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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 18, 1927

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WEATHER TALK

Why do people talk so much about the weather? Certainly not because, to the average human being, weather is more important than hundreds of other possible topics of conversation.

Perhaps the custom is a survival of the time when weather really was a subject of supreme interest to mankind. The occupations of our ancestors back in the Stone Age were mostly carried on out-of-doors, and the rude habitations of the period afforded but a poor shelter from the elements. In India, today, as the period of the monsoon rains approaches, anxiety about the timely arrival and the abundance of these showers eclipses all other thoughts in the mind of the peasant, because a severe drought at this season means a famine. When our forefathers lived by hunting, fishing and crude systems of grazing and agriculture, they were, no doubt, equally solicitous about atmospheric conditions that directly affected their food supply.

In those days comments on the weather were by no means empty formulas. Men rejoiced together that the day was fine, because it was a circumstance upon which their dinner depended, and the prehistoric equivalent of "What beastly weather!" was probably accompanied by a significant tightening of the belt.

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