

dry, and the fruitfulness of the land has disappeared. The Jordan is four feet lower than it was in the New Testament days. Greece and Spain suffer severely to this day from the effect of destroying their forests. Many parts of the kingdom of Wurtemberg have been rendered almost barren by the felling of the trees. In Hungary the periodically returning drought is universally attributed to the extermination of the forest. We attribute the present unfruitfulness of Asia Minor and Greece to the destruction of the woods; steeples, ruins, and tombs have taken the place of what was the highest culture. Sardinia and Sicily were once the graineries of Italy, but have long since lost the fruitfulness sung of by the ancient poets.

On the other hand, man can improve the condition of the land in which he lives, more slowly indeed, but as certainly, by cultivating and preserving the forests. In former years reliable authorities have told us that in the Delta of Lower Egypt there were only five or six days of rain in the whole year, but that, since the time when Mehemet Ali caused some twenty thousand trees to be planted, the number of days of rain in the year has increased to forty-five or forty-six. The Suez Canal has produced remarkable results. Ismailia is built on what was a sandy desert, but since the ground has become saturated with canal water, trees, bushes, and other plants have sprung up as if by magic, and with the re-appearance of vegetation the climate has changed. Four or five years ago rain was unknown in those regions, while from May, 1868, to May, 1869, fourteen days were recorded, and once such a rain-storm that the natives looked upon it as a supernatural event.

Austria herself has a very striking instance of a change of climate being produced by deforestation. We refer to that stretch of miles of country over which the railroad passes, near Trieste, as you go from Austria to Italy, bleak, barren and stony, with hardly earth sufficient for a weed to take root in, a stretch of barrenness on which some dread anathema seems to rest. It is a curse that reason is called down from Heaven by man. Five hundred years ago, and an immense forest stood on the ground where now is nothing but a sea of stone. Venetians came and hewed down the forest in order to procure wool for piles and mercantile purposes.

### Spring Flowers.

"The spring, the spring is coming!  
Through grassy pathways roaming!"

So reads an old, bright German song which might be true for Germany, but is not for us. The school girls whom we knew, in singing it always said,

"Through muddy pathways roaming."

and if the fair goddess came walking along here, her dainty feet would soon have no lightness left in them, and her white dress would be soiled long before the apronful of flowers were distributed. But in spite of the mud and rain, spring is coming.—*Hudson Reg., N. Y.*

Some Polar Bears who thought it nice,  
Tried a sea voyage on a lump of ice;  
All went well, while the lump of ice lasted  
But when it melted the bears were "dod gasted."  
Comm.

### Circular Letter.

To the Geologists of America:

At a meeting of the geologists in attendance at the Cincinnati session (1881) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the undersigned were appointed a committee to correspond with American geologists, respecting the formation of an American Geological Society, the result of such correspondence to be reported at the next meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Pursuant to such instructions it is deemed best to present sundry considerations, some of them brought forward at Cincinnati, which seem to render it desirable that such a society be organized in America, and which have been approved, and hereby are presented jointly by the committee.

The committee are desirous of eliciting opinions from all active and professional geologists, to the end that more judicious and effective action may be taken at the next meeting.

1. The science of geology, with its kindred branches of paleontology and lithology, has made rapid progress in America,—perhaps more rapid than in any other country—in the last twenty years.

2. The literature of geology is largely distributed through numerous scientific journals, and in the proceedings of miscellaneous scientific societies, a procedure which is difficult and expensive.

3. The present facilities afforded through the American Association for the Advancement of Science are insufficient, and are unavailable by the working geologists of this country—because: (a.) The meetings are held in summer, which is the geologist's working season. In order to be present he must interrupt his work and leave the field, often at considerable expense especially if he has a party with him. (b.) Its brief meetings partake largely of the nature of vacation pleasure parties, and much of the time is engrossed by reception, congratulation and excursions. (c.) There is no sufficient avenue of publication of the work of geologists and especially of paleontologists. (d.) The association has become so large, wide-spread and popular in its work, membership and organization that its spirit necessarily, and properly, is not favorable to the development of any special work through its own agency.

4. The geologists, as a body, have no way of expressing their views on important state, national or international measures, except through the medium of the American Association, at the meetings of which there is a perceptible and increasing lack of attendance and interest on the part of geologists, in consequence of which the actual views of the geologists of the country on such questions can not be obtained and expressed correctly.

5. There is a need of co-ordination of the results of state surveys, to the establishment of greater uniformity in nomenclature and classification.

6. There is need of co-operation on the part of paleontologists, and of some system in describing and publishing new species.

7. There is no strictly geological magazine or journal in America.

8. There is no strictly geological society in America.

9. There are numerous such societies and journals in Europe, as well as journals and societies devoted exclusively to the branches of paleontology and mineralogy.

The committee desire also to disclaim any intention to trespass on the field and plans of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, or to criticize it in any way as to the discharge of its functions. Its tendency is to popularize science and to advance its acceptance by the world by diffusing scientific knowledge, and by announcing important discoveries, and as such its sphere of activity is one that no special scientific body can occupy, but which still will be aided by the existence of tributary organizations, such as that contemplated by this circular.

Persons to whom this circular is addressed are requested to communicate promptly their views and recommendations to any member of the committee, in order that a report may be presented at the Montreal meeting of the American Association, embodying such recommendations as may be warranted by the correspondence, and summarizing the same.

Signed:

N. H. WINCHELL, State Geologist of Minnesota,  
Minneapolis, Minn.

JOHN R. DOCTOR, State Geologist of Kentucky,  
Frankfort, Ky.

HENRY S. WILLIAMS, Professor of Paleontology,  
Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

JOHN COLLETT, State Geologist of Indiana,  
Indianapolis, Indiana

G. C. SWALLOW, Professor of Geology, etc.  
University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

WM. J. DAVIS, Paleontologist,  
Assistant Geol. Sur. of Ky., Louisville, Ky.

S. A. MILLER, Paleontologist,  
Cincinnati, Ohio

### Tributes to Bulletin.

"Those who have taken pains to follow Mr. Vennor's predictions, or rather probabilities, during April and May, will have found them wonderfully close. Even those contained in the Almanac and written from last September, have hit pretty close, but are naturally not quite as precise as those contained in his BULLETIN for May."—*Farmer's Review Chicago.*

"The men who speculate in grain here are pinning their faith to your predictions and advertising your correctness greatly in their talk. During the first five days of May we had frost here."—*Evening Wisconsin, Milwaukee.*

"VENNOR'S PREDICTIONS.—It is a puzzle to the scientist as well as to the layman how Vennor has so accurately foretold the season's changes. In his predictions for May this weather prophet takes occasion to remark that 'out of thirteen long range general predictions' made between the years 1875 and 1882, only two relating to the summer season have not been verified. We have not the data at hand to question the statement, but believe it to be substantially correct. The predictions can hardly be mere guesses, and yet it is difficult to explain upon what scientific calculations they are based. It is easy to understand how the weather bureau at Washington, receiving reports twice every twenty-four hours from all parts of the United States, showing the humidity of the atmosphere, its temperature, the direction and velocity of the wind, can predict for twenty-four or forty-eight hours, with reasonable accuracy, what atmospheric conditions will prevail at a given point.

But where does Vennor get the data upon which to calculate for one month or six months ahead? He cannot conclude that because given conditions prevail in a certain district to-day certain consequences will follow six months hence. New currents will arise, producing new conditions, which are in turn affected by influences which it is impossible for him to anticipate for so long a time upon any known scientific basis of calculation. Such prophets, however, have been known in all ages of the world, and have made predictions which were to a greater or less degree verified." *The Evening Post, Louisville, Ky., May 8.*

MOOREHEAD, Clay Co. Minn., May 1st, 1882.  
H. G. Vennor, Esq., Montreal, Canada.

DEAR SIR,—I have been comparing the weather with predictions in your almanac for 1882, and they agree generally pretty well. Send me the May Bulletin and I will probably subscribe. Yours, &c.,  
D. SMYTH.

CLEVELAND, Ohio, May 6th, 1882.

Please send us Bulletin, Almanac, and whatever you can for the enclosed amount. We want all the information we can get from now till harvest, about the weather.  
J. GREGORY & Co.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., May 4th

Prof. H. G. Vennor, Montreal Canada.

DEAR SIR,—I will subscribe to your Weather Bulletin and am in hopes if you reduce meteorology to a science that the sailors will lose all their superstition. Send a paper to my friend —, Perry Co., Alabama. I hope you may secure him for a correspondent. He has no superior in this country.

Yours &c., A. R. SUTTON.

CINCINNATI, O., May 6th, 1882.

Henry G. Vennor Esq., Montreal Canada.  
DEAR SIR,—Received the May Bulletin, think it's splendid, send it for 1 year. Yours very truly  
C. M. DAVIDSON.

PADUCAH, Ky., April 25th, 1882.

H. G. Vennor, Esq., Montreal.

DEAR SIR,—Having been a close observer of your predictions and weather reports for several years, their general correctness has given me great confidence in your precasts of the weather. You will please send me your Bulletin. W. THORNBERRY,  
Tobacco & Cotton Merchant.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., April 24th, 1882.

H. G. Vennor, Esq.,

DEAR SIR,—I am much interested in your weather forecasts and believe them to be a source of great and valuable information, and to do much good in every way. Send your Bulletin for enclosed amount.

Respectfully yours,

J. J. CRAMER, Coal Dealer.