

In addition to a library and reading room, a lecture room should be secured if possible, where, through the Winter season, weekly lectures might be delivered; and in anything approaching a populous community, I cannot imagine any great difficulty in obtaining gratuitous lectures from the various ministers and professional gentlemen of the neighbourhood.

I am aware that considerable prejudices have of late arisen in regard to such lectures, as being too unconnected in the subjects treated of to be of any practical value to those who attend them. In that opinion I do not at all agree; for although no large amount of information can be obtained by listening to one single lecture on any given subject, yet the attention may be awakened and an interest excited, that may lead to a course of consecutive reading on the subject treated upon by the lecturer.

Indeed I am of opinion that, unless of a very popular character, one lecture, or at the most two, on any one subject during the same session, will be the most beneficial to the Institute and to the Public.

I had intended to refer to the establishment of classes in the several institutions, both as a means of instruction and amusement, but will leave that subject for the present, hoping some abler hand will take it up in the next number of the Journal. I trust also that others will follow the example of Dundas and Hamilton, in furnishing abstracts of reports and proceedings of their annual meetings, thus supplying each association with information as to what other institutions are doing, and awakening a spirit of emulation amongst them which will undoubtedly tend to their general benefit.

Yours, &c. &c.

A MEMBER T. M. I.

Toronto, April 26th, 1861.

## NOTICES OF BOOKS.

*An Introduction to Entomology, or Elements of the Natural History of Insects: comprising an account of Noxious and Useful Insects, of their Metamorphoses, Food, Stratagems, Habitations, Societies, Motions, Noises, Hybernation, Instinct, &c.* By REV. WILLIAM KIRBY, M.A., F.R.S., F.L.S.; and WILLIAM SPENCE, Esq., F.R.S., F.L.S. Seventh edition, with an appendix relative to the Origin and Progress of the work—1 vol., crown 8vo. pp. 607. London: Longman & Co. Price \$1 50.

To pass any comments upon a book that has been stamped with the approbation as well of the learned as of ordinary readers, for upwards of forty years, and which now appears in its seventh edition, would be presumption on our part. We merely desire, while paying our tribute of admiration and approval, to bring it under the notice of those of our readers who are not yet acquainted with it, and to inform them where they can gain access to this very mine of instruction and amusement. There is probably no other work in the English language that has done more than this to spread the

taste for Natural History, and to direct it to the vast field for observation afforded by the transformations, habits, and instincts of the countless species of insects. Its popularity has not been confined to one country, or even to one tongue, but by means of translations, and through the effect it has undoubtedly exercised over many of the best elementary books in other languages, its influence has been extended far and wide. The present edition is published in one volume, and at less than one-sixth of the price of the former one, thus placing it within the reach of all; its value is further enhanced by an addition from the pen of Mr. Spence (who survived his associate by about ten years), detailing, in the shape of letters and recollections the origin and progress of the work, and giving an account of the life-long friendship of the learned authors, who, after having originated and carried out the undertaking, so long survived its completion, and shared in its success.

The title affords a very good index to the contents of the work; the book opens with an introductory letter, giving a general view of the science of Entomology, and showing that it possesses attractions sufficient to reward any one who diligently studies it. The authors next go on to answer (which they do most conclusively) all the objections that are usually urged against this pursuit. Any one who imagines that it leads to inhumanity and cruelty, and is on that account to be avoided, has but to read our author's masterly refutation of this charge to perceive its unreasonableness and inconsistency, and to feel that the converse of what our great poet says,

"The poor beetle that we tread upon,  
In corporeal sufferance feels a pang as great  
As when a giant dies,"

is nearer the truth. The next chapter gives an account of the metamorphoses of insects, a matter interesting alike to the moralist and the naturalist. The authors then take up the subject of the injuries and benefits derived from insects, shewing how important these minute creatures are as instruments both of evil and good; how closely connected with them are our prosperity, comfort, and happiness, and consequently how extremely useful and necessary is the knowledge and study of them. They then pass on to the more interesting parts of their history, those namely, that relate to their affection for their young, their food and methods of obtaining it, their habitations, societies, &c. From the observation of all which "it is clear—to quote the words of the authors themselves—that by these creatures and their instincts, the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Great Father of the universe are loudly proclaimed; the atheist and infidel confuted; the believer confirmed in his faith and trust in Providence, which he thus beholds watching with incessant care, over the welfare of the meanest of his creatures; and from which he may conclude that he, the prince of the creation, will never be overlooked or forsaken; and from them what lessons may be learned of patriotism, and self-devotion to the public good; of loyalty, of prudence, temperance, diligence, and self-denial." The remainder of the work treats of the means of defence possessed by insects, their motions, noises,