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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed July 14, 1930.

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SUNSHINE ADVERTISING

Nearly twenty years have elapsed since Major L.B. Brown, owner and editor of the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Evening Independent, conceived the novel idea of giving away the entire home edition of his newspaper every day the sun failed to shine up to the hour of going to press in the afternoon. This plan, which was announced in September, 1910, and has been faithfully adhered to ever since, has made St. Petersburg famous far and wide as the "Sunshine City." The first free issue of the paper was on October 15, 1910, and the last up to the present time was on April 5, 1930. The total number during the twenty years has been 103, averaging 5.1 a year. The longest period without a sunless day was a year and 3 days, from Dec. 16, 1926, to Dec. 20, 1927. On days when the paper is given away 5,000 extra copies are printed to meet the expected demand. The newsboys enter into the spirit of the affair and forego their usual earnings. Regular subscribers get a week's extension of their subscriptions when credit for six free issues has accrued.

Several more or less similar advertising stunts have been inspired by this one. At Yuma, Arizona, a hotel displays prominently on the side of the building the notice: "Free Meals Every Day the Sun Does Not Shine." In St. Petersburg itself one of the hotels charges its guests nothing for room and board on sunless days. Recently, according to an advertisement in the London Times, a hotel at Sheringham, on the coast of Norfolk, England, has offered to deduct one-third of a guest's bill for any day without sunshine, except during the period from July 21 to September 11.

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