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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THUNDERSTORM BREEDING SPOTS

Even when the weather map shows a favorable condition for local or heat thunderstorms they will usually start only in regions where the surface temperature provides a strong puff of ascending air. Some places seem peculiarly fitted to furnish these convective puffs and constitute "thunderstorm breeding spots."

Local thunderstorms tend to originate most often where large volumes of moist air are readily warmed and forced upwards; broad expanses of meadowland or river flats, smoky cities, and valleys in mountain regions may all serve as breeders. R. E. Horton, an hydraulic engineer, has observed thunderstorms over Albany, N. Y., and Providence, R. I., "which originated immediately over the city and did not travel far outside their limits on days when there were no other adjacent thunderstorms." Similarly, Mr. Horton notes the development of thunderstorms over the warm, shallow waters of Oneida Lake, N. Y. Such storms travel the length of the lake and die out soon after reaching the cool, wooded shore. Intense overheating of air at the bottom of the Grand Canyon sometimes breeds a thunderstorm within the Canyon, the entire cloud mass remaining below the level of the rim. It is not surprising then, that the frequency of thunderstorm rains varies markedly within even a relatively small area, such as a state, or even a county.

(Tomorrow: Thunderstorms on Alternate Days)
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