

son should be made of the number of murders each year for several years before and after the abolition of capital punishments in each of these states, together with the like statistics for neighboring States in which the same general conditions, customs and sentiment prevail. Until this can be done with care and precision, more or less doubt and uncertainty must necessarily shroud the whole subject; and yet I believe an unprejudiced observer would find much in the consideration and facts here advanced to incline him to earnestly desire and strive for the final abolition throughout our fair land of the barbarous and inhuman custom of slaughtering human beings upon the scaffold or in the electric chair.

J. R. ROOT.

THE 'ICE HOLE' AT COLERAIN  
FORGE.

That part of the Appalachian mountains between the west branch of the Susquehanna and the Juniata would be thought rather tame and uninteresting by the lover of mountain scenery. Although erosive action has been enormous here, as in other mountain regions, the absence of any but local glacial action has left a surface but little varied. There are no lakes or ponds, and but few and small marshes, while the low mountain ridges are frequently so close together as to leave only long and narrow valleys, or even none at all. But the interesting features in any region are always multiplied by search and careful examination, and if extensive surface waters are here unknown, the great springs in the limestone districts, and the frequent "sinks" or disappearance beneath the ground of streams of considerable volume are sure to attract the attention of the traveler and excite his curiosity and interest.

Years ago I was told that somewhere in these mountains ice accumulated so abundantly, and was so well protected from waste, that it remained throughout the whole year. As time went on and no such place could be found, it was put down

as one of those exaggerations to which new comers are so often treated. But one day picking up Gen. Brisbin's "Trees and Tree Planting" this astounding statement was found in the introduction, where the natural features of this very district were being described. "If we turned over a rock in the mountain side we found ice beneath it even in the hottest days of August." Having turned over a good many rocks on that particular mountain side, and never having found any ice in August, the whole matter was cast out of the mind as useless rubbish, when within a very short time an interesting botanical discovery was made. The twin flower (*Linnaea borealis*) was found in the college woods, woods which have been searched by botanical students for many years, and yet I knew of no record that the plant had ever been found there before. Running over the back numbers of the Botanical Gazette to see if this or other northern plants had been recorded from this part of the State, an interesting note was found from Mr. J. R. Lowrie, of Huntingdon county, in which not only were such species named, but their persistence in a given instance was credited to the "perpetual ice which was found among the rocks in late summer about three feet below the surface." The precise locality was named, and visits to it have shown much of botanical interest, besides confirming in the main, what was said regarding the ice.

Spruce Creek is a small tributary of the Juniata, running parallel to Tussey Mountain for several miles. About three miles above its mouth, near Colerain Forge, in Huntingdon county, it cuts close in to the mountain side, and by wearing away the easily evaded Utica Shale has exposed a nearly vertical wall of the overlying Oneida sandstone. For ages this cutting and scouring has been going on until at the base of the wall, and running into and choking the stream itself, lies a heavy talus of broken rock from the undermined cliff. In the interstices of these rocks ice forms readily and in great quantity in cold weather, and such is the protection offered by the sweep of