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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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OIL VERSUS FOG

Oiling swamps to prevent mosquitoes has long been an established practice. A possible new use of oil is suggested by experiments in French rivers and at Pittsburgh, where the waters were oiled to hinder the formation of autumn "steam" fogs. On calm cool nights in fall the air becomes cold while the water surfaces remain relatively warm. Evaporation takes place from the water, some of the moisture is promptly condensed in the cool air, and a fog results. The process is similar to the steaming from a soup tureen. If the dish is tightly covered there is little steam. The oil film is employed with partial success as a cover or lid to prevent the steaming of the warm river or lake.

With other types of fog, the oil cover would be useless. For instance, in spring warm and moist air may be chilled by contact with the then relatively cold water surfaces. Condensation of the moisture in the air may then cause a fog. In this case, however, it is the air rather than the water which is furnishing the fog moisture, so the supply of fog could not be curtailed by putting a lid over the water.

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