

115184/4

NOTICE TO READERS.

Contributions to the columns of the SNOWFLAKE may be addressed to "The Snowflake Club," Newcastle, or "The Snowflake Club," Chatham, or "The Snowflake Club," Douglastown. Original articles in prose or poetry gladly received from any of our readers.



NOTICE TO READERS

Friends of this paper will please hand in their subscriptions, as soon as convenient, to the Treasurers  
Rev. J. A. F. McBain,  
Chatham.  
Rev. James Anderson,  
Newcastle.  
William Russell, Jr.,  
Douglastown

No. 6.

MIRAMICHI, MAY, 1879.

THE SNOWFLAKE:

MIRAMICHI, MAY, 1879

THE STUDY OF NATURE.

(For the Snowflake.)

Great is the loss to the person who knows but little of the working of organic and inorganic life displayed in the beauties of nature around him. Happy the man with his limited power, that has sought means to unravel the maze before his eyes, for then he will find the narrow view of life changed for one that is richer and fuller.

There is no Natural History Society here, and any who wish to pass away periods of relaxation in this line of study must do so without aid, save from those books which are ever instrumental in furthering information in that direction, but which does not meet the purpose entirely, for it leaves the mind in want of a companion or companions to give expression and accuracy to these studies, which with the necessary excursions from time to time, and compare the living illustrations does the subject become instructive and interesting. To quote one particular branch, Botany, (taught in schools here), I think my views would be corroborated, that in order to retain due appreciation of the study, repeated visits should be made to the spots where the plants thrive, and then there is every probability, this special subject will impart a glow long to be remembered. So, if this principle was exacted, no fear, may be apprehended from those who are yet in the hands of the academy. But what is to be said or done for those whose whole attention is directed to keen competition in business? Would the antidote that I should propose to allay the weariness brought on by this struggle be approved of? I cannot say; but intermingling daily with those engaged in business I feel myself a competitor in this battle, and some of the happiest moments of my

life have been passed, when those faculties were exercised which afford satisfaction in exchange of services. Yet all of us have a certain time allotted to build up the waste of tissue from mental and muscular exertion—a time to give rest to the brain that has figured and planned all day—and a time to slacken the fibres that have wrought unceasingly. To have the word, pleasure, solved by a group of persons might so alter the etymology of the word that necessary qualification would have to be made for its meaning, and we have only to look about us to observe the different phases it assumes. Many as there may be who would not coincide with my view of it, what I now desire to give so much expression to, is, if possible to endeavour and value those charms outside of our small circle which is the foundation of art, music, and poetry. We cannot escape being moved by them, and more especially during the coming season when people are compelled to sever themselves for a time from daily toil, and take refuge with nature, seeking a resort in gardens resplendent with flowers or some sylvan retreat where the busy sound of strife lies buried. Let me draw a picture or two on the subject I advocate. Mill Cove usually is chosen, in conversation, as one of the most desired for grandeur, outline, and impressive of noble thoughts that may arise within us. I will therefore locate myself here, preparatory to searching other recesses.

It is time for the Botanist to awaken from his sleep for he will find much to be done to keep up with the living forms that have again commenced to shed forth their annual buds. Here, on this hill the pendent catkins of birch and poplar wave their tresses in the vernal breeze; the bright, crimson flowers of the red maple with tints of scarlet and yellow give a gloss that returns with the leaves in autumn. At one's feet masses of fallen beech leaves cover the ground, where, however, the

white-violet striped with purplish hues rises from its wintery bed to drink in the air through its narrow throat. The Mayflower, so well known to every New Brunswicker, has a home here, among the rocks it shows forth in all directions, the leaves bristly with rusty hairs hide rose-coloured flowers exuding a rich fragrance. In the valley below another scene is drawn before your eyes, the meadow is one panorama of yellow clusters, the marsh-margolds spending its kidney-shaped leaves in every direction. A week later will bring further illustrations for the student to investigate and month will follow month, until those hours which otherwise he might have found tedious will be replaced by others which will reap its good fruit. The Pyrola and Prince's pine flourish here with the waxy white Indian pipe (corpse plant) shaded from the scorching sun by the smooth beech and striped maple. The side of the hill no fallen tree or rock rest lonely, than the delicate-leaved creeping saxifrage covers the sleeping form with fields of moss and bear vine, waiting in giving a picture of beauty and sadness, solitary aside stands Solomon's Seal ready to chime its bells. Where the brook runs merrily along, one is transported to a different species of flora. The variety of ferns that adorn one's pathway can only be mentioned for want of space, and are a study in themselves. Gracefully decorating a spot where the wood-sorrel and Star of Bethlehem exhibit their pretty white petals close by in the swamp, bunches of yellow lady slippers, white orchids, and Smilacina almost takes one's breath away, to think that there should be such a charming scene; in midst of this halo of colour you cannot wend your footsteps than that odd shaped nodding flower, Dutchman's Breeches taking refuge under the foliage of the Alder, and the meadow rue and flowering daywood have allured you far in this deeply wooded dell, where the walls

surrounding seem to grow higher and higher.

An island possesses a fascination for some people where other places of nature are less appreciated; a class to which this may be applicable are naturalists for the reason that often times the fauna and flora differ to some extent from adjacent lands, not that I expect to offer Beauthear's close to Newcastle as an illustration, for visitors could not fail to be moved with a sense of their insignificance, standing among the lofty pines, that tower high above him. This is an imposing first introduction, but groping along for discoveries, you come upon the well known pathway that directs you from the foot to the head of the island; no one needs Rondeletia, for beds of Linnae will give the required gratification, which line his footsteps on each side of him. From step to step you leave behind some plant only to be replaced by another variety, and again perhaps a former friend comes back decked with a richer hue. Dense as the fir grows here in the cold moss the Trillium stans single, and only the Wild yellow Lily as company, slim and tall, with a dignified nod seem to ask for a passing greeting. Farewell to pine and fir, the deciduous trees branch out to all sizes, at their feet the dwarf cornell (Pigeon-berry) crowd the space with their white and greenish blossoms. Neering what is termed the Tickle (head of the island) ferns of different varieties embosomed with that sweet scented trailing evergreen already alluded to—Linnae, (dedicated to Swedish Botanist Linnæus, with whom it was a special favourite) and an Iris that looks as if it was intruding, will bring the rambler once more to the river and regrets to bid farewell to a pleasant early summer stroll. The barrens that range along the sea board by Shippegan, Tabusintac, Escommiac Point and Kouchibouguac, can scarcely be allowed to pass by without notice. Immersed in the sphagnum moss, the pitcher plant,

(Continued on 4th page.)