

POPULARIZING SCIENCE.

THE POPULAR SCIENCE MONTHLY FOR 1879.

The fourteenth volume of the magazine conducted by E. L. and W. J. Youmans gives a guarantee of the success of its undertaking by increasing the number of its pages and improving the quality of its paper and type. The same system which has made the publication popular in fact as well as in name will be continued on a slightly larger scale. It will contain articles and abstracts of articles, original and selected, from leading scientific men of different nationalities; where they are needed, wood-cuts will be added to the text. Accounts of scientific discoveries and latest views concerning natural phenomena put forth by *savants* are promised, so that the reader may be sure of being even with the rapid march of events in the scientific world. The editors also state that attention will be given to those sciences which teach a better understanding of the nature of man, having to do with society and government, scientific education, and the conflicts arising from the progressive and aggressive march of scientific knowledge. It also concerns itself especially with the application of science to the practical arts, and seeks to prove a comprehensive and independent library of popular science, particularly suited to the wants of non-scientific persons.

The January number of *The Popular Science Monthly*, is an earnest of the proposed course. Prof. Tyndall is about to publish a volume of *Fragments of Science*, and contributes the advanced sheets of his introductory chapter. It relates to an address by Dr. Virchow on "The Freedom of Science in the Modern State," in which the latter made implications against him. Prof. Tyndall does not agree to the charge that he has been rashly propagating unproved theories for established science, but points out how careful, on the contrary, he has been not to advance unsupported views. He applauds the ideas of Virchow as to the teaching of science in the schools. Prof. E. S. Morse has an illustrated paper on "Traces of an Early Race in Japan," in which he comes to the conclusion that certain prehistoric implements found in refuse heaps in Japan belong neither to the Japanese who came from the South, nor to bearded Ainos, who were in Japan when the Japanese arrived. Plain traces of cannibalism are found among these ancient and now vanished shell-fish eaters. Another illustrated paper, by W. E. Damon, relates to the devil-fish (*octopus*) and its cousins the cuttle and the squid. Victor Hugo, who was so much laughed at for his devil-fish when *Les Travailleurs de la Mer* was first published, is cited in his own words, with no more criticism than that his description is a little overdrawn and in one or two trifling particulars incorrect. George J. Romanes has a paper on "The Beginning of Nerves in the Animal Kingdom," where appropriate wood-cuts show the first traces of a nerve-system in animals of the lowest organization, belonging to the radiates.

Prof. Carl Vogt has a sharp word to say in "Pope and Anti-Pope" about the contest going on in Germany between the "Medical Pope," Virchow, and the "Zoological Pope," Haeckel, on the old Darwinian battle-field. Prof. Joseph Le Conte lends his brilliant pen to the subject of the scientific relation of sociology to biology, furnishing only an initial chapter in the present number. Prof. Carhart tries to imbue us with some faint conception of the distances of stars by a paper on "Astronomical Magnitudes and Distances," and with the title of "Black Diamonds," M. F. Maury introduces an account of the coal-fields, coal-yield, and coal-use of the world, together with the earliest known application of coal by man. George Hles discusses the subject of "Hereditry"; L. K. Curtiss, "Molecular Dynamics," and Maurice Girard, "Curari, or Woorara Poison." A portrait of Gustav Wallis, traveler and botanist, is supplemented by a short biographical notice. He was born at Lüneberg, Prussia, in 1830, and died of his exertions in swamps and tropical forests at a hospital in Cuenca, Ecuador, in June of last year.

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