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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CLASSICAL WEATHER LORE

Ancient Greek and Roman literature is rich in weather lore. Much of this lore is mere astrological nonsense, but some of it contains an element of empirical wisdom gradually acquired by farmers, sailors and others who led out-of-door lives. Aristotle, Theophrastus, Aratus, Virgil, Lucretius and Pliny are some of the well-known classical authors who mention the various natural signs--meteorological, astronomical and biological--regarded by the ancients as prognostics of coming weather.

Other authors, whose names are less familiar, compiled weather calendars, recording the normal succession of atmospheric events through the year--prototypes of modern climatic statistics. The value of these calendars was much impaired by the fact that data used in compiling them were often derived from climatically dissimilar places scattered over the shores and islands of the Mediterranean.

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