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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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ELECTRICAL RAIN-MAKING

The use of electricity as a means of making rain or otherwise controlling the weather has assumed a variety of forms, at the hands of cranks and charlatans on the one hand, and scientific experimenters on the other, but the results thus far are negligible.

A few years ago there was much excitement in California over the doings of a rain-maker whose plan consisted of sending powerful electric discharges into the atmosphere. Radio fans claimed that he was ruining their fun with "static," while many farmers believed his contrivance to be the salvation of their crops. There was a lively controversy on the subject in the newspapers. The operator himself was reported to have promised unlimited prosperity to the state through the effects of his undertakings upon the hydroelectric industry.

"I produce water", he was quoted as saying, "and the water will in turn work the dynamos that make the electricity. Then, with the electricity, I will produce more water. It will be a sort of perpetual motion of energies."

This utopian project seems to have gone the way of many others more or less akin to it. Nothing has been heard of it for some years.

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