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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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MOON AND WEATHER

The specious argument so often heard that, because the moon causes tides in the ocean, it must exert an equally striking influence over the atmosphere is not only false but also comparatively modern, and hence has little to do with the wide-spread belief in lunar control over weather, which grew up in the early infancy of the human race.

There are some familiar weather signs relating to the appearance of the moon as affected by the atmosphere through which it shines that have a certain amount of science back of them; but those dealing with purely astronomical phenomena, such as the angle at which the lunar crescent stands in the evening sky or the change in the moon's phases, are entirely fallacious. They imply the erroneous belief that the moon exercises some sort of control over the earth's atmosphere. Only one heavenly body actually has any such control and that is the sun. The machinery of weather is run by solar heat. There are lunar tides in the atmosphere, but they are so insignificant that they are completely swamped by the atmospheric movements caused by the sun, which sends us more heat and light in 13 seconds than we get from the moon in a whole year.

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