

SEA SERPENTS.

There have been so many "mariners' yarns" told about gigantic sea serpents that few believe that any true member of the snake family ever lives in the sea, despite the fact that in our temperate climate there are many of the reptiles known as water snakes which are rarely met with except in ponds and marshes. The truth is that there are sea serpents, to be sure not colossal monsters with heads as big as hogsheads, and capable of crushing small vessels in their vast folds, but moderate-sized snakes, growing sometimes to a length of over nine feet, but generally about half that. The family of thantophidians to which they belong has only seven genera and about twenty species, and is indigenous to the Indian Ocean and archipelago. The serpents have flat tails and a compressed body, perfectly adapted to their aquatic existence. They are, in fact, compromises between snakes and eels. Like snakes they are venomous, and their bite is often deadly, although their poison loses its power after the reptile has been out of water a few days. The jaws and teeth are smaller than those of land serpents of the same dimensions. The head is always small. The body changes its form according to the season of the year, being sometimes long and thin, again short and thick.

The serpents belonging to the genus *hydrophis* are nearest allied to their land brethren, and one especially, the *platyura*, appears to be a connecting link between the two orders. Its general conformity and its large ventral scales all indicate an animal capable of locomotion on the land as well as in the water. The food of the family—one member of which is well represented in the annexed illustration, from *La Nature*—is fish, crustaceans, and small turtles, which they kill by their venomous bite. A curious fact is that the snakes in time become literally covered with barnacles, as when these parasites affix themselves to their bodies the serpents make no attempts to remove them.

PREHISTORIC RELICS IN ARIZONA.

Arizona Territory is perhaps less known, to the majority of our inhabitants, than any other part of the country; and

yet it has a remarkably fine climate, moderate temperature, fertile soil, and unbounded mineral wealth. No railways, however, have as yet been constructed in Arizona; but the Atlantic and Pacific and the Texas Pacific companies have obtained charters and land grants, and, when these roads are constructed, there is every likelihood of this beautiful region being reached by settlers from the East; and its lands, now chiefly occupied by nomadic tribes of Pimas, Marico-

pas, Mohaves, Utes, and Apaches, will be brought into cultivation. but scratched on the surface of the rock, which is a kind of gritty sandstone, of red color; and many of the animals thus rudely depicted are not, and perhaps never have been, indigenous to Arizona. The alpaca, for instance, belongs to the uplands of South America; and the buffalo's native land is far to the northeast of these rocks. It seems reasonable, therefore, to believe that the inscriptions were part of an account of some travelers' wanderings, who thus recorded news of the remarkable countries they had visited.

The pitahiya, or giant cactus, several specimens of which are shown in our engraving (which we select from the pages of the *Illustrated London News*), sometimes reaches the height of seventy feet. It has a curiously weird appearance, with its huge pronged branches looming in the distance. The fruit is a favorite food with the natives, who knock it down from the trees with arrows. They also use the fibers of the trunks, matting them together to roof their wigwams with.

The Aztec relics are very numerous on the Colorado plateau, in the northwestern part of Arizona; and the Spaniards subsequently erected reservoirs, terraces, and buildings of great extent. Stone fortifications are also very frequently met; and it has been estimated from such indications that at least 100,000 people inhabited the Gila valley at one time. It is probable, moreover, that some further light may be thrown on the history of this wonderful region, as much of the northern part of the country has never been ex-



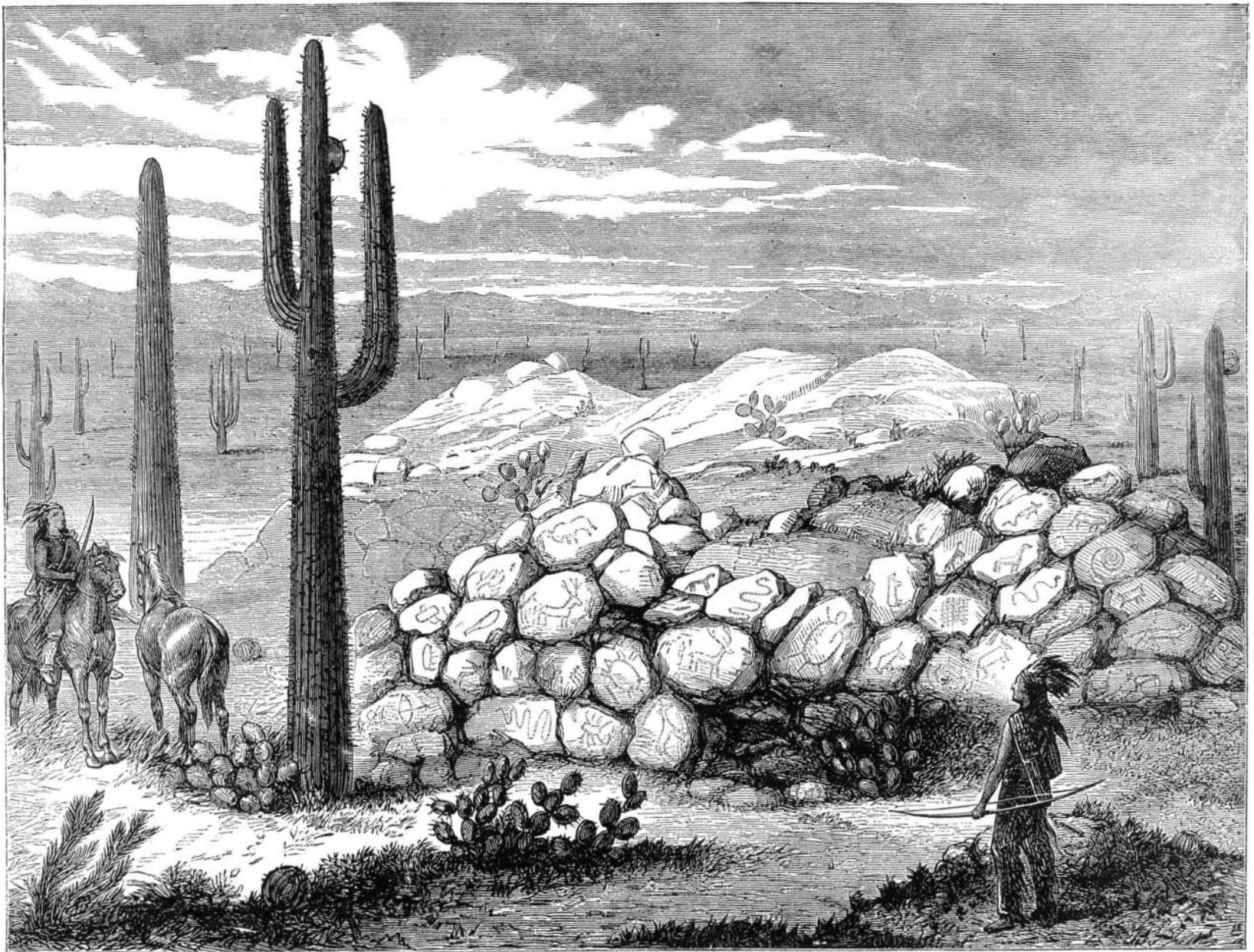
THE HYDROPHIS.

explored.

To the traveler and antiquary, Arizona is a land possessing especial interest, as it abounds with relics of two populations, probably widely separate in point of time. There are to be found here numerous ruins of Aztec sculptures and buildings, which were probably of great antiquity when Cortes arrived in Mexico, and Don José de Vasconcellos crossed Arizona towards the Great Cañon, in 1526. But the remarkable painted rocks, shown in our illustration, are doubtless much older than the Aztec relics; and there is no history, legend, or tradition that even attempts to explain the origin of the inscriptions. The marks are not painted

FOR KEEPING crackers dry, unslaked lime is recommended. The wooden boxes for the crackers should be about 12 inches deep, and have a tray 1 inch deep to rest just beneath the lid, which should fit tightly. The lime is placed on the tray, and is said to keep the crackers dry for six months if the box is not opened, or for about two months if the box is visited daily.

THE *Herald of Health* says that the right way to cook an egg is to pour water on it at a boiling temperature and leave the egg there for fifteen minutes.



THE PAINTED ROCKS, ARIZONA TERRITORY.