

ICE AT LAKE ROLAND.— For the past ten days the ice on Lake Roland has ranged in thickness from five to seven inches. On Saturday, the 9th of the month, it was six inches thick at the Relay House, and from seven to seven and a half inches at the upper end of the lake. The water board allows the ice to be cut for private houses around the lake, charging for this privilege the moderate price of twenty-five cents per ton. The first cutting at the early part of last week was as clear as crystal and solid as the best ice from the North. Since then a slight fall of snow has covered the surface of the lake and, melting since, has made the surface ice porous to the depth probably of half an inch. The sharp cold during the nights of Friday and Saturday last—the thermometer standing at ten degrees yesterday morning—has so increased again the thickness of the ice that if the snow-ice of the surface were pared off, as is the custom of the ice gatherers at the North, there would still remain an average thickness of six inches of pure, solid, transparent ice, of the best quality for domestic purposes. Every foot of this ice is merchantable. Not only is the demand in ordinary years in Baltimore in excess of the local supply, but the charges to private customers are quite high, and when ice has to be imported from Maine the ice bill constitutes quite an important item in the housekeeping of large families. We are aware that considerable quantities of ice are gathered and stored away every winter on the banks of the Susquehanna for consumption in Baltimore; but the haul is a long one and the cost is correspondingly increased. It is a matter of surprise, therefore, that the fine body of ice at Lake Roland has not been turned to account. The facilities for gathering and bringing it to Baltimore are of the best. Lake Roland, as everybody knows, is but seven miles from Baltimore. It lies immediately between the forks of two railroads—the main stem of the Northern Central and the Green Spring branch of the same road. From the bed of these roads easy slopes lead to the water's edge—in some places not more than a few feet distant; in others from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet. The banks of the lake, following the curvatures of the two roads, render the construction of ice-houses and the loading of ice on the cars an easy matter. Ranges of ice-houses built there at favorable points might be made a valuable source of revenue to the city. To the objection that these ice-houses would be unsightly, and so detract from the beauty of the lake, the easy answer is that it is the simplest thing in the world to make them externally ornamental, and thus add another attractive feature to the landscape. A more serious objection is that our winters are variable, and that there would be seasons in which no ice could be cut. The same objection applies to all our local ponds, but with less force to Lake Roland. There has been no season in which ice two and a half to three inches has not been formed on the lake, and this, when properly stored, can be kept as well as ice of greater thickness, whilst in point of quality it would be found superior to any ice that the dealers gather in their suburban ponds. We throw out these suggestions as at least worthy of consideration.