

its adaptability to Nova Scotian ores.— One great advantage of the process is the action of the sodium-amalgam upon pyrites, which material abounds in our quartz veins and is known to contain gold, but has hitherto been accumulating around the mines in enormous quantities as a waste material. A portion of this material operated upon by the new process gave at the rate of 5 ounces of gold per ton of pyrites. This is regarded as a remarkable result, and one that will certainly lead to the profitable extraction of gold from pyrites, especially as no extra apparatus is needed such as would be necessary for the chlorine process.

EXPANSION OF ICE.

Rev. Frederic Gardiner, by inserting a line of stakes in the ice across the Kennebec river, in the early part of February, found, in the middle of March, that there had been an expansion of the ice of over 12 feet in a breadth of 500 feet. As during this time the temperature of the water was nearly equal, the expansion must be due to the sun's rays, which was proved by the fact that there was the least expansion on the eastern side, where the ice was partially shielded from the sun by a high bank.

AN IRISH SULPHUR SHOWER.

At the last meeting of the Natural History Society of Dublin, the subject of Sulphur Showers was revived in consequence of a letter from Mr. R. A. Duke, C. E., recording the occurrence of large quantities of a fine-grained yellow powder, on three or four occasions, after a night's rain, in the neighbourhood of Templehouse, county of Sligo. It was strewed in considerable quantities on walks, roads, &c., and grass, as was shown by its sticking to the nostrils of horses and cows grazing. It fell also on the roofs of houses. This yellow rain-dust was first observed on the 6th of May, and fell afterwards on four occasions, of which the last was the 17th May. The Rev. Dr. Haughton examined it chemically, and found 16 parts of sulphur in 1050 parts of yellow powder, omitting clayey particles. This result proved that it could not be regarded as sulphur. Under the microscope it presented the appearance of agglutinated masses, composed of spherical particles, sometimes containing only two or three, and sometimes a score, of single particles. Mr. Duke, and others, considered the yellow dust to be composed of insects' eggs. Mr. Porte suggested that this yellow dust might, on examination, prove to be the pollen of fir trees.—*Gardeners' Chronicle*.

These pollen showers are of annual occurrence in Nova Scotia, New Brun-

wick, Canada, and, in fact, in all countries where there are pine or spruce forests of any great extent. When the trees are in bloom the pollen fills the air, and falls down in an invisible shower, coating the surfaces of the lakes and ponds, and quiet bays of the sea,—collecting between the laps of green-houses and other glazed roofs, and finding its way from the roofs of houses down through the water spouts into cisterns and casks. A portion of the powder placed under the microscope will be seen to have the peculiar grain-form of fir pollen, constricted by a central band. The idea of its being sulphur is an error.

GOOD WHEAT.—Geo. W. Underwood, Esq., brought into our office, last Monday, four stalks of Egyptian Mummy wheat measuring five feet, two inches in height. It was raised on the farm of Mr. George Gordon, of Back Meadows, in the Western part of this County. A Gentleman who had been a number of years in the Western States, stated that for length and cleanliness of straw, and average good quality of grain he had not seen it excelled in these great wheat-producing settlements of the Republic. This speaks well for the climate and soil of Nova Scotia. And be it noted, the stocks sent into our office are not picked ones, but show the average growth of a large field.—*New Glasgow Chronicle*.

CYPRIPEDIUM SPECTABILE.—Some correspondents of the *Gardeners' Chronicle* have discovered that this plant is so hardy that it may be kept over winter in the open air. A plant like this, which stands over winter without injury in the Canadian swamps imbedded in ice, and subjected not unfrequently to temperatures of 30° or 40° below zero in winter, is not likely to catch a cold in an English flower border. Our North American *Cypripediums* are both showy and curious, and ought to be more generally cultivated. They grow easily if treated simply as hardy herbaceous plants.

COLD IN SCOTLAND.—Whilst we had broiling hot weather in Nova Scotia throughout a large portion of the month of June, old Scotia was suffering from excessive cold. According to a correspondent of the *Gardeners' Chronicle* writing under date 19th June, the thermometer ranged from 34° to 40° (it was 70° to 90° in Halifax), and on 18th June, at night, the minimum was 30°, killing potatoes and many other plants.

LAVENDER HEDGES.—There can be no "sweeter" plant for a flower garden hedge than the Lavender. The late Duchess of Sutherland had her private flower garden at Syon House hedged about with Lavender. In Nova Scotia it grows very well, and the plants are easily kept over winter in a frost-proof cellar.

A BUTTER MACHINE.—A machine for working butter is one of the new inventions in England. It consists of a moveable metal cylinder suspended from a small cast iron frame. The bottom of the cylinder is a loose piece of galvanized iron, and above it the cylinder is suspended in a bowl of water, and the butter is placed in the cylinder, and pressed by a screw piston, the result of which is that the butter is forced through the holes into the water in the shape of vermicelli. By this means all the buttermilk is excluded, and the butter is found to be much closer and sweeter than when made by hand.

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