

been bestowed upon the eruptive rocks which form so important and interesting a feature of Colorado geology. The more characteristic varieties are represented by distinct shades of crimson or orange, and they have been mapped in such a way as to convey at a glance, and even without the aid of sections, a tolerably clear notion of the volcanic phenomena of the region. On the one hand we see the great lava-sheets capping the mesas and spreading far over the plateaux, on the other we notice the great centres of volcanic activity, with their abundant flows, dykes, and breccias.

Two sheets of sections, drawn across all the more interesting and important portions of the geology, complete the vast fund of information given by the maps; while, that nothing may be wanting to enable readers to realise what has been done by the Survey, and the conditions under which it has been accomplished, two large sheets of sketches are given, which most vividly represent the forms of the mountains, plateaux, mesas, and river-channels, as seen from various commanding heights.

Dr. Hayden, with whose personal supervision this great work has been accomplished, has increased tenfold the obligations under which he has laid geologists all over the world for the number and value of his contributions to geology. He now furnishes us with new light whereby to read his former researches and those of his able colleagues. May we venture to hope that he may find leisure to confer yet one further benefit before the progress of his Survey plunges him into a new whirl of work? If he could be prevailed upon to sketch out a plan for digesting the materials of his published Annual Reports, he could doubtless find among his staff some competent writer who, under his guidance, could produce a well-arranged systematic guide-book or text-book to complete the value of the work of his Survey. Such a book of reference as would give a reader who has never had access to the Annual Reports a clear and comprehensive view of Colorado geology, would be of very great service.

These remarks may be fitly closed with an expression of the warmest admiration of the liberal spirit in which the United States Government has conducted these Surveys of the Territories and has published their results. This costly atlas has been distributed gratuitously all over Europe. That this is a wise policy cannot be doubted. Whether actuated or not by a desire to diffuse scientific information, the authorities at Washington do well to make as widely known as possible the geological structure and economic resources of their country. They cast their bread upon the waters, and the harvest comes to them in the form of eager, active emigrants from all parts of Europe. ARCH. GEIKIE

OUR BOOK SHELF

Forest Flora of British Burma. By S. Kurz, Curator of the Herbarium, Royal Botanical Gardens, Calcutta. (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1877.)

By the completion of the work whose title is given above, we have the third valuable contribution to a knowledge of the rich vegetation of our Indian forests. In all three works, namely, Col. Beddome's "Flora Sylvatica of Southern India," Brandis's and Stewart's "Forest

Flora of North-West and Central India," and the book now before us, there is much in common, and the plans of the two latter are very similar. There is, however, one great difference between Beddome's and Brandis's Floras and the present issue; while the first two are most profusely illustrated, the work under consideration is entirely without plates. This, perhaps, is not to be regretted considering that the work in its present form constitutes two good-sized volumes; and further than this, Indian plants have of late been very well represented, notably in the two forest floras just referred to. Another distinction, and perhaps one more affecting foresters generally, for whose benefit these floras are ostensibly prepared, is the meagre information regarding the uses of the plants mentioned. Mr. Kurz excuses himself for reducing this portion of his work to a minimum, and refers to Brandis's "Forest Flora" for information on this head. We regret that Mr. Kurz did not see his way to greater condensation in his descriptions, and, if need be, the use of smaller type, so as to reduce the bulk of the book. At the same time its efficiency would have been much increased had he followed Dr. Brandis in giving extended notes as to the uses, for to no similar work can we point with so much satisfaction in this respect as to that of Dr. Brandis.

Regarding the nomenclature of genera and species, it is a pity that some kind of uniformity should not prevail amongst the different authors. Many forest officers would, to say the least, be somewhat confused as to the use of a proper name when he finds in two books published by authority and appearing within a year or two of each other a different generic distinction for the same plant; thus Brandis keeps up the rubiaceous genus *Adina*, and figures *A. cordifolia* of Hook. fil. and Benth., placing *Nauclea cordifolia*, Roxb., as a synonym. Kurz, on the contrary, retains *Nauclea* as a genus, sinking under it *Adina cordifolia*, which is spelt *Andina*, and attributed to Roxb. On this subject of nomenclature, however, Mr. Kurz says: "I confess myself an admirer of, and adherent to, the botanical laws as laid down by the International Botanical Congress at Paris in the year 1867, and published by Prof. Alph. de Candolle. These are translated into nearly all modern languages, and are now generally adopted in Europe, except at Kew. However, I have deviated in several cases in favour of Hooker's 'Indian Flora,' or kept up old-established names, not because I assent to such irregularities, but simply because I thought it not fair that I, a German, should introduce my individual convictions into a practical work written solely for the use of English people."

Notwithstanding the remarks which we have been obliged to make, Mr. Kurz's Flora is one of very great value, and, taken in conjunction with those we have before referred to, forms a pretty complete forest flora of British India. We are reminded by the passing of this work through our hands of the loss Indian botany has sustained by the lamented death of its author.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- [The Editor does not hold himself responsible for opinions expressed by his correspondents. Neither can he undertake to return, or to correspond with the writers of, rejected manuscripts. No notice is taken of anonymous communications.]
- [The Editor urgently requests correspondents to keep their letters as short as possible. The pressure on his space is so great that it is impossible otherwise to ensure the appearance even of communications containing interesting and novel facts.]

American Storm Warnings

THE author of the papers on the American Storm Warnings (NATURE, vol. xviii, pp. 4, 31, 61) seems well acquainted with the storms and storm-warnings of America, and at least with some of the results arrived at in Europe, and if he had confined himself to what he really knew, and to the description of the means