

way to prevent this loss of plant food is to sow a late crop, which will be at the proper stage of growth to consume the nitrates as they are formed in the warm months. This late crop could be ploughed under in the autumn, and thus a large amount of nitrogen would be available for the ordinary crops of another year.

Mr. C. V. Riley of Washington, D. C., in a letter in a recent number of *Nature*, says that in many parts of Canton, China orange trees are injured by certain worms, and to rid their trees of these pests the inhabitants import ants from the neighboring hills. The ants are placed on the upper branches of the trees, and bamboo rods are stretched between the different trees so as to give easy access to the whole of the orchard. This remedy has been in use since 1640, and probably from an earlier period.

It is well known that steel is iron containing a small quantity of carbon, but the relation which the carbon bears to the iron is not so well understood. In a recent paper read by Mr. George Woodcock, before the Iron and Steel Institute that gentleman maintains that the carbon in steel is primarily in a state of simple absorption in the iron, and that the hardening of steel is due to a metamorphic change in the condition of the carbon which finally assumes a crystalline form closely analogous to the diamond. The microscope readily shows the minute crystals, and shows, moreover, that they increase in number with the proportion of carbon present in the iron. It may yet be found that diamonds of commercial value may be obtained in this manner.

Roumania displays a commendable interest in scientific work. The address of Sir John Lubbock at the last meeting of the British Association, which was a review of the scientific work of the past fifty years, has been translated into the language of that country by one of the professors of Natural History in the Museum of Bucharest; and, as already mentioned, Professor Stephansco is to represent Roumania at the approaching meeting of the American Association in this city.

At the meeting of the American Association last year the question of the American Geological Society was mooted. A Committee was appointed at a meeting of Geologists attending the Association to enter into correspondence with American Geologists, with reference to the formation of such a society. The committee invites geologists to submit their views and recommendations in order that a report may be presented at the coming meeting of the American Association. Whilst many are in favor of the formation of a geological society, there are not wanting those who object, the latter maintaining that it will weaken the Association without conferring a corresponding advantage upon Science. We are of opinion that such a society should be of great service and would not in any way lessen the influence of the American Association.

Smaltite has been discovered in Gunnison County, Colorado, in sufficient quantities to lead to the belief that it will be a commercial source of Cobalt.