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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed October 2, 1928

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A SHOWER OF DUST

In the latter days of last April a heavy shower of dust fell over a wide area of east-central Europe, causing much popular excitement and superstitious terror. The fall was first noted in northern Rumania on the 26th. Press reports cabled to America attributed it to an active volcano in that region, but no such volcano exists. On the afternoon of the 26th the dust had spread into southeastern Poland, and as rain fell at the same time the result was a heavy shower of mud. At Lemberg the fall was heaviest on the night of the 26th-27th. The next day, at the same place, the daylight was much diminished and assumed a yellow tinge, recalling the effects of a solar eclipse.

During the 27th and the 28th the dust traveled across Poland into eastern Germany and also northward into Lithuania, where it was noted in the district of Vilna on the 29th. According to Profs. Arctowski and Stenz, of the University of Lemberg, fully 1,500,000 tons of dust fell in Poland alone, covering about 30 per cent. of the country. The same authorities estimate that the total fall of dust in Poland and adjacent countries was considerably greater than that recorded in the famous dustfall of March, 1901, when about 1,800,000 tons of dust blown from the Sahara was deposited on the continent of Europe.

The dust that fell last April is supposed to have been blown up from the soil of southern Russia, where, in the region north of the Black Sea, winds of hurricane force prevailed on the evening of the 25th under the influence of a cyclonic disturbance central over Asia Minor.

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