

NEWS AND NOTES

The silver willows in Pictou have their leaves affected by a blight which gradually backens them.

The unification of geological nomenclature, and of the systems of colors used for geological maps, is expected to come up before the International Congress of Geologists at its next meeting in Berlin.

Bartsia Odontites, Huds. (Red Bartsia) *Senecio Jacobaea*, L., (St James Ragwort, alias Stiukin Willie) and *Senecio Viscosa*, L., (Clammy Ragwort) are too abundant in Pictou County. In what other counties are they found? They are slowly spreading. The worst of them by far, is *S. Jacobaea*.

Dr. Oscar Leuz maintains that the aridity of the Western Sahara crossed by him between Morocco and Timbuc-oo, is comparatively recent, and was caused by the felling of the forests on the Ahaggar mountain range. The growing aridity of some portions of the United States and Canada, and the increasing violence of floods, are traceable to similar causes. Intelligent legislative action on this subject is urgently required in Nova Scotia.

The following are the heights of the most remarkable high buildings in the world : towers of Cologne Cathedral, 524 ft. 11 in., or 515 ft. 1 in ; tower of St. Nicholas at Hamburg, 473 ft. 1 in ; cupola of St. Peter's, Rome, 469 ft. 2 in ; cathedral spire at Strasburg, 465 ft. 11 in. ; Pyramid of Cheops, 449 ft. 5 in ; of St. Stephen's, in Vienna, 443 ft. 10 in ; cathedral of Antwerp, 404 ft. 10 in. : St. Paul's, London, 365 ft. 1 in. : at towers of Notre Dame at Paris, 232 ft. 11 in.

Baron Nordenskjöld's expedition to Greenland started recently in the *Sofia*, a small steamer loaned by the Swedish Government, under the command of Captain Nilsson, and a crew of thirteen hands. The Baron is accompanied by some half dozen assistants, representing different departments of Natural History and Science ; two Laplanders, two Norwegian ice-masters, and one harpooner. The *Sofia* carries fourteen months' provisions. The work which Baron Nordenskjöld purposes to accomplish is to penetrate into the

centre of Greenland, in order to test the theory that the interior is not a vast stretch of ice fields, as commonly supposed, but a land made green, at least in summer, by its verdure. After returning from his trip to the interior, Nordenskjöld proposes to search for traces of the Norse colonies founded nine hundred years ago. The Baron's expedition is of great public interest, as it is hoped that thereby some important additions will be made to our knowledge of the early settlement of America, and further information be gained in regard to that boreal portion of our hemisphere about which so little is now known.

CELLULOID PRINTING-PLATES.—Celluloid, though comparatively a recent product, is being continually applied to new uses in the arts. A French inventor, M. Jennis, has succeeded in producing remarkable results by means of celluloid printing-plates, both from wood-engravings and font type. These are said to possess great fineness, and to be considerably more durable in service than either metal stereotypes or electrotypes. The process consists in taking a copy of the engravings on wood, or of the type, with the use of a special cement, which hardens rapidly, and takes the finest lines sharply. After about twenty minutes this cement is hard and resistant. The press in which this first impression is taken should be slightly heated ; and a sheet of celluloid is employed to obtain a counter-impression from this, which is then prepared by ordinary methods for the printing-press.

M. Jannis is now engaged, on a large scale, in making celluloid reproductions of letter-text, engravings of all descriptions, bas-reliefs, medals, and imitations of carvings in ivory. The work is executed very rapidly. A plate can be made within an hour, while to make a good electrotpe by the usual process requires from twelve to fifteen hours. A celluloid plate has been subjected to twenty-five thousand impressions, apparently without losing any of its sharpness.

When used as a substitute for wood in the production of large printing-type, it is found to be much preferable to wood. It has a fine surface, possesses great durability, can be readily worked, is light, and can stand all the rough usage of the job press.—*Popular Science News*.