

at the Mer Bleue and offers almost the same plants. *Cypripedium parviflorum* was abundant, but the flowers were mostly faded, and *Lonicera oblongifolia* occurred in great profusion. Those who remained at the river obtained among other fine plants *Cypripedium acaule* and *Orchis spectabilis*. Insects as on the previous Saturday seemed unusually scarce, but towards evening the Black flies and Mosquitoes were sufficiently abundant.

Some members, lovers of botany and the muses, made a trip to North Wakefield on the 18th June, for the purpose of visiting a swamp discovered last autumn to contain great numbers of the Showy Ladies-slipper (*Cypripedium spectabile*). The display of these lovely plants was even more extensive than had been expected, and charmed and delighted the party, who returned laden with spoil.

VALUABLE EXPERIMENTS.

Mr. Frank T. Shutt, M.A., chief chemist of the Dominion experimental farms, read an interesting paper at the recent meeting of the Royal Society, descriptive of a preliminary series of experiments with the object of ameliorating certain alkaline soils in Manitoba and the North-west territories. He opened by drawing attention to the occurrence of the "alkali patches" in many parts of these provinces. These patches or barren spots, which vary greatly in extent, always occupied low places or natural depressions in the soil. In dry weather they were covered with a white incrustation, but when moist the affected soil was usually black. Apart from the presence of the injurious chemical, analysis had shown these alkali soils to possess all the elements of fertility. Complete analyses of the three samples of soils—supposed to be typical of these spots—were given. They showed that in addition to comparatively small quantities of salts of soda, a considerable amount of magnesium sulphate (Epsom salts) was present. To get rid of the soda salts, thorough drainage was instanced as the most effective means. The soda salts were usually either carbonate or sulphate—the latter was not as injurious as the former. The use of an application of gypsum had proved efficacious to soils impregnated with carbonate—which was thereby converted into the less injurious form of sulphate. To ascertain the effect of magnesium sulphate on vegetation, Mr. Shutt