

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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PHYSIOLOGICAL CLIMATOLOGY

Though for some years there have been a number of investigations in progress on the therapeutic value of different types of climate, it is only recently that these have become sufficiently coordinated to be dignified by a name as a distinct branch of climatology. Under the able leadership of Dr. C. Dorno, Switzerland, there was held not long ago a congress on physiological climatology. Of this instructive gathering Dorno says: "it reflected as in a mirror in the most varied manner the views upon climatic characteristics and climatic effects held by the representatives of climatological science. The sun is a friend to one, to the other an enemy; one prefers wind, the other avoids it, etc., each according to the effect upon the human species which he has observed in the conditions of his environment."

Climatological data expressed in the usual terms do not adequately show the features so important physiologically. So Dr. Dorno proposes that for physiological climatology the climatic data be expressed in terms of the human physiological zero, our blood temperature, 36.5 degrees Centigrade. A comfortable air temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit, 20 degrees Centigrade, would be minus 16.5 degrees phys. Radiation, likewise, should be in terms of heat loss from a warm body. Relative humidity, instead of being stated in terms of vapor present relative to what might be in the air at the current temperature, would be stated relative to the possible vapor amount if the air were saturated at body temperature. The Dorno relative humidity of 77 average corresponds to a physiological humidity of but 9 per cent. The construction of new tables and maps of the climates of the world on a physiological basis would be laborious but well worth the effort.

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