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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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RAIN BREAKS FRUIT TREES

The branches of fruit trees are especially likely to break during or just after rains. The rain held on the leaves adds a very appreciable weight to the already laden boughs. Mr. Robert E. Horton has found that in showers trees will hold in drops on their leaves from 0.02 to 0.07 inches of rainfall; 0.05 is not uncommon. Suppose we have a large apple tree with a crown 40 feet in diameter. This tree will cover an area of about 1250 square feet. If it intercepts and stores on its leaves and branches 0.05 inch of rain, exclusive of what runs down the trunk, it adds to its load about 5 cubic feet or over 300 pounds of water. This weighs about as much as 5 bushels of apples. It has been roughly estimated that such a tree may have half a million leaves. When each leaf bears 20 drops of one-eighth inch diameter, as is sometimes the case, nearly 6 cubic feet of water will be held.

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