

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed May 16, 1931

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Authority on Meteorology.

SOME PRANKS OF LIGHTNING

A book by Camille Flammarion, of which a somewhat bungling English translation appeared twenty-five years ago, contains a host of interesting anecdotes about lightning; which appears to be capable of performing as many mischievous tricks as Puck himself.

Sometimes, says the author, it will snatch things out of your hand and carry them away to a distance. "There is a case of a mug being thus spirited away from a man, who had just been drinking from it, and deposited undamaged in a courtyard near; the man himself suffering no injury. A youth, holding a missal from which he is singing, has it torn out of his hands and destroyed. A whip is whisked out of a rider's hand. Two ladies, quietly knitting, have their knitting-needles stolen. A girl is sitting at her sewing-machine, a pair of scissors in her hand; a flash of lightning, and her scissors are gone, and she finds herself sitting on the sewing-machine. A farm laborer is carrying a pitchfork on his shoulder; the lightning seizes it, carries it off fifty yards or so, and twists its two prongs into corkscrews."

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