

somewhat unfair decision where the case was one of unprovoked attack, and this based on material published by Dr. Carpenter and myself." By referring to Dr. Dawson's article in this Journal for 1879 (vol. xvii) the reader will be able to judge whether Professor Möbius's article six months later (vol. xviii) was an *unprovoked* "attack" or not. It appears to us that the "attack" was first made by Dr. Dawson, if there was any "attack" in the discussion. But we did not regard either paper as an "attack," for each was courteous though earnest. We hold that an honest, courteous criticism is not an attack. It is bad for science that investigators should ever thus regard it; for in that case criticism pretty surely degenerates into attacks which treat opponents as "adversaries."

5. *Nya anmärkningar om Williamsonia af A. G. Nathorst*—(Ofversigt af Kongl. Vetenskaps-Akademiens Förhandlingar, June, 1888. No. 6.)—The discovery described in this preliminary note in Swedish is of the highest interest to geologists and paleontologists. It is nothing less than that the author has found the peculiar inflorescence known as *Williamsonia angustifolia* Nath. attached to the stems and foliage of *Anomozamites minor* (Brongn.) Nath., so as not only to show that the genus *Williamsonia* belongs to the Cycadaceæ, as long ago conjectured by Williamson, but also to indicate in what manner these flowers were developed in the forks of the sympodial stems of those cycadean plants. A figure is given showing all this, which, however, is admitted to be largely a restoration, and leaves many things to be explained in the forthcoming memoir which is promised.

L. F. W.

6. *Riebeckite, a new mineral*.—Dr. A. Sauer has described under this name what he regards as a new member of the amphibole family corresponding to ægirite among the pyroxenes. It occurs in the granite of the island of Socotra, where it was collected by Dr. E. Riebeck. It appears in slender prismatic crystals, black in color, and showing the characteristic cleavage of amphibole. An analysis, after the deduction of 7.12 per cent zircon, yielded:

SiO <sub>2</sub>	Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	FeO	MnO	CaO	MgO	Na <sub>2</sub> O	K <sub>2</sub> O
50.01	28.30	9.87	0.63	1.32	0.34	8.79	0.72=99.98

It thus in composition corresponds closely to ægirite and differs from the arfvedsonite analyzed by Lorenzen chiefly in the state of oxidation of the iron; he found in the Greenland mineral 3.80 p. c. Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and 33.43 p. c. FeO. The doubt existing as to the true composition of arfvedsonite, however, prevents a definite conclusion as to the relations of the new mineral to it.—*Zeitschr. Geol. Ges.*, xl, 138, 1888.

7. *Mazapilite, a new mineral*.—Dr. G. A. König announces a new mineral from Zacatecas, mining district of Mazapil, Mexico. It occurs in deep red to black crystals, believed to be orthorhombic. The hardness is nearly 7, the specific gravity 3.567. Preliminary trials have led to the conclusion that in composition

it is an arsenite of calcium and iron.—*Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Philad.*, July 3, 1888.

8. *The Minerals of New York County, including a list complete to date*; by B. B. CHAMBERLIN.—This little pamphlet, by the late Mr. Chamberlin, is a valuable contribution to the local mineralogy of New York, a subject to which the author had given much attention.

### III. BOTANY AND ZOOLOGY.

1. DR. SERENO WATSON'S *Contributions to American Botany*.—The last two numbers of this important series have not yet been noticed in this Journal. For reference the titles are here given. No. 14 contains:—*List of plants collected by Dr. Edward Palmer in the State of Jalisco, Mexico, in 1886*. In this list the Gamopetalæ were determined by Professor Gray, the Juncaceæ and Cyperaceæ by Dr. N. L. Britton, the Gramineæ by Dr. Vasey, and the ferns by Professor Eaton. *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, vol. xxii, pp. 396–485. Also in the same volume, pp. 466–489: a second paper, entitled, *New Species*. These species are about 40 in number.—No. 15, same *Proceedings*, vol. xxiii, contains [1] *Some new species of plants of the U. S. with revisions of Lesquerella (Vesicaria), and of the North American species of Draba*, pp. 249–267. [2] *Some new species of Mexican plants chiefly of Mr. C. H. Pringle's collection in the Mountains of Chihuahua, in 1887*, pp. 276–283. [3] *Description of some plants of Guatemala*, pp. 283–287.

G. L. G.

2. *Flora of Middlesex County, Mass.*; by L. L. DAME and F. S. COLLINS, Malden, Middlesex Institute, 1888, pp. 201, with map.—The authors of this work have spared no pains to ensure a good degree of accuracy and completeness. In the first place, they are themselves botanists of experience and have personally examined with great care some of the most interesting portions of the district. And, second, they have availed themselves of the assistance of a goodly number of local collectors, while all important doubtful determinations have been submitted to special authorities. Thus, doubtful Compositæ were examined by the late Professor Gray, Mr. Bebb aided in determining the willows, and Drs. Watson and Farlow assisted at many points by the collections in their charge.

The county is irregular in outline and considerably diversified in surface. Its highest land, Mt. Watatic, in the western part, is somewhat less than 2000 feet above the level of the sea, sea-level being reached at the eastern limit. The county is abundantly watered, and would seem from the map which is crowded with lakes, ponds, and rivers, to promise a rich vegetation, but the soil consists chiefly of the usual deposits and admixtures of gravel, sand, and clay, with which residents of eastern Massachusetts are only too familiar. Hence there are here lacking many