

*Place-nomenclature.*

A striking fact about most commemorative names is their failure to commemorate. Innumerable names are given, especially in new countries like New Brunswick, to honour some individual. The great majority of our parish names have thus originated. But almost invariably no record is made of the reason for the name, its origin is speedily forgotten, it is used by millions of people with no thought of its significance, and it is only finally by the laborious search of some antiquarian that its significance becomes known to him and his little circle of fellow students.

184. Of changes in place-names caused by mis-prints on maps we have several in New Brunswick. Thus, the name *Mascabin Point* (in Charlotte) is, I have no doubt, simply a misprint for *Mascarin* (a form for *Mascareen*) Point; the new form is not known locally except that, being on the charts, it is known to some captains in that vicinity. Again, a branch of the Little South-West Miramichi is called on some maps *Mainor Lake Brook*; but I find by comparison with the originals in the Crown Land Office that this should read *Main* or *Lake, Brook* being named for a lumberman, one *Main*. But a very striking case occurs in the the name *Upsalquitch*. This form, though universal on maps and in such literature of the region as exists, is not used locally, for the river is called by guides, lumberman and others who use it *Absetquitch* or some similar form of this word. I find, as I have shown in the Bulletin of the Natural History Society of N. B., V. 180, that the word was written *Upsatquitch* on Van Veldens's original survey map of the river, but was copied with a misprint of *l* for *t*, giving us the present form *Upsalquitch* upon Purdy's printed map of 1814, which has been followed by all others down to the present day, thus establishing a literary as distinct from a local form. Again the map-name *Belas Basin*, at Lepreau, has no doubt been formed, as later noted, by an accidental map-combination of two separate words.

The persistence of these forms by the way, shows the great effect of publication in giving stability to place names, and another illustration of the same principle is seen in the survival of *St. John* and *St. Croix*, much-printed names in early times, which are among the few European names which have been able to displace the native names on our rivers. All humanity has a reverence for that which is in print and attributes to a printed statement an authority it only rarely merits.

185. Another danger to be guarded against in seeking the origin of place-names, is the acceptance of a folk-etymology, based upon the accidental resemblance of the name to some striking word or phrase. Such explanations are of all degrees from plausible to absurd, and a