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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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ARAB WEATHER PROVERBS

"The majority of Arab weather prognostics," says Professor Edward Robertson, who has recently published an interesting collection of such prognostics, "are, as might be expected, concerned with the winter season, when the changeable weather gives scope for forecasting. The summer months in most Arabic-speaking lands are rainless, and except for wind changes offer little or no field for the activity of the weather prognosticator. The sun and moon, the stars, the rainbow, mist, dew, thunder and lightning, birds and insects all form constituents of Arabic weather forecasts." Here are some specimens:

"The 'sun-house' is a rain bringer." A Palestinian saying. The "sun-house" is a halo.

"When it is red in the evening bridle your ass for setting forth (i.e., the weather will be good), and when it is red in the morning leave your ass to rest (i.e. the weather will be bad)." This saying, from North Africa, agrees with our "Evening red and morning gray," etc., and similar proverbs current in many parts of the world.

"Dew is the bed of rain." This saying is current in Palestine, where heavy dew is regarded as the harbinger of rain; just the reverse of the opinion prevalent in most parts of the world.

"The year of the hornet, the winter will be severe." This is a Syrian saying, meaning that when hornets are numerous in summer a severe winter will follow."

"If the rain in January is of small amount, there is fear of locusts."
Another Syrian saying.

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