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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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HOW THE ATMOSPHERE IS DRIED

All the time the air contains some water vapor, even over deserts it is not perfectly dry. At any temperature water vapor present may vary from 10 to 100 per cent of the possible amount. Evaporation puts water into the air, condensation takes it out.

In cloudy storm weather, the condensation which removes water vapor from the air is taking place at relatively high levels. It seems somewhat paradoxical but it is often true that rain dries the air, at least temporarily. The water vapor turns into water droplets and falls out.

In clear weather the atmosphere is more likely to be dried at the bottom. On calm nights air is chilled where it comes in contact with cold surfaces near the ground, part of its vapor condenses as dew, and the air is thereby dried to a certain extent - even more at times than the air is later humidified by the evaporation of this dew, for some of the dew runs into the ground and seeps away. The collection of dew water even to the extent of forming dew ponds has often been claimed - but has not been proved to the satisfaction of meteorologists.

In general the atmosphere is receiving water vapor more largely in the spring and giving it up in the fall.

(Tomorrow: Quiet Vs. Windy Weather)

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