

EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS to the author from the late Hon. George P. Marsh, Minister of the United States at Rome, and author of *The Earth as Modified by Human Action*:—‘I am extremely obliged to you for a copy of your *Réboisement in France*, just received by post. I hope the work may have a wide circulation. . . . Few things are more needed in the economy of our time than the judicious administration of the forest, and your very valuable writings cannot fail to excite a powerful influence in the right direction.

‘I have received your interesting letter of the 5th inst., with the valuable MSS. which accompanied it. I will make excerpts from the latter, and return it to you soon. I hope the very important facts you mention concerning the effect of plantations on the island of Ascension will be duly verified.

‘I put very little faith in *old* meteorological observations, and, for that matter, not much in *new*. So much depends on local circumstances, on the position of instruments, &c.—on *station*, in short, that it is only on the principle of the tendency of some to balance each other that we can trust to the registers of observers not *known* to be trained to scientific accuracy. Even in observatories of repute, meteorological instruments are seldom properly hung and guarded from disturbing causes. Beyond all, the observations on the absorption of heat and vapour at small distances from the ground show that thermometers are almost always hung too high to be of any value as indicating the temperature of the stratum of the atmosphere in which men live and plants grow, and in most tables, particularly old ones, we have no information as to whether the thermometer was hung five feet or fifty feet from the ground, or whether it was in any way protected from heat radiated from near objects.’

EXTRACT LETTER from the late Professor Henry, of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington:—‘The subject of Forest Culture and its influence on rainfall is, just at this time, attracting much attention in the United States. At the last meeting of the American Association for the advancement of science a committee was appointed to memorialise Congress with reference to it. Several of the Western States Governments have enacted laws and offered premiums in regard to it. The United States Agricultural Department has collected statistics bearing on the question, and we have referred your letter to that establishment.

‘The only contribution that the Smithsonian Institution has made to the subject is that of a series of rain-fall tables, comprising all the observations that have been made in regard to the rainfall in the United States since the settlement of the country; a copy of this we have sent to your address.

‘It may be proper to state that we have commenced a new epoch, and have, since the publication of the tables in question, distributed several hundred rain gauges in addition to those previously used, and to those which have been provided by the Government in connection with the signal service.’

These notices and remarks are cited as indicative of the importance which is being attached to the subject discussed.