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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CHARTING INDOOR AIR

An interesting device for recording and averaging air conditions indoors as they affect human health and comfort is the Synthetic Air Chart, which was developed in the Ventilation Division of the Chicago Health Department and was adopted in 1920 as a standard measure of ventilation by the American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers. In preparing the chart the observer makes a series of tests at different places in a room. The results of these tests are entered in appropriate columns on the chart.

One series gives the number of degrees by which the "effective temperature" at each point differs from an effective temperature of 64, which is regarded as ideal. Effective temperature is obtained from a "comfort chart" on the basis of readings of dry-bulb and wet-bulb thermometers, in accordance with the methods worked out at the research laboratory of the A. S. H. V. E. in Pittsburgh.

Other tests give the number of dust particles per cubic foot, the bacterial content of the air, the percentage of freedom from objectionable odors, the amount of carbon dioxide present (in parts per 10,000), and the "distribution" of air, as determined by comparison of the carbon dioxide measurements at different points. The results of all tests are expressed in percentage, and the average of all the percentages is taken as a numerical expression of the atmospheric conditions as a whole.

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