

PLACE-NAMES.

BY GEORGE JOHNSON, OTTAWA.

In a lecture on the "Place-Names of Canada," delivered about twelve months ago, I stated that in the Dominion there are 3,600 counties, townships, parishes and municipalities; about 9,000 post offices; several thousands of mountain ranges, mounts, lakes, rivers, streams, gulfs, bays, coves, harbours, inlets, capes, etc.—in all, many thousands of place-names and every name has a meaning. It had an origin and has a significance. Too many of us go through life without acquainting ourselves with the history of the place-names in our province and in our country. Yet the study is a very entertaining one and as agreeable a way of becoming intimate with the history of our storied past as can be imagined.

It is said that there is no royal road to learning. But the study of the history of our country by means of its place-names is a very near approach to the royal road. One is helped amazingly to retain the knowledge gained, by linking it to the names of places frequently on our tongues or seen every day in the newspapers. The name is a perpetual reminder of the story, and in these busy times we need constant reminders. Matthew Arnold in the "Scholar Gypsy" supplies a reason:

"For each day brings its petty dust
Our soon-choked souls to fill,
And we forget because we must
And not because we will."

The study of place nomenclature is not encumbered at the outset by a lot of scientific terms to frighten the student. Some studies have a dictionary of their own. In beginning the study of the application of electricity to machinery for the purpose of securing power to be converted into heat or into motion, one is apt to find his resolution falter and his will weaken when he looks at the dictionary of terms employed. Ohms and volts and amperes and farads and gausses and watts and dynes and joules and coulombs, and all the others of the thousands of words which have been added to the language because of man's success in harnessing the lightning and