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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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Authority on Meteorology

TALKING ABOUT THE WEATHER

"There was no information," says Boswell, "for which Dr. Johnson was less grateful than for that which concerned the weather... If any one of his intimate acquaintance told him it was hot or cold, wet or dry, windy or calm, he would stop them by saying, 'Poh! poh! You are telling us that of which nonebut men in a mine or a dungeon can be ignorant. Let us bear with patience or enjoy in quiet elementary changes, whether for the better or the worse, as they are never secrets.'"

From time immemorial the weather has been a universal topic of conversation. There is, however, some reason to believe that people discuss the subject less nowadays - when artificial conditions of life make humanity to a certain degree independent of weather influences - than they did in former times. Some surprising figures bearing on this point have been adduced by Prof. H. T. Moore, the psychologist, who recently collected fragments of conversation overhead on Broadway, New York, at Columbus, Ohio, and in London, and classified them according to subject.

Only two out of 200 conversations overheard in London related to weather - though the world's metropolis has an abundance of weather worth talking about. Less than half a dozen of 500 conversations gleaned in Columbus dealt with this subject, and so rarely is the weather mentioned on Broadway that Prof. Moore ignored it in his classification.

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