

An examination of the records of the United States reveals some interesting and important facts, which it may be well to quote at this stage for the purpose of comparison.

The greatest annual rainfall on this continent is recorded at Greytown, the Atlantic entrance to the proposed Nicaragua Canal. It there assumes the enormous total of 240 inches (20 ft.), a figure which is only surpassed in the Western Hemisphere on the Mexican Gulf Coast in the West Indies, by Guiana and by the coast of Brazil. It is reported that from 7 to 10 per cent. of the total annual rainfall may descend in one day. The results of such a precipitation can be better imagined than described; dry river beds become torrents in a few minutes, the water coming down in a wall several feet high; marshes change to lakes, and the power so quickly developed is necessarily very dangerous to any work of man.

The most remarkable rainfall is recorded at Cuyamaca Dam in San Diego Co., California, about 40 miles east of San Diego. During a storm ending February 27, 1891, the record shows that 23.40 inches fell in 54 hours, of which 13 inches fell in 23 hours, and 7 inches in 10 hours. The elevation of the reservoir is about 4500 feet above sea level. The highest surrounding mountains are 6500 feet above sea level, and lie to the west of the reservoir between its watershed and the direction whence the storms come. The eastern boundary of the basin is on the rim of the desert at an elevation of not over 5000 ft. The topography of the country is such that a rain gauge at the dam would not be likely to indicate the maximum precipitation on the three peaks that bound the water shed on the west. The most notable thing about the above remarkable rainfall, however, is that the place where it occurred is within a few miles of one of the very driest regions in the world. The average annual rainfall at Indio, San Diego Co., a station on the Southern Pacific Railway, about 50 miles east of the Cuyamaca Dam, is given by General Greely as but 1.92 inches, and he says of this and Camp Mohave, Arizona, where the average rainfall is but 1.85 inches: "These stations, doubtless, have the smallest known