

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed March 28, 1928

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WAR AND WEATHER

We still hear echoes from time to time of the idea so prevalent during the World War that the enormous quantities of explosives set off at that time must have had a perceptible effect upon atmospheric conditions. The following remarks by Dr. W. J. Humphreys are pertinent:

"It is true that the amount of explosives used in the war far exceeded that of any other, but even so no appreciable effect could have been produced in this way on the climate of the world. All weather factors - temperature, precipitation, wind velocity, etc., - ultimately depend upon heating and cooling.

"Now the approximate amount of heat generated by the burning of a pound of smokeless powder is well known, and a little calculation shows that if there had been ten million men engaged in the war, and if each had used up ten tons of smokeless powder, and, further, if none of this heat had been lost but all had been kept in the atmosphere, the temperature of the whole atmosphere would have been raised by only one-thousandth of a degree Fahrenheit - certainly not enough to produce any appreciable change in the world's climate."

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