

first school for the blind. The French and English mineralogical societies are interesting themselves in the appeal for subscription, and it is to be hoped that the sum of 25,000 francs required to carry out the project will soon be raised.

To the extensive donations of Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan to public mineral collections, noted in the last number of this Magazine, must now be added that of a collection of precious stones recently presented by him to the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle at Paris. This collection, consisting of 600 specimens of faceted and rough stones, was brought together by Mr. G. F. Kunz for the Pan-American Exposition of 1901 to illustrate the occurrence of precious stones in both North and South America, and especially in the United States, and is said to be one of the finest and most complete collections of its kind.

Among the several exhibits of mineralogical interest at the Royal Society's *Conversazione* in May last may be mentioned the microscope preparations of meteoric and artificial irons shown by Mr. J. E. Stead. When polished surfaces are heated in air the various constituents—metallic iron, carbide and phosphide of iron—acquire different oxidization tints, which in reflected light rival in brilliancy the polarization colours of a transparent mineral section. In this way was shown the minute structure of a piece of artificial iron in which small, but beautifully marked, Widmanstätten figures had been developed by the very slow cooling of the mass from a high temperature.

It is interesting to remember that this method of 'heat-tinting' was the way by which the crystalline structure of meteoric iron was shown by Widmanstätten in 1808. The method has, however, been recently developed by metallographers, and, in conjunction with Koenigsberger's method of detecting polarization of light reflected from the surfaces of opaque crystals (abstract, this vol., p. 203), should find an extensive application in the study of meteoric irons.

The rare event of the fall of a meteoric stone was witnessed on September 13, 1902, near Crumlin in co. Antrim. The weight of the stone is 9 lb. 5½ oz., and it measures $7\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ inches; it is thus the largest stone which has been observed to fall in the British Isles for eighty-nine years. The stone was acquired for the British Museum collection through Mr. Fletcher, who has given a preliminary account of the fall and of the stone itself in 'Nature' (vol. lxvi, p. 577).

In addition to the Crumlin meteorite, mentioned above, the following noteworthy recent additions to the mineral collection of the British Museum may be mentioned:—

A large crystal of topaz, measuring two feet in length and weighing 137 pounds, from Sætersdalen, Norway.

A large and valuable collection of native gold and gold tellurides from Western Australia, presented by the Government of Western Australia and by various gold-mining companies. A description of these specimens is given above on p. 268, and a selection of them is exhibited in the recent acquisition case in the Mineral Gallery.

We have received several descriptive catalogues and guides reprinted from the Report of the United States National Museum at Washington. One of these, by Mr. George P. Merrill, on the non-metallic minerals exhibited in the section of Applied Geology, extends to 330 pages and is illustrated by 30 excellent plates together with several text-figures, and is in itself a valuable text-book on the economic applications of minerals. Other catalogues, by Mr. Wirt Tassin, deal with the collection of precious stones (200 pp., 9 plates and 26 text-figures), the collection of meteorites, and a collection illustrating the properties of minerals, while another outlines the classification adopted for the systematic collection of minerals.

From the annual report for 1889–1900 we learn that the same museum has acquired the private collection of minerals of the late Professor C. U. Shepard; this includes some 5,000 selected specimens, many of them types described by Professor Shepard and of great rarity.

A small handbook, 'Aids to the Analysis and Assay of Ores, Metals, Fuels, &c.,' by J. James Morgan (London, 1902, viii + 105 pp. Price 2s. 6d., or in paper covers 2s.), has been received from the publishers, Baillièrè, Tindall & Cox. It gives concise instructions for the execution of various technical analyses.
