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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

WIND "HOLES"

In parts of rural England the curious custom prevails of describing the quarter from which the rain-bearing winds blow as a "hole". The word, in this sense, is always used in connection with the name of some locality. About Shrewsbury, for example, you hear people say, "There'll be rain, for the wind has got into Habberley Hole" -- Habberley being a village to the southwestward of that town. In Ashford Vale, East Kent, it is Bodjam Hole that is said to breed the rainy winds, and at Dunstable, Bedfordshire, it is Flammer's Hole. In parts of Lincolnshire people talk in a similar fashion of Weaby Hole and Marnum Hole.

Probably these expressions are mementoes of the time when even the wisest philosophers believed that many winds had their origin underground, in caves. This belief was, I suppose, founded on the now well-known phenomenon of "blowing caverns." A typical blowing cavern has two openings at different levels. In summer the air in the cave is colder than the air outdoors, and therefore flows out of the lower opening, while air is drawn in above to replace it. In winter the circulation is reversed. The air in the cave is then warmer than that outside and escapes at the top as from a chimney, being replaced by air drawn in below.

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