

A Science Service Feature

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! WHY THE WEATHER !

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Authority on Meteorology

A QUAIN T GUIDE TO WEATHER PREDICTION

In all literature no other work relating to the weather has had so wide a circulation as the one known, in its original German form, as "Bauern-Praktik," and in its English versions as "The Husbandman's Practice."

It first appeared in Germany in 1508 and was soon translated into the principal tongues of Europe. In German alone it has gone through 60 editions. More than 40 editions have been published in Swedish, and it remains to this day a favorite among the Swedish peasantry. The first English translation appeared about 1642, and it was frequently republished, both separately and in combination with other popular books; especially the "Book of Knowledge" and the "Shepherd's Prognostication for the Weather".

This quaint work embodies a very ancient superstition, according to which the weather of the twelve months of the year may be predicted from that prevailing on the so-called "twelve-nights", or "twelve days". In the earliest form of the superstition these twelve nights or days were counted from the beginning of the year, but after Christianity gained its ascendancy they were reckoned from Christmas. The same work ascribes a prognostic signification to the day of the week on which Christmas falls.

Besides these prognostics relating to the Christmas season, the early editions contain a few other rules for predicting the weather. In later times the work was gradually expanded by the addition of other more or less fantastic information, supposed to be of value to the rural community.

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