

The present number of the Canadian Review contains three or four valuable articles on the discovery and early history of the Provinces, on the aborigines, and the fur trade. The Quebec Literary and Historical Society has recently been founded under the auspices of the Earl of Dalhousie. Its objects are 'to promote every means of discovering, collecting, and procuring whatever information may throw light on the early natural, civil, and literary history of the British Provinces in North America; to further, by assistance from friends, when practicable, the translation and in some cases the publication of valuable manuscripts or scarce books relating thereto, which may be discovered in any private or public collection; and to encourage and reward such discoveries by every means in the power of the society.' We should presume, that papers thus obtained might be published to advantage from time to time in the Canadian Review. The literary articles in this number are not of a high order; they betray the unpractised writer, and exhibit few marks of deep and methodical thinking. There is much original poetry; the book would be better if the quantity were less. In some of these specimens the Canadian muse has shown so obstinate a reserve, that we wonder her votaries should have persevered in soliciting her acquaintance. In illustrating an important branch of American history this work cannot fail to be valuable; in the department of letters and taste it will doubtless improve with the practice and experience of the writers.

- 
- 2.—1. *Universal Geography, Ancient and Modern; on the Principles of Comparison and Classification.* Modern Geography by WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE; Ancient Geography, by EMMA WILLARD. 12mo. pp. 388 and 88. O. D. Cooke and Sons. Hartford. 1824.
2. *Modern Atlas on a New Plan, to accompany the System of Universal Geography.* By W. C. WOODBRIDGE.

THE plan on which this Geography is executed is in some respects original, and has many things to recommend it. The work has been drawn up with immense industry and good success. The first and principal part, comprising modern geography, is arranged in three divisions, namely, *physical*, *political*, and *statistical* geography, with numerous subdivisions, tables, and illustrative drawings under each of these general heads. Physical geography embraces the natural divisions and structure of the earth, mountains, rivers, islands, volcanoes, earthquakes, caves, lakes, cataracts, canals, inland navigation, atmosphere, climate, vegetable productions, animals, minerals, and races of men. Political geography

comprehends civilisation, government, religion, education, literary institutions, national character, agriculture, roads, buildings, arts, manufactures, and commerce. Statistical geography treats of the natural and artificial division of the earth into states and kingdoms, and also of the extent, productions, population, and resources of each. Considering the great number and variety of topics thus introduced, the author's method is clear and judicious. We doubt whether in any other work so great a mass of facts, on such a multiplicity of subjects, can be found compressed within so small a compass.

Whether this minute analysis of all the principles of nature, and the concerns of life, ought to be ranked under geography, will perhaps in the minds of some admit of a doubt ; and whether it affords the best facilities for instruction can be tested only by experience. As to the first point, however, it cannot be denied, that there is a collateral relation between the several topics, and if they are well selected and combined, and well suited to communicate useful information to the student, it is not worth while to quarrel about the name under which the author chooses to comprise them all, nor to refuse the benefits which his industry and enterprise would confer, because, by presenting them to us in one volume, he has relieved us from the necessity of purchasing and reading three or four. He that succeeds in condensing the important branches of knowledge, so as to diminish the time and labor of acquisition, is a benefactor to society, and deserves the approbation and patronage of a generous public. In this light we are disposed to view the efforts of Mr Woodbridge, and to recommend his work at least to the experiment of teachers, and also to the occasional use of such persons, as would revive the knowledge of some of the chief traits of physical nature, at as small an expense of time and means as possible.

The general division of the work evidently admits of improvement. The order of the three great divisions should be inverted. The intricate science of geology, and the hardly less intricate principles of physical nature, are put first ; then come politics, modes of government, agriculture, condition of society, and the various states of human life ; and last of all we have the divisions of the earth and the survey of its surface. Now this is beginning at the bottom of the well to work your way up. There are few things of which the mind of a child will receive more ready or accurate apprehensions, than the elements of geography taught from maps ; but the phenomena of the internal structure of the earth, the organisation and classification of animals and plants, the nature of earthquakes, winds, and temperature, these, and all their kindred subjects are not to be grasped, till the mind has arrived at its maturity. Even the terms, in which the ideas pertaining to them are clothed, must be unintelligible to any one not already well versed

in the sciences themselves. If it be said, that care is taken to avoid the recurrence of such terms, we reply that nothing valuable is then communicated, since the knowledge of a science can only be derived through the medium of its appropriate terms. It is a little remarkable, that the author should have fallen into this mistake in the great divisions of his subject, since in his minor divisions he has arranged his materials for the most part with singular good judgment and propriety.

The tables in which mountains, rivers, lakes, canals, seminaries of learning, and many other particulars, are brought together and classified, are ingeniously composed, and calculated to aid the learner in acquiring and retaining the most essential facts. In one or two instances tables occur of which the utility may be doubted; as in that, for example, purporting to state the quantity of rain which falls annually in different places. The following statements are given for Massachusetts. Andover 51 inches; Cambridge 47, Charlestown 36; Salem 35; Williamstown 25. Here is such a want of uniformity within a small space of country, that it is evident no practical results can be drawn, but such, on the contrary, as prove inaccuracy somewhere. Yet the author introduces his table, as if it showed the uniform medium of the quantity of rain annually falling in these respective places. If each amount was what is here stated in any particular year, it is not likely that they were all measured in the same year, or that they would be the same, or vary in the same ratio, any other year. And unless some of these positions be true, the statements can be of no use in a table.

We have noted a few mistakes, but very few, considering the vast field of facts over which the author has ranged. He mentions the University in Cordova, La Plata, as 'recently established,' whereas it was instituted by the Jesuits among the first in South America. He says again, 'the greater number of Colleges in the United States is in New England;' but according to his own showing, there are only ten in New England, and more than thirty in the other states. He speaks of Vera Cruz as the 'chief commercial port in Mexico, and the centre of most of its trade with the West Indies;' but in reality almost the entire trade for the last three years has been to Tampico and Alvarado. Among his maps is an ingenious emblematical chart, in which he places Mexico and New Granada under the government of viceroys from Old Spain, whereas the latter has been an independent republic for several years, and the former exempt from the yoke of Spain for a longer period. These are not mentioned as errors of importance, but such as may be properly corrected in another edition. We have only to add, that we think some of the wood cuts might be spared, those for instance which represent, or are said to represent, mountains, lakes, grottos, and cities, since they cannot be supposed to give a

single impression, which shall assist the understanding in arriving at an accurate conception of the reality. An animal, or an individual object of a moderate size, may be so drawn as to give some imperfect notion of the original, but to compress a city, or a volcanic mountain, or the falls of Niagara, or islands of ice, into a wood cut of three inches square, with a view of instructing a learner, is absurd, and labor expended in vain.

Mrs Willard's part of the work, on Ancient Geography, is perspicuous and executed with good judgment; and for so concise a treatise, it answers in every respect the purpose desired in a work of this sort. The preface is well written, and proves the author to have thought philosophically on the principles and practical means of education.

---

3.—*Sketches of the History, Manners, and Customs of the North American Indians.* By JAMES BUCHANAN, Esq. His Majesty's Consul for New York. 8vo. pp. 371. London. 1824.

HE must have read but little, who has not often been disappointed in his anticipations of the contents of a work, from the promise held out in the titlepage. Not that we would charge the author of the present volume with being accessory to such a disappointment, except so far as he has committed an oversight in not hinting that his book is a *compilation*. Out of the three hundred and seventy pages, of which it consists, no more than forty, if we except the preface, bear the impress of the author's own thoughts and language. The others are filled with materials collected from various, though highly respectable and authentic sources. This fact is not mentioned as detracting from the intrinsic merits of the work, but as one not likely to promote the good humor of an eager purchaser, who may happen to possess all these materials in other forms.

It ought to be observed, however, that Mr Buchanan makes no extravagant demand on the admiration of the reader, for the manner in which he has executed his task, but modestly 'disclaims the slightest pretension to merit as an author.' He is a warm and benevolent advocate for the Indians, and in his preface he speaks of the oppressions they have suffered in a kind and feeling manner. No one can doubt his sincerity, when he avows the generous disinterestedness of his motives in making this compilation, and using his endeavors to draw public attention to a subject in which he feels a deep interest. If there is an air of false sympathy in his lamentations over the fate of the Indians, there is nevertheless a degree of truth in the picture he sketches, which should make us blush for the deeds of civilised man, and mourn over the melancholy reality, that in some of the worst traits of his nature, he holds a guilty preemi-