

plains some of the circumstances which attend its fall, is found to be altogether inadequate for the explanation of others. In France and Spain it generally hails in the hottest part of the day, chiefly in spring and summer, and but seldom during the night, or in the winter months. In the present great uncertainty in which all meteorologists feel themselves to be placed, in attempting to account for the formation of hail, we shall only remark, that there is some evidence of the interference of electricity in this as well as in other atmospheric changes. The electrometer is always in a state of agitation upon the approach of a hail-cloud, the electric condition of the atmosphere frequently changing from one state to another ten or twelve times in a minute; and some suppose that the rattling noise which precedes the fall of hail, is attributable to the collision of the stones in differently electrified conditions.

Mr. Stewart has given a very interesting and graphic account of a remarkable hail-storm in the Pyrenees. "In August, 1813, the British army occupied a range of mountain district extending from Roncesvalles to St. Sebastian. About this period, the forces under Marshal Soult were anxious to get possession of the pass of Maya, situated at the top of the Pyrenees, and one of the few roads on the western ridge by which cavalry or artillery can enter Spain. A division of British infantry were ordered to take possession of the pass, and remain there till two o'clock: the day was very warm, and the sky clear and cloudless. About three o'clock, the summits of the adjoining hills were enveloped in a cloud of pitchy darkness, and leaving but an obscure light as it quickly passed over our heads, and producing a peculiar noise among the rocks. As the troops began to descend the mountain, they were overtaken by a violent hail-shower, which lasted about twenty minutes, and created more alarm among its victims than the approaching contest. Contrary to my expectations, the storm was unaccompanied with either thunder or lightning, while the stones increased from the size of a bean to that of a hen's egg. These were transparent masses of ice, round in form, and having on their surface icicles about the length and thickness of the prong of a common silver fork. From this circumstance, I am induced to believe that the hail had been twice as large in the higher regions of the atmosphere, and before they reached the sur-