connections of the corner or edge rods to the iron columns are made at several points lower down, by passing one-half and three-quarter inch copper rods through holes drilled in the stone-work of the pyramid. At the bottom the earth connection is made by four heavy copper rods, which project several feet into a well of moist sand, at the bottom of which water is always standing.

Owing to the unrivalled height of this monument, its protection from damage by lightning is a matter of scientific as well as of practical interest, and the efficiency of the plan now being carried out will doubtless be questioned in some quarters; but it is a problem which time alone can satisfactorily solve. Z.

Washington, D.C., Oct. 26.

BOSTON LETTER.

ALTHOUGH the removal of *Science* to New York is greatly regretted here, the many friends it has made in the place of its birth continue to express their great interest in its success, and their appreciation of the efforts made toward its constant improvement. Its weekly reception, too, on the very day of its publication in New York, makes a very favorable impression, since this was by no means the case when printed here; it lessens, to some degree, the regret at losing it as one of the scientific attractions of the community.

The publication of the 'Life of Agassiz' is most favorably commented on in our scientific circles. It awakens anew the enthusiasm toward our great naturalist which was always manifested in the most lively manner whenever he made a public appearance. We are all glad, moreover, to possess a clearer and fuller account of his university life, when he was laying the foundation of his remarkable career. The unity of his whole life, the persistency of his mental and moral characteristics, can here be traced as never before, while the successful outcome of his early aspirations lend a completeness to the picture, and are a source of inspiration to any reader.

No clearer case can be pointed out than his connection with Harvard, of the utmost importance to a university of securing men in its scientific posts who are not merely excellent teachers, but are also thorough and active investigators, imparting to their pupils their own ardor in scientific research. The band of students who flocked to his standard is scattered all over the country, most of them teachers in colleges, and everywhere leaders in scientific work and thought. No other such band of disciples in any science has ever appeared in our country; and his presence at Harvard raised the standard of its scientific department to a height of excellence and renown, as nothing else could have done.

It may not be known to all your readers that the designer of the Puritan has made his mark already in quite another field of science, being favorably known for many years as an entomologist. His memoirs on the anatomy of Lepidoptera and other orders of insects, and his minute technical knowledge of Diptera, easily won for him a place in our Academy of sciences. His friends in the scientific club here are very enthusiastic over his new success, and propose to give him a dinner in recognition of their appreciation of it, at which it is hoped that he will relate some of the points which have made the Puritan the fastest known yacht in the world. Yet they have some doubt whether he will consent even to this private honor; for, though the most genial companion in the world, Mr. Burgess is modest to a fault.

The bequest of the late Robert Treat Paine was mentioned in *Science* last July, when it was stated that Harvard college observatory would receive nearly three hundred thousand dollars, one half at once, the other on the death of his widow. This was particularly opportune, for the increased work of the observatory in later years had been due to an annual subscription raised by its friends for a limited period, then recently past. Unfortunately, it now transpires that the will is contested in the courts by the heirs-at-law, who claim that he "was not of sound and disposing mind and memory." Under the laws of Massachusetts, the costs of legal action of this sort are chargeable to the estate, so that there is danger that, even if the will is not broken, the amount finally received by the observatory may be somewhat diminished, and, in any event, delay must ensue; so that the observatory is now working on a sadly diminished income, for which even the zeal and ingenuity of the indefatigable director cannot wholly atone. Y.

Boston, Oct. 24.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

*** Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as proof of good faith.*

Cruise of the Arethusa.

THE yacht Arethusa, having on board an expedition to Newfoundland, previously noticed in *Science*, returned September first to Annisquam, Mass., after a successful trip of three months.

The scientific party consisted of Prof. Alpheus Hyatt, curator Boston society natural history; Dr. E. G. Gardiner and Mr. George Barton, instructors in the Massachusetts institute of technology; Dr. Howard M. Buck, of Boston; Sidney R. Bartlett and C. L. Burlingham, students of the Institute of technology.

The weather while going and returning was not upon the whole favorable, but while on the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador, from June 17 to about