Since this would destroy a large part of the writing, the archeologists refused to cut them, and are seeking help of expert chemists for means of unrolling them.

That this is not too much to hope ~~for~~ is indicated by the experience with some of the leather and parchment rolls which appeared so dry that they seemed likely to crumble if an attempt was made to open them. It was found that some of the most stiff and fragile scrolls became soft and pliable after exposure to a humidity of 80%. In some cases this could not be done because the rolls were covered with a black substance which was at first ~~through~~ thought to be pitch. It was considered at first that the sectarians had sealed the scrolls with pitch or bitumen. Examination of the substance proved that it was not pitch at all, but coagulated leather from the scrolls. It was discovered that this type of scroll could be handled by a fairly simple procedure. First it was placed under a humidity of 80%, and this caused the scrolls to relax. Then it was put in a refrigerator, and this relaxed the black material so that it could be brushed off and the scrolls unrolled. This success with the leather scrolls gives hope that success will also be achieved in opening the copper rolls and reading their message.

The excitement about the scrolls had naturally stimulated the seven hundred Bedouin who live in the area to hunt through these wild and desolate desert regions for more caves. Since digging by untrained persons can easily destroy valuable evidence, the police tried to prevent it, but the territory is too large and too wild to be adequately patroled. Additional manuscripts related to the Qumran texts appeared for sale in Jerusalem. Alongside of them, manuscripts began to appear of a