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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 29, 1930

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SMOKY AIR IS COSTLY

A smoky atmosphere in a city imposes a variety of expenses upon the inhabitants. It means, in the first place, a vast waste of fuel through imperfect combustion. Then there are heavy laundry and dry-cleaning bills, deterioration of buildings, damage to goods in stores, excessive cost of artificial light, and so on. In 1912 the Mellon Institute found that Pittsburgh, with a sootfall of 1,031 tons a year per square mile, was mulcted by the smoke nuisance at the rate of \$20 per annum per head of population.

London's sootfall in a recent year averaged 288 tons per square mile. Figuring on the basis of the Pittsburgh estimates, Shaw and Owens, in their book "The Smoke Problem of Great Cities," find that smoke costs the average Londoner \$5.50 per annum. As the population of Greater London is about seven million, this gives as the total price London pays for smoke the colossal figure of \$38,500,000 a year.

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