1853. The first eclipse of the sun will take place on the 6th of June, and will be visible in California, the southern portion of the United States, and in nearly the whole of South America. The second will be total, and will take place on the 30th November. It will be visible in California, Mexico, Central America, and nearly the whole of South America. Both of these eclipses will be invisible here. A partial eclipse of the moon will take place on the 21st of June, beginning at 10h. 28m. A. M., and ending at 2h. 5 m. Digits eclipsed 2 1-2 on the northern limb.

THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.—The apartment will present a splendid appearance when completed. Alcoves will surround us on the floor; a range, uniform with these, but narrower, will form as it were, the second story, and a third will contain a series of shelves. The whole of this furnished is of cast iron, beautifully moulded; and above is the only cast iron roof of which we have any knowledge. The room will be fire proof, and will present at once a massive and beautiful appearance.—Would that all the precious old tomes could be here replaced, and the exquisite works of art that perished with them.

METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION WANTED.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE, Washington, 1852.

The Smithsonian Institution is engaged in a series of investigations relative to the meteorology of North America, and is desirous of collecting all information bearing on this subject.

It is believed that there exists many records of observations extending back, in some cases, through a long period of years, the comparison and discussion of which would elicit much valuable information relative to the climate of this country, which would otherwise be liable to be lost. The undersigned would therefore earnestly request that copies of such journals, or the original records, be lent or presented to the Institution. In cases of