

SCIENCE NOTES.

WE have great pleasure in publishing the following letter, from the Rev. James Smith, a Presbyterian missionary in India. It is dated

AHMEDNAGAR, INDIA, *June 2nd, 1885.*

DEAR SIR,—I have just had a most delightful vacation of two months at the Pulney Hills, in the extreme south of India. The Sanatorium is one that promises to become one of the most popular in India, though it is now frequented almost exclusively by missionaries and their families. It is south of Madras, on the South Indian Railway, and can be reached from Madras in about thirty-six hours, twenty-four by train and about twelve by cart and pony. The hills are about 8,000 feet high, and the climate is unsurpassed in the world. The sun while bright is not hot. Showers are frequent, and heavy rain rare. The tops and sides of the hills are clothed with the richest vegetation. Formerly there were few trees except in wet places, but the Forest Department of Government has done a good deal of tree planting, chiefly of the encalyptus or Australian gum tree. It has been a great relief to me to find a climate where one could spend the whole day out of doors, and as this place is a Botanist's Paradise, I have not been idle. Amid such luxuriance, it would be the work of years to collect specimens of everything found here, so I have given my whole attention to ferns, and have been amply repaid. I give you a partial list of those I have collected within a radius of seven miles. With time and diligence one could collect a much larger number of varieties. I shall be glad to hear directly from botanists in Canada, and to exchange specimens. Yours ever, etc.

[Here follows a list of 64 varieties of cryptogams, very rare and beautiful, a copy of which we will gladly furnish to any botanist desiring one.—ED.]

NERVOUS SYSTEM IN SPONGES.—The discovery of a nervous system in sponges has been made by an Australian naturalist,