

GEOGRAPHICAL TERMINOLOGY OF THE U. STATES,

DERIVED FROM THE INDIAN LANGUAGE.

These Extracts are made from "Cyclopadia Indiaensis" a MS. work in preparation.

No. I.

HUDSON RIVER.—By the tribes who inhabited the area of the present County of Dutchess, and other portions of its eastern banks, as low down as Tappan, this river was called Shatemuc—which is believed to be a derivative from Shata, a pelican. The Minisi, who inhabited the west banks, below the point denoted, extending indeed over all the east half of New Jersey, to the falls of the Raritan, where they joined their kindred the Lenni Lenape, or Delawares proper, called it Mohicanittuck—that is to say, River of the Mohicans. The Mohawks, and probably the other branches of the Iroquois, called it Cahohatatea—a term of which the interpreters who have furnished the word, do not give an explanation. The prefixed term Caho, it may be observed, is their name for the lower and principal falls of the Mohawk. Sometimes this prefix was doubled, with the particle *ha*, thrown in between. Hatatea is clearly one of those descriptive and affirmative phrases representing objects in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, which admitted as we see, in other instances of their compounds, a very wide range. By some of the more westerly Iroquois, the river was called Sanataty.

ALBANY.—The name by which this place was known to the Iroquois, at an early day, was Schenectady, a term which, as recently pronounced by a daughter of Brant, yet living in Canada, has the still harsher sound of Skoh-nek-ta-ti, with a stress on the first, and the accent strongly on the second syllable, the third and fourth being pronounced rapidly and short. The transference of this name, to its present location, by the English, on the bestowal on the place by Col. Nichols, of a new name, derived from the Duke of York's Scottish title, is well known, and is stated, with some connected traditions, by Judge Benson, in his eccentric memoir before the New York Historical Society. The meaning of this name, as derived from the authority above quoted, is *Beyond the Pines*, having been applied exclusively in ancient times, to the southern end of the ancient portage path, from the Mohawk to the Hudson. By the Minci, who did not live here, but extended, however, on the west shore above Coxackie, and even Coeymans, it appears to have been called Gaishtinic. The Mohegans, who long continued to occupy the present area of Rensselaer and Columbia counties, called it Pempotawuthut, that is to say, the City or Place of the Council Fire. None of these terms appear to have

found favour with the European settlers, and, together with their prior names of Beaverwyck and Fort Orange, they at once gave way, in 1664, to the present name. A once noted eminence, three miles west, on the plains, i. e. Trader's Hill, was called Isutchera, or by prefixing the name for a hill, Yonondio Isutchera. It means the hill of oil. Norman's Kill, which enters the Hudson a little below, the Mohawks called Towasentha, a term which is translated by Dr. Yates, to mean, a place of many dead.

NIAGARA.—It is not in unison, perhaps, with general expectation, to find that the exact translation of this name does not entirely fulfil poetic pre-conception. By the term O-ne-aw-ga-ra, the Mohawks and their co-tribes described on the return of their war excursions, the neck of water which connects lake Erie with Ontario. The term is derived from their name for the human neck. Whether this term was designed to have, as many of their names do, a symbolic import, and to denote the importance of this communication in geography, as connecting the head and heart of the country, can only be conjectured. Nor is it, in this instance, probable. When Europeans came to see the gigantic falls which marked the strait, it was natural that they should have supposed the name descriptive of that particular feature, rather than the entire river and portage. We have been assured, however, that it is not their original name for the water-fall, although with them, as with us, it may have absorbed this meaning.

BUFFALO.—The name of this place in the Seneca, is Te-ho-sa-ro-ro. Its import is not stated.

DETROIT.—By the Wyandots, this place is called Teuchsagrondie ; by the Lake tribes of the Algic type, Wa-we-á-tun-ong : both terms signify the Place of the turning or Turned Channel. It has been remarked by visitors who reach this place at night, or in dark weather, or are otherwise inattentive to the courses, that owing to the extraordinary involutions of the current the sun appears to rise in the wrong place.

CHICAGO.—This name, in the Lake Algonquin dialects, to preserve the same mode of orthography, is derived from Chicagowunzh, the wild onion or leek. The orthography is French, as they were the discoverers and early settlers of this part of the west. Kaug, in these dialects is a porcupine, and She kaug a polecat. The analogies in these words are apparent, but whether the onion was named before or after the animal, must be judged if the *age* of the derivation be sought for.

TUSCALOOSA, a river of Alabama. From the Chacta words *tushka*, a warrior, and *lusa* black.—[Gallatin.]

ARAGISKE, the Iroquois name for Virginia.

ASSARIGOA, the name of the Six Nations for the Governor of Virginia.

OWENAGUNGAS, a general name of the Iroquois for the New England Indians.

OTESEONTEO, a spring which is the head of the river Delaware.