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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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INDOOR BALL LIGHTNING

One of the most interesting of the many recorded cases in which ball lightning has invaded houses occurred at Linguy, Eure-et-Loire, France, in 1897. According to Camille Flammarion, a man and his wife were quietly sleeping when they were awakened by a terrific crash. The chimney had fallen in and its wreckage filled the room. The roof was wrecked and near to collapse. Besides much miscellaneous damage the discharge performed a number of curious feats. A chair at the bedside, on which clothes had been placed, was picked up and carried some distance to the door of the room. A mirror was removed from the wall and laid unbroken on the floor.

The spectators perceived a fiery ball, which grazed their bed, passed within a few inches of their heads without doing them any harm, and then went through the wall into an adjoining dairy. There it carried a row of empty milk cans from one side of the room to another, uncovered another row of cans, full of milk, without upsetting any of them, and broke four plates out of a pile of a dozen, leaving the other eight intact. It carried away the tap from a small barrel of wine, letting the contents flow away, broke its way through a window, and thus left the house.

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