

The Winds of the Sahara.

Most interesting meteorological observations made in the Sahara during eight excursions between 1883 and 1896 have been published by M. F. Foureau, an abstract of which has been published in Popular Science Monthly. The most frequent winds are those from the northwest and southeast. Every evening the wind goes down with the sun, except the northeast wind, which blows all night. There is also a warm wind from the southwest charged with electricity and often carrying fine sand and darkening the atmosphere. The compasses are much disturbed by it, because, it has been suggested, of a special condition produced upon the thin glass covers by the friction caused by the rubbing of the fine wind-carried sand upon them. But it has been observed that the spare compasses show the same disturbed conditions as soon as they are taken out of their boxes. The disturbance ceases when the glasses are moistened, and does not appear again until they have dried. Several hail stones were noticed. They were usually about as large as peas, but were larger in the heavier storms. He observed no snow in the Sahara, but was informed that snow falls in the winter on the tops of the mountains. Similar observations have been made by other travelers. A curious mirage phenomena was sometimes observed. He found frequent fulgurites in which sand had been vitrified by lightning strokes.

A CURIOUS MEANS OF DISPOSING OF THE DEAD.

The vicissitudes of the dead would furnish material for an interesting and gruesome volume. We are, of course, not surprised when we see an Egyptian mummy, but it is very extraordinary that during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance a species of mummification was also adopted in Italy, and even continues to this day. The two most curious examples of this are the cemetery of the Capuchins, in Rome, and the catacombs of the Capuchins, at Palermo. In the latter place, we believe, bodies are still added; though probably not in the Roman Capuchin cemetery, as intramural interments are forbidden in Rome even to Popes. Our engraving represents the catacombs of the Capuccini, at Palermo. They consist of a series of chambers which are well lighted, adding to the ghastliness. Here are to be seen the mummies of the dead of the better classes, in the convent vaults. They are fully attired, even down to the white kid gloves. Some are erect against the wall, and others again buried in chests, while some sit in chairs, all ticketed with their names and dates.

Every year or two the gloves, and less frequently the clothes, are renewed by the affectionate survivors, who go on great feast days of the church to gladden their eyes with the family mummies. A visit on the eve of All Souls' Day is a thing long to be remembered. Lights flare dimly through lanterns of bone, revealing the hideous forms of the dead. The bodies against the walls appear like malefactors who had been hung. Many of the bodies appear shabby as regards dress, as their friends do not give them a posthumous toilet from time to time, which is so necessary to keep them in good repair.

The cemetery of the Capuchins, in Rome, is fully as interesting and ghastly. It is a series of vaulted chambers above the ground, so that there is no need of artificial daylight. Around the walls skulls and other bones are arranged in patterns. The ceilings are covered by ornamental patterns made of smaller bones, and lamps depending from the ceiling are also made from bones of the arm.

After a monk dies he is buried for a term of years in the ground in the chapel, the earth being brought

originally from Jerusalem. His bones are then taken out and help to deck the gruesome chambers. A few monks of particular sanctity are not buried at all, but placed against the wall and dried in situ.

DISCOVERY OF TWO INDIAN MUMMIES.

BY J. M., BALTIMORE.

Two white men, while out on a hunting and prospecting tour in the Cascade Mountains recently, dis-



INDIAN MUMMIES DISCOVERED IN THE CASCADE MOUNTAINS.

covered some genuine Indian mummies. There were two bodies that had been preserved, in some manner, so as to measurably resist the ravages of time and the encroachments of decay.

These bodies had originally been incased in the skins of some wild animals. Evidently some preservative substance was used to prevent decomposition. The skins had been wrapped snugly around the bodies and securely fastened, so as to exclude the air as far as

usual thing, Indians never mummify the bodies of their dead.

Indians who have been shown the mummies and questioned have invariably shaken their heads in an incredulous manner, and looked puzzled and mystified. They have not been able to throw one ray of light on the subject.

The mummies were found in a small cave, situated at the base of a lofty, rocky bluff. Their discovery was purely accidental. The two men entered the mouth of the little cave merely out of curiosity, and were surprised on discovering the mummified bodies. Careful search and investigation failed to discover more bodies.

As near as can be ascertained, these mummies were found near the headwaters of the Santiam River, in the very heart of the Cascade Range.

The men making the discovery have persistently declined to reveal the locality where the bodies were discovered. They are in hopes of finding more Indian mummies, and of turning the discovery to pecuniary gain, either by selling the bodies or by exhibiting them and charging admission. They propose to make a thorough search.

The recent discovery of these mummies has attracted much attention among those who are interested in ethnology. The shape of the heads and other peculiarities leave no possible doubt that the bodies are those of Indians.

A New Satellite of Saturn.

A new satellite of the planet Saturn has been discovered by Prof. William H. Pickering, at the Harvard College Observatory. This satellite is three and a half times as distant from Saturn as Iapetus, the outermost satellite hitherto known. The period is about seventeen months and the magnitude fifteen and a half. The satellite appears upon four plates, taken at the Arequipa Station, with the Bruce photographic telescope.

The last discovery among the satellites of Saturn was made half a century ago, in September, 1848, by Prof. George P. Bond, at that time director of the Harvard College Observatory.

Sampson's Sword.

The special committee having in charge the selection of a design for a sword to be presented to Rear-

Admiral Sampson have at last agreed upon that submitted by Simons Brothers, of Philadelphia, and its cost will be \$2,000. The design represents on the head of the pommel the coat of arms of the State of New Jersey, while on the collar of the pommel will be raised letters and enameled flags crossed, being the emblems of the rank of Captain and of Rear-Admiral, signifying the fact that at the beginning of the war Sampson was a Captain and a Rear-Admiral at its close. The grip will be made of shark's skin wrapped with gold wire with forty-eight stars, each star being set with a diamond. The guard, top, and bottom will terminate with dolphins' heads with ruby eyes, the ruby being the natal stone of the Rear-Admiral. The sleeves

of the scabbard are to be of gold and the rings are municipal fasces held to the sleeve by ship's cables. The monogram will be made of diamonds. The belt will be etched, showing the position of the American fleet in front of Santiago.

PASSENGER fare on the new Congo railroad is 33¼ cents per mile.



THE CATACOMBS OF THE CAPPUCCINI, PALERMO, SICILY.

possible. As the flesh shrank the covering also shrank, until it fitted as tight as the natural skin.

In the long lapse of time, flesh, bones, and covering became very dry and as hard as horn. How long these bodies had remained in this mummified condition it is impossible to determine. To what tribe the mummies once belonged no one can tell. The object in thus preserving the bodies is also shrouded in mystery. As a