**TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."**

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# SUNBURY AMERICAN.

## AND SHAMOKIN JOURNAL.

Absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of Republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism.—JEFFERSON.

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### Professor Espy's First Report on Meteorology,

Consists chiefly of charts, exhibiting, by various symbols, the winds and barometic fluctuations, and changes of temperature, which accompany storms as they pass from the western to the eastern part of the United States, for it appears that all storms in the United States travel towards the east. We extract from the report the following

GENERALIZATIONS.

1st. The rain and snow storms, and even the moderate rains and snows, travel from the west towards the east, in the United States, during the months of January, February and March, which are the only months yet investigated.

2d. The storms are accompanied with a depression of the barometer near the central line of the storm.

3d. This central line of minimum pressure is generally of great length from north to south, and moves side foremost towards the east.

4th. This line is sometimes nearly straight, but generally curved, and most frequently with its convex side towards the east.

5th. The velocity of this line is such, that it travels from the Mississippi to the Connecticut river in about twenty-four hours; and from the Connecticut to St. John, Newfoundland, in nearly the same time, or about 36 miles an hour.

6th. When the barometer falls suddenly in the western part of New England, it rises at the same time in the valley of the Mississippi, and also at St. John, Newfoundland.

7th. In great storms, the wind, for several hundred miles, on both sides of the line of minimum pressure, blows towards that line, directly or obliquely.

8th. The force of the wind is in proportion to the suddenness and greatness of the barometric depression.

9th. In all great and sudden depressions of the barometer, there is much rain or snow; and in all sudden great rains or snows, there is a great fluctuation of the barometer.

10th. Many storms are of great and unknown length from the north to the south, reaching beyond our observers on the Gulf of Mexico and on the northern lakes, while their east and west diameter is comparatively small. The storms, therefore, move side foremost.

11th. Most storms commence in the "far west," beyond our most western observers, but some commence in the United States.

12th. When a storm commences in the United States, the line of minimum pressure does not come from the "far west," but commences with the storm, and travels with it towards the east.

13th. There is generally a lull of wind at the line of minimum pressure, and sometimes a calm.

14th. When the wind changes to the west, the barometer generally begins to rise.

15th. There is generally but little wind near the line of maximum pressure, and on each side of that line the winds are irregular, but tend outwards from that line.

16th. The fluctuations of the barometer are generally greater in the northern than in the southern parts of the United States.

17th. The fluctuations of the barometer are generally greater in the eastern than in the western parts of the United States.

18th. In the northern parts of the United States, the winds, in great storms, generally sets in from the north of east, and terminates from north of west.

19th. In the southern parts of the United States the wind generally sets in from the south of east, and terminates from the south of west.

20th. During the passage of storms, the wind generally changes from the eastward to the westward by the south, especially in the southern parts of the United States.

Accompanying this report is a circular to the friends of science, on the subject of artificial rains, containing many certificates of gentlemen of high standing, in various parts of our country, that rains of great extent were actually produced before their eyes, precisely as predicted by Professor Espy. The clouds were seen by them to form in a clear sky, right over the fire, and pour down a flood of rain, which increased in magnitude at least twenty-eight miles East of the place of beginning, whilst it rained none to the West. Several of these rains took place in Pennsylvania, last summer, and some of them in Indiana, two summers ago. All occurred in extremely dry, warm weather.

We are at liberty to publish, also, a written statement of Judge Catron, of the Supreme Court of the U. S. After mentioning a number of storms which have occurred from time to time in Tennessee, exhibiting phenomena which he and Judge M. W. Brown think can only be accounted for by an up-moving current in the middle of them, and thus conform to Espy's theory, he says: "As to the producing of rain by an upward current from heat, it is so difficult to illustrate the theory, that few will understand the philosophy of it but those who have been accustomed to large fires in the forest. I have often seen it produced before I was acquainted with E-py's theory, and once since, most distinctly, in the Cumberland mountains, when it rained on and over the fire, and on neither side. I travelled through the fire during the rain, and was on both sides while it was raining. The rain was soft and light, and the morning fair North and South of the fire. Being on horseback and alone, I had, and took time to examine the phenomena, in reference to Espy's theory—and I view this theory of storms as established, and that of producing rain as greatly advanced."

Judge Brown says: "that on the Northern border of a violent tornado, which passed through Tennessee, there was a violent storm of hail and rain, with a storm N. W. wind driving obliquely into the tornado. On the South side the wind blew strongly from the South, without rain or hail.

Along with the hail fell a great quantity of the green leaves of trees, and in many instances branches or limbs which were covered with a thick layer or coating of ice, much thicker than in the heaviest sleet The view of hail was about a mile from the path of the tornado, on the North side."

Professor Espy concludes his circular with the following:

INSTRUCTIONS TO OBSERVERS.

In my Philosophy of Storms, from page 492 to 518 are detailed many other facts of a similar nature, all going to show that rains may be produced in time of drought. It remains now to try the principle on a large scale, to see whether it may not be used economically to benefit mankind.

From the investigation which I have been able to make on this subject, and on the nature of rains generally, it follows certainly that all travel eastward from the place of beginning; and that rains and snows in the winter are of great length from north and south, and comparatively narrow from east to west, and of course travel side foremost.* Several other conclusions are rendered highly probable by these investigations, but can only be made certain by future experiments.

Let masses of timber to the amount of forty acres for every twenty miles be prepared and fired simultaneously every seven days in the summer, on the west of the United States in a line of six or seven hundred miles long from north to south, then the following results seem highly probable, but not certain until the experiment is made: A rain of great length north and south will commence near or on the line of the fires; this rain will travel eastward; it will not break up till it reaches far into the Atlantic ocean; it will rain only a short time in any one place; it will not rain again until the nexth seventh day; it will not rain enough and not too much in any one place; it will not be attended with violent wind, neither on land nor on the Atlantic ocean; there will be no hail nor tornadoes at the time of the general rain, nor intermediate; there will be no destructive floods, nor will the waters ever become very low; there will be no more oppressive heats nor injurious colds; the farmers and the mariners will always know before the rains when they will commence and when they will terminate; all epidemic diseases, originating from floods and subsequent droughts, will cease; the proceeds of agriculture will be greatly increased, and the health and happiness of the citizens will be much promoted. These, I say, are the *probable*—not certain—results of the plan proposed; a plan which could be carried into operation for a sum which would not amount to half a cent a year to each individual in the United States; a plan which, if successful, would benefit in a high degree not merely the landsman, but every mariner that plies the Atlantic. If this scheme should appear too gigantic to commence with, let the trial be first made along the Alleghery mountains; and let forty acres of four ten-acre lots be fired every seven days through the summer in each of the counties of McKean, Clearfield, Cambria and Somerset, in Pennsylvania; Alleghany, in Maryland; and Hardy, Pendleton, Bath, Allegheny, and Montgomery, in Virginia. The ten-acre lots should be, as convenient, from one to four miles apart in the form of a square; so that the up-moving column of air which shall be formed over them may have a wide base, and thus may ascend to a considerable height before it may be leaned out of the perpendicular by any wind which may exist at that time.

The summer rains at present are local, and of very limited extent; and though they travel towards the east, like the winter storms, they are not extensive enough to cover the whole country; hence, portions of the country are liable to be parched with drought and hot weather.

May it not be possible that this irregularity is in part produced by the irregular burning of the low prairies, thus producing partial and irregular rains; interrupting the wide extended and general rains which would otherwise take place, as they do in winter?

There is at present, and will be for many years to come, a vast amount of timber cut down and burnt every summer, in the western parts of the United States, enough perhaps, to produce the wide extended and uninterrupted rains so much desired without any expense. Until the government of the United States can be induced to carry into effect the above plan, I earnestly recommend to all persons who have fallows or other large masses of combustibles to burn, save them till the very first dry spell in the summer, and to ensure simultaneous action, let all west of west longitude 87 degrees set fire to their materials only on a Thursday, those west of 90 degrees in the morning at ten o'clock, and those at 90 degrees at six o'clock in the evening; and let all east of 87 degrees set fire to their materials on a Friday, those west of 77 degrees at ten in the morning, and those east of 77 degrees at six o'clock in the afternoon; and in no case let any fallows be burnt unless there has at least a week elapsed without rain.

I hope this request will be complied with, not only because all are interested in the probable results, but because it will be attended with no expense, and the best time of burning is in very dry weather.

It is not at all probable that all will be ready to burn on the first dry spell, or even on the second or third, and thus on every Thursday and Friday during the season on which there may be a draught, materials enough may be burnt to produce a general rain.

For some time after these general rains, partial rains cannot take place, both because of the scarcity of vapor left in the air, because any up moving column of air which may be formed will not rise very high before they enter into the stratum containing much of the caloric of elasticity given out by the condensed vapor of the previous rain, in which the up-moving columns cannot swim; and it is only after the low air becomes charged with vapor, and the upper air becomes cooled by radiation, that another general rain can be produced, and it is not probable that not either of these can be effected in less than about seven days.

I hope that all editors of newspapers throughout the United States, who think there is the least plausibility in the plan here proposed, will publish this letter, or at least enough of it to let all who have materials to burn know how to act in concert.

Finally, I desire all who burn their materials, to watch the phenomena, and send a description of the whole to the Surgeon General's Office, Washington.

A mass of information will thus be accumulated, which lead to modifications in the plan for future operations. JAMES S. ESPY.

M Dobrezhoffer, in his account of the Abiphones of Paraguay, vol 3, page 150, says: "I myself have seen clouds and lightning produced from the smoke over the tall grass and bulrushes that the Indians are not to blame for setting fire to the plains in order to produce rain, they having learned that the thicker smoke turns into clouds which pour forth water."

January 1, 1845.

*See first Report on Meteorology to the Surgeon General United States Army, by the Author.

TRUTH STRANGER THAN FICTION.—A poor country girl travelled from Gee Cross, near Manchester, to London, during the troubles in the time of Charles the First, to seek a place as servant. Failing in this object of her ambition, she engaged herself as what was called tub-woman to a brewer—that is, she carried out the beer from the brew-house. Pleased with her healthy, handsome face, the brewer raised her to the position of his servant—then to that of his wife—finally, to that of a widow, with a handsome dowry. She engaged Mr. Hide, then celebrated as a clever lawyer, to settle some puzzling money matters for her, and, as his own money matters happened to be not only puzzling, but in a hopeless state just then, he proposed to the rich widow and married her. Mr. H. became Lord Chancellor, and Earl of Clarendon.

The only daughter of the marriage became wife of James II, and mother to the Princess Mary and Ann; and so the poor tub woman ended her life as Countess of Clarendon, wife to the Lord Chancellor of England, and mother to one, and grandmother to two Queens of England.

WIVES CAUGHT BY TRAPS.—It is said that the Winnebago Indians catch their wives by setting traps for them—in other words, whenever a young Indian takes a fancy to a squaw he leaves a steel trap in front of her lodge at night. If this is taken in by the father—the squaw is not expected to "put her foot" into the matter at all—the contract is considered settled; if not, and the young man deems the copper-colored fair one worth an extra trap, he leaves two, sometimes three. Whenever the trap or traps are taken in, the marriage ceremony at once comes off. This is about the last way of catching a wife we should have thought of.

### THE RAT TOWER.

The memory of Hatto, archbishop of Mainz, is still execrated on the banks of the Rhine, eight or nine centuries after his death; and, to this day, when a cloud or fog is seen resting on the Mausthrum, the peasants point to it, in fear and detestation, as containing the spirit of the savage priest. Hatto was a man without a heart. He delighted in cruelty, and was pleased with all sorts of horrors, except the fictitious.—He would have made an excellent ogre, only that he wanted the peculiarity of appetite.

A famine visited the land which was under the spiritual and pastoral care of this good shepherd. The people died in thousands; infants perished of hunger at the breast, and others of hunger and self detestation that their fountains of nature refused to supply their offspring with the means of life. The archbishop feasted and fattened. He prayed to God, however, to remove his curse from the land; he anathematized the foul fiend with bell, book, and candle; nay, he fasted an entire day on stewart carp and smoked salmon, drinking naught save johannisberger, and sudesheimer and hockelmer. But he gave nothing to the starving poor—not a fragment, not a crumb.

Then the people waxed wroth. They looked with their hungry eyes into one another's faces, and said, "Let us go unto the man of God; let us go up in a body, and show him our skin and bones, and cry altogether with a loud voice, help!—help!" and they went up; and their voices, although thin and weak and broken, were able, because of the number, to reach the archbishop's ears, as he sat drinking the pale wine and the red at his dessert.

'What is this?' cried the archbishop; 'what rascally concert have we now?'

'It is the people,' answered his men; 'they are hungry, and they cry for food.'

'Let them work, varlets,' said the archbishop, growing red with indignation.

'They have no work, and are too feeble to work.'

'Too feeble to work! Go you now!—what is that? Mercy on us, these are feeble lungs, indeed! Send them packing, I say! Off with them—troop, trundle.'

But the people would not move, for they were fierce in their hunger, and valiant in their despair; and they continued to cry without voice. 'Oh, man of God! help! help!'

Then the soul of the archbishop was stirred with wrath and fiery indignation, and he commanded his archers to lay hold of the rebels, and shut them up in an empty barn near the palace. And when this was done, he sat quaffing the pale wine and the red, thinking of the insolence of the base populace, till the veins of his head swelled with fury.

'Go,' said he to his men, starting suddenly up from the table, 'go and set fire to the barn.'

And his men did so.

And the archbishop stood at the window waiting impatiently; but when he saw the flames burst through the roof of the barn, and heard the screams of the wretches within, he clapped his hands and cried out joyfully: 'It burns! it burns! *Hark how the rats squek!*'

That night the archbishop's men were awakened by their master, and ran to his chamber 'My lord,' said they, 'what is the matter!'

'It is the rats,' answered he; 'they will not let me alone.' And they saw that the counterpane of precious fur was indeed all gnawed to pieces. Then the men waited and set traps and dogs, and slew the rats in great numbers; but the faster they slew, the faster they grew. And the archbishop had no rest, neither night nor day. At his meals, the odious vermin jumped in his porringer, or upset his drinking cups; and if he slept, (which fear allowed him but rarely to do,) he was sure to be awakened by a rat tearing at his throat.

The archbishop, at last, determined not only to leave a palace infested by such importunate guests, but to choose a lodging in which there could be no possibility of a repetition of the nuisance. He accordingly caused a tower to be built amid the rushing waters of the Bingerloch, and when it was ready, set out with a joyful heart to shut himself up in his new abode.

He embarked at Bingen, and on arriving at the tower, sprang eagerly to land. That day he feasted in safety. He retired early, and commanding that no one should disturb or come near him on pain of death, he prepared to enjoy, at least, the luxury of an untroubled sleep. He had already undressed: but, in the fullness of his exultation, would scan with his own eyes the space of waters between him and the land, which was the tenantable inheritance of his foes.

As he looked out of the window, he saw a motion on the dark and troubled waters beneath, which was unlike the motion of the waves. The whole surface seemed instinct with life; and on the opposite shore a plashing sound, as of hundreds and thousands of stones or other small bodies, dropped from the rocks into the river, rose above the din of the waters. Struck with a sudden terror yet not knowing what to fear, the archbishop leaned out of the window, and looking down the bottom of the wall. There he saw myriads of small black things rising out of the waves and ascending the stones, and as a fatal conviction flashed upon his mind, he hastened to shut the casement. He was but a moment too late. The casement closed upon the neck of a monstrous rat; and as the brute gasped and goggled in his face, the archbishop, overpowered with horror, let go his hold.

That night the achbishop's men heard a cry from their master's room; but they remembered his commands and did not stir.

'My lord,' said they, 'is asleep, and dreams that he is still among the rats at Mainz'—Nevertheless they were troubled; for their lord was a hard master, and was accustomed to punish, whether they did ill or well, if harm came of it. So, in the morning, they all ran anxiously to his chamber, but the archbishop was gone. Some small fragments of his night-gown were on the floor, and some specks of blood among the rushes; but, skin and bone, lith and limb, had the rats eaten him up.

### Hints for the Season.

The following hints are condensed from the last number of the 'American Farmer.' Our agricultural reader will find them worthy of consideration at this season of the year:

*Wheat Fields.*—It should be the business of every wheat grower to examine the water furrows in his wheat fields, and to have every thing cleaned out of them that can in any way impede the free passage of the water.

*Sowing Clover.*—All who may not already have sown clover seed on their wheat, should do so at an early period; so firmly convinced are we of its fertilizing properties, that, time and opportunities permitting, we would sow clover seed upon all our grain fields, whether we intend to permit them to remain in grass for hay or pasture, or to plough them up at the end of the season—But we would, as soon as our grain was cut, sow a bushel of plaster to the acre to encourage the more rapid growth of the tender clover plants, in order that they might make shade to protect themselves from the burning suns of summer All clover fields should be dressed with a bushel of plaster to the acre.

*Lucerne.*—We have often advised our readers to try a few acres of this valuable grass. Whether cut green and fed to horses and cattle, or cured into hay, it is one of the most profitable artificial grasses. It may be cut three or four times a year.

*Oats.*—The earlier this crop is got in the greater certainty will there be for it to make a good yield; but it is useless to expect large production without the soil be good and suitable to the nature of the oat and plant, and wherever there may be any doubt of its fertility, means must be used to supply the deficiency. If nothing else is at command, let a compost be made of two bushels of ashes and one of plaster to the acre sow it evenly over the field—the ashes will dissolve the sand, form a resinate of potash, and thus impart to the straw the capacity to stand erect and face the wind, while the plaster will attract nebulous grass from the atmosphere, whereon the plants may feed, give volume and substance to the kernel, and ensure its perfect fruitification.

*Preparing the Ground.*—The ground should be ploughed deep—say 7 or 8 inches, thoroughly pulverised, and after the oats are ploughed in two or three inches deep, not more, the ground should be harrowed finely and then rolled with a heavy roller, so that the earth may be compressed around the seed and facilitate its germination.

*Quantity of seed to the acre*—From 2 to 4 bushels to the acre has been found the best quantity.

*Corn.*—It is time to be putting the corn ground in order, and while the grower may be making his arrangements, let him not forget that his success will mainly depend upon the pains which he may bestow in the preparation of his ground—that he should plough it deep, pulverize it finely, and manure it with every thing in the shape of fertilizers which he can command, giving it broad cast, and with a liberal hand, not omitting to give to each hill a mixture of *ashes* and 1 bushel of *plaster* to the acre.

ALPHONSE KARR AND HIS TAILOR.—The talented author of "Les guepes," and various other *jeux d'esprit*, relates that he lately sent to his tailor to make him a coat out of a piece of cloth he had purchased. "Can't do it," said the tailor; "there is n't stuff enough." Karr then sent for another tailor, who, after carefully measuring the material undertook to make the coat. In due time the garment was delivered, and Karr's first visit was to the tailor. "*Ma voila, malheureux!*" said he; behold me in the very coat from the very stuff you said was insufficient! You see there was stuff enough after all!" "Very likely; said the man of measures, with imperturbable *sang froid*, very likely; but the *son of the tailor who made it is not so big as mine!*"

It is no one great thing which makes the character of a man, but a great many little things.