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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SOME DROUGHT EFFECTS

In many American communities affected by last year's drought the water supply available for municipal and other uses was affected in quality, even where it was not seriously reduced in quantity. This fact has been brought out in a survey of drought effects conducted by the Engineering News-Record. It appears, for example, that cities drawing their water from the now completely canalized Ohio River found that the conversion of the river into a series of lakes, in which sedimentation is much more effective than it was in the past, had provided micro-organic life a particularly favorable environment; made even more so by the abnormally high temperatures that prevailed last summer:

"Increased concentration of sewage and industrial wastes," we are told, "assisted the micro-organisms in producing objectionable tastes, difficult to remove. The hardness of water in streams that depended chiefly upon ground-water for their reserve supplies increased greatly, and in the mining districts the acidity of mine drainage brought trouble to communities that found themselves forced to fall back on such sources for all or an abnormal part of their supplies. Along the eastern seaboard cities that draw their supplies from tidal streams found salt water ascending far above previously recorded points. In some instances salinity increased to the point of making the supply unfit for use."

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