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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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DRY FOG

Meteorologists apply the term "dry fog" to a haze consisting of dust or smoke, especially the latter, including the Indian summer haze of North America and the obscurity of so-called "dark days." In former times a common cause of this condition in Europe was the practice, now largely abandoned, of burning the moors in order to prepare the land for cultivation. The stronghold of the practice was north-western Germany and the regions adjacent. The land was drained with ditches and sections of turf were cut in the autumn. During a dry spell in May or June the clods of turf were piled in heaps and set on fire. This process produced huge clouds of smokes, and the winds carried the smoke, hundreds and even thousands of miles. There was a saying that "when the moors are smoking all Germany smells it," but the smell was not confined to Germany, for the smoke haze resulting from these moor fires was often observed as far away as Italy, Spain and Greece.

In the south of Spain occurs a dry fog known as the "callina." It is first seen about the middle or end of June as a bluish-gray mist all around the horizon. By mid-August, when the greatest heat prevails, the callina covers about a quarter of the sky. It then has a reddish-brown tint at the horizon; higher up the color is yellowish, while from the upper rim there is occasionally an appearance as if a thin, lead-colored gauze were spread over the sky.

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