

In the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History*, (London), for January 1885, H. J. Carter, F.R.S., &c., describes a fresh water sponge new to Science from Nova Scotia, under the name *Spongilla MacKayi* (Carter). It is found in the lakes of Pictou Co., N. S., and as named in honor of Principal A.H. McKay of Pictou Academy.

Another fresh water sponge new to science, will be described before the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia by Edward Potts. It is also from the lakes of Pictou County, Nova Scotia, and will be known as *Heteromyenia Pictavensis* (McKay).

The *Bulletin of the Torrey Botanical Club* for January, contains another plate and article on the Desmids of the United States in which the Rev. Francis Wolle adds a number of new species to those already described and figured in his excellent book on the subject. The Bulletin contains also several other interesting articles, and always, of course, has something new. It is a necessity to the American Botanist.

In the JOURNAL OF BOTANY, (England), for February, Mr. Joshua F.L.S., F.R.M.S., makes some notes on some rare *Desmidiæ*, from Nova Scotia, which he received through the kindness of A.H. McKay. Some of them are new to America, and one variety, *Xanthidium antilopeum var. Canadense*, is new to science.

NATURAL GAS IN ESSEX, PA.

John White, of Mersea, whilst boring for water last fall procured an abundant supply at a depth of 40 feet. The water will suddenly rise to the surface, boiling and bubbling with a hissing sound like escaping steam, and will as suddenly recede, flowing up and down alternately every few seconds. Whilst Mr White was passing the well with a lighted lamp he was considerably surprised and frightened by the air suddenly igniting and a steady, bright, roaring flame shot up to the height of 20 feet, and continued to burn for two or three days, when on account of its proximity to his farm-buildings Mr. White had the flame extinguished by covering the top of the well tightly over with plank. He then inserted a gas pipe, 1 1-2 in. bore, 15 feet long, and when a light is held near this pipe, a bright flame 15 or 20 feet in length will shoot forth, lighting the country for a considerable distance around, and will continue to burn for any length of time, regardless of wind or weather, until extinguished by being turned off.—Ex.