touches, which cause it to exhibit the prescribed sequence of its instincts. Whoever has been in the habit of attending to the motions of *insects* will find them most alert in sultry weather, especially in an electric state of the atmosphere, before a thunder storm. Heat and electricity also accelerate the growth of *plants*, if duly supplied with moisture.

It is remarkable, and worthy of particular observation, verifying the old adage that extremes meet, that an approach towards the *maximum* of heat produces sometimes the same effects upon organized nature that an appproach towards the *minimum* does. In tropical countries they do not divide the year into winter and summer, but into the rainy and dry seasons; as to temperature, the former would, perhaps, be judged to correspond with our winter, and the latter with our summer; but with respect to the state of animals and vegetables, the reverse would appear to be most consistent with facts. The great rains, according to M. Lacordaire,* "begin to fall in Brazil about the middle of September, when all nature seems to awake from its periodical repose; vegetation resumes a more lively tint, and the greater part of plants renew their leaves; the insects begin to reappear: in October the rains are rather more frequent, and with them the insects; but it is not till towards the middle of November, when the rainy season is definitively set in, that all the families appear suddenly to develop themselves; and this general impulse that all nature seems to receive continues augmenting till the middle of January, when it attains its acme. The forests present then an aspect of movement and life of which our woods in Europe can give no idea. During part of the day we hear a vast and uninterrupted hum, in which the deafening cry

* Annal. des Sc. Natur. xx. Juin, 1830. 193.