

For Release
May 17, 1938

By Major A. H. Thiessen
Science Service Meteorologist

Rainfall and earthquakes! Humboldt, the great naturalist-traveler, wrote early in the 19th century that it would be difficult for anyone residing in lower Peru to deny the connection between these two phenomena. Darwin, in "The Voyage of the Beagle," writes: "The natives of certain parts of South America always connect earthquakes with abundant pasturage. It seems very probable that after torrential rains, one inch adding 113 tons to every acre, the equilibrium of the surface layers would be disturbed and an earthquake would result. Also, after a long dry spell, the ground would lose tons of moisture and aided by low pressure the equilibrium would again be disturbed and an earthquake might result. But earthquakes do not produce rain."