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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

THE THUNDERSTONE

A good-sized book by Dr. C. Blinkenberg deals entirely with the folklore of the "thunderstone" -- the stone that, according to beliefs that have prevailed from remote antiquity and are found over a large part of the world, falls to the earth with lightning. Typical of the notions on this subject are those once prevalent, and not yet entirely extinct, in Denmark.

In that country the object most frequently taken for a thunderstone is the common flint axe of the Stone Age or other stone artifacts dating from the same period; but in some districts the supposed thunderstone is the belemnite and in western and southern Jutland it is usually a fossilized sea-urchin.

The stone is supposed to protect the house in which it is kept against strokes of lightning; also to keep away trolls and other pernicious creatures, to prevent unchristened babies from being "changed," etc. It is especially prized in the dairy as a charm to keep milk fresh and insure good cream and butter.

In many parts of the country the stone was simply kept lying on a shelf, on a chest of drawers or in a box. Usually, however, it was kept in a particular place where it might be free from daily disturbance, or from being touched at any time. Thus it was sometimes immured in the wall or laid under the floor or placed on top of the four-post bedstead.

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