

old miners in Colorado showing that Platinum is widely distributed in that State. One of the mineralogical experts, Mr. W. E. Hilden, writes in an encouraging strain from North Carolina, in the auriferous gravels of which State he has found twenty-three minerals bearing a strong analogy to those constituting the platiniferous gravels of the world. Platinum occurs in company with gold, and, as its Spanish name denotes, is of a silvery-white colour. It may be recognized by appearing in very small round grains like globular specks of steel, by being very malleable, infusible (except in the oxyhydrogen flame), and insoluble in any of the acids (excepting aqua regia); it is also heavier than gold, having a specific gravity of 21.5 while that of gold is about 19.3. Owing to the properties of platinum there are additional reasons for wishing Edison success in his efforts to find considerable quantities of this metal. That it does not corrode or even tarnish in either dry or moist air, that it is able to withstand high temperatures, and is not attacked by acids, are properties that render Platinum extremely useful in the chemical laboratory.

THE singular formation described by Dr. J. W. Dawson as *Eozoön Canadense*, and regarded by him and most other naturalists as a chambered Rhizopod of the order Foraminifera, is once more under discussion. It occurs plentifully in the Laurentian series of rocks in Canada, having likewise been discovered in rocks of similar age in Bavaria, and in the Lower Silurian marbles in Ireland. Several have doubted that it is the remains of an animal at all, and a German scientist, Dr. Mœbins, has recently published an extensive memoir, illustrated with fine plates, upon the matter, in which he denies its organic origin. Both Dr. Dawson and Dr. Carpenter have already replied, asserting that Dr. Mœbins' conclusions are incorrect. Dana says, "whatever may be the final decision in

regard to the *Eozoön*, there can be but little doubt that rhizopods existed in Archean times."

A PRIZE has been awarded to the Swansea Waggon Company of Glamorgan, Wales, for a railway van that will keep fresh meat in good condition during a long journey. Meat, rabbits, and poultry, were kept fresh throughout a nine days' journey, and the interior of the van maintained a temperature of thirty-nine degrees whether in motion or at rest.

WITHIN a comparatively short period four new metals have been discovered, Gallium, Scandium, Norwegium, and Uralium, the first three being named after the countries France, Scandinavia, and Norway. Hence there are about sixty-seven elements at present known to the scientific world. Gallium, the earliest discovered of the four above named, has perhaps the most curious and interesting history of any of them. The existence of a metal possessing the properties of Gallium was definitely predicted by M. Mendelejeff, a Russian chemist, in 1871, and previously also by Mr. Newlands. This prediction was based on a study of the relations of the atomic numbers of the known elements, and their ratios of combination with one another. In the seriation which these numbers form certain terms are here and there wanting, and one was missed, having properties between Aluminium and Indium. Mendelejeff minutely described what these properties should be, giving the sp. gr. as 5.9. Several years afterwards Boisbaudran discovered the metal itself in connection with Zonic Blende from the Pyrenees, and ascertained its sp. gravity to be 5.935. Uralium is the latest discovery among the metals, and A. Guyard is the discoverer. It is nearly as white as silver, is very malleable, is almost as soft as lead, and is much more ductile than platinum, with which it is closely related in many respects. Its sp. gr. is 20.25; and its combining weight is 187.25.