Professor O. C. Marsh:

My Dear Sir:

I learn from the enclosed note that you are not satisfied with the wood cuts of the Eclipse Report. I regret this as so much time and money were spent on them. The cuts were made from drawings made by the best artist in Washington (who does the finest work for Major Powell’s Survey) from the original photographs; and carefully compared with these originals. No doubt they may contain errors, but I should think not any material ones.

The bird’s eye view is geometrically wrong, as of course, I knew. It however is copied from a sketch by Mr. Jansen, which sketch is the best representation of the island that could be found. From the mast-head, these irregular shaped islands look el-
(roughly)

Lithical, no matter what their real shape, owing to erroneous judgment of distances. I think Darwin and Prof. Dana explicitly refer to this illusion—which is illustrated several times in the Wilkes' exploring expedition, & elsewhere.

I mention these things that you may see that the subject had been considered beforehand. If I had been in Washington longer I could have removed some small errors that I know of; but I had hoped no serious ones remained, & I regret it, if it is so.

Very faithfully yours,
Edward L. Holden
Nautical Almanac Office  
Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department  
Washington  
Feb. 2nd, 1885  

My Dear Holden;

Although I have received no commission to mention the matter to you, I take it upon myself to advise you that President Marsh is somewhat annoyed by certain criticisms which have been made upon the illustrations in your eclipse report. One is that the birds eye view on the frontispiece is entirely irreconcilable with the chart two leaves following; that by no possibility can the chart be projected into the picture. I believe also that the botany and geology of the engravings comes in for criticism but this is a point on which I am not exactly informed.

Yours very truly,

S. Newcomb

Prof. E.S. Holden,  
Madison,  
Wis.
Professor O. C. March:
New Haven:

My Dear Sir:

I am naturally very anxious that our Eclipse Report shall be not only a creditable thing but also well thought of; and so I have watched the reviews of it. There is a very complimentary one in The Observatory for April 1885 p. 134; and in The Nation for March 26 p. 261 a writer has actually singled out the view of Caroline E. for special praise. I took the pains to ask the editors who wrote this; and I find it was Prof. W. M. Davis of Harvard. I do not know him, but from all I have seen of his work I should think his good report was worth having. I personally am satisfied the work was as well done as the time permitted and I feel tolerably sure that it will be well thought of.

I am, Very faithfully,
Edward S. Holden