

package containing more than a certain amount must be accompanied by a customs permit or certificate from the local farmer, and heavy penalties are appointed for breach of these regulations or infringement of the privileges of the farmers. The effect of the decree is to establish a monopoly in the trade in opium in the government, which will work through the licensed farmers. But no provision is made for the sale by public auction of the right to deal in opium, as is usual in British and other colonies where opium is farmed.

— We learn from *The Critic* that a periodical of a somewhat new character is to appear in The Hague (Netherlands). It will be a fortnightly in four languages,—English, French, Spanish, and Italian,—containing original correspondence on letters, arts, and science from London, Paris, Madrid, and Naples. A New York correspondent has been invited to contribute an American letter to the quartet already named. The object is to promote the study of languages. The editor of the new periodical is to be M. Taco H. deBeer, editor of *de Portefeuille*, the *Dutch Art Chronicle*, and *Literary Review*.

— A new process of electroplating natural objects, such as animals, flowers, and tissues, has been brought out in France, and, as described in *Engineering*, is as follows: An albuminous liquid is obtained by washing some slugs or snails in water to clean them, then placing them in distilled water until they give off their albuminous matter. This is filtered and boiled for an hour, then distilled water is added to make up for that lost by boiling, and also about 3 per cent of nitrate of silver. This solution is then kept in bottles hermetically sealed, and in a dark place. When required for use, about 30 grams of the liquid are mixed with about 100 grams of distilled water, and into this solution the objects to be electroplated are immersed for a few moments. They are then put into a bath consisting of about 20 per cent of nitrate of silver dissolved in distilled water, and afterwards submitted to the action of sulphurated-hydrogen gas, which reduces the nitrate of silver on the albumen-coated object. Thus treated, an organic object becomes fitted to receive the electro-deposited metal intended for it; and the layer is said to be of superior fineness to that produced by the other known processes for coating natural objects with metal by galvanoplasty. It shows the texture of the object with much delicacy.

— Improvements have been made at the glacial pot-hole on Colonel Hackley's land in Archbald Borough, Lackawanna Co., Penn. Mr. Hackley has generously appropriated the sum of five hundred dollars for the purpose of protecting it against the action of the weather, and also to make it more attractive to visitors. All the underbrush has been cleared and the ground graded, leaving the shade-trees standing, forming a little park. At present the pot-hole is divided in two by a wooden brattice for the purpose of mine-ventilation. All this timber-work will be taken out, so that the entire pot-hole can be seen.

— Reports of two journeys through Yemen have recently been published,—one of a German scientist, E. Glaser, who visited the country for the purpose of collecting Sabian inscriptions and manuscripts, in which he was eminently successful; one by the English major-general, F. T. Haig. The latter made only a flying trip through the country, starting from Hodeida on the western coast, to Sanaa, the capital, a distance of 140 miles, and from Sanaa turning due south to Aden, 260 miles. Including a week spent in Sanaa, the journey occupied, in all, thirty-one days. The object of the journey was to ascertain whether it might be possible to do any thing for the Christianization of the inhabitants. Glaser, on the other hand, staid in southern Arabia from October, 1882, to March, 1884, and from May, 1885, to February, 1886; and at the present time he is again at work in his old field. It is somewhat amusing to compare the statements of both travellers. Haig describes the severity of the Turkish taxation, and their cruelty against the natives. Glaser, on the other hand, praises the safety of the territories occupied by the Turks, and states that the English have no control whatever over the tribes inhabiting the colony of Aden, who receive an annuity amounting in the aggregate to twelve thousand dollars a year. During the last fifteen years the Turks have suc-

ceeded in establishing their authority in several parts of Arabia, but it is only in Sanaa that the influence extends into the interior. According to Haig's description, they cannot feel very safe here: "The town has an Arab population intensely hating the few thousand Turks by whom it is held down, heavily taxed, and generally obliged to furnish gratis the supplies required for the large garrison of Turkish soldiers. The latter are not allowed to go into the narrow streets for fear of assassination. There is a citadel at one part of the walls, with its guns turned significantly, not to the outside, but upon the town. Glaser staid most of his time in Sanaa, and made numerous excursions in the neighborhood. He made astronomical observations and surveys in addition to his important archæological collections. The following notes are taken from his description in the Proceedings of the Geographical Society of Vienna. The west side of Arabia is occupied by a mountain-range from eight thousand to ten thousand feet in height. The western declivity of this range is very steep, falling abruptly to the Tihâma, a plain about two thousand feet in height, with a gradual slope towards the sea. The eastern slope of the mountain-range is very gradual. The south coast of Arabia is also occupied by high mountains. While the high land between these ranges is a desert, the slopes are drained by numerous rivers, some of which are running throughout the year. The slopes of the mountains are highly cultivated, terraces being built from the summit of the range to its foot. Those which can be easily irrigated yield four crops annually, and are highly prized. Coffee is one of the principal products of this country. While Haig describes the climate of the high parts as wholesome and agreeable, it is quite the reverse according to Glaser. He says that malarial fevers prevail in the high land as well as in the low land. In Sanaa the temperature frequently falls below the freezing-point, and during the hottest season a temperature of 92° F. was observed. In winter the daily variations are very great, a temperature of 32° in the morning being followed by one of 68° after noon. The western slopes of the mountains are moistened by heavy fogs which every day ascend from the low land to the summit, though they do not extend into the interior of the country.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

. The attention of scientific men is called to the advantages of the correspondence columns of *Science* for placing promptly on record brief preliminary notices of their investigations. Twenty copies of the number containing his communication will be furnished free to any correspondent on request.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

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

The Scientific Swindler Again.

A MAN answering the description of the impostor given in previous numbers of *Science*, appeared at the rooms of the Boston Society of Natural History on Saturday last, having in his possession a microscope, which he offered for sale at a very low price. We suspected his character, but, having no charge against him, were unable to do any thing, and were in hopes he would return on Monday with his microscope, as he engaged to do. He did not return, and we could therefore do nothing.

ALPHEUS HYATT.

Boston, Oct. 18.

Savagery in Boyhood.

EVERY thing, we suppose, must be considered hereditary in the present age; even the tendency to wear cocked hats, or to throw cabbage-heads on hallow eve. At any rate, the *Popular Science Monthly* for October brings this doctrine to bear upon the phenomena of savagery in boyhood, as noticed in *Science* of Oct. 7. The author explains that cruelty in children is the transmitted habit of ancestral savages, and observes that "the emotion of pity appeared late in the history of the race." In the same connection we may mention the intense interest which children take in narratives of warfare: torturing animals is a less general incident. But the callousness of children in contemplating the horrors of war and its consequences has always been an interesting fact to us. However, is no other analysis of this possible than the supposition that our savage forefathers were cruel? May we not be in danger of making