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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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"ALL SIGNS FAIL IN DRY WEATHER"

During the long, dry spells forecasters must often feel that "all signs fail in dry weather". The truth of this proverb lies in the fact that when the air is comparatively dry, the rainmaking process must be vigorous to allow any drops of rain to reach the surface. If, when the air above the earth is dry, light rain starts falling from a great height, it will all be evaporated before it reaches the surface. An extreme case of this sort frequently occurs in the Australian desert where the parched explorers often watch the thunderclouds gather, and the lightning flash, but never feel any rain.

On the other hand, the statement is often made that "In wet weather it rains without half trying". Under such circumstances, of course, the humidity is high and very small raindrops will reach the ground, for but little evaporation is taking place.

(Tomorrow: Climate and Health)

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