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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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FOREST AIR

On an average for the year the air of a forest in the temperate zone is slightly cooler - not more than a degree or so - than that of open country. In summer the forest air is generally a few degrees cooler than the air outside by day, and somewhat warmer than the air outside by night. The coolness of the air under the trees on hot summer days is often loosely ascribed to the effects of "shade," but shading is not necessarily a cooling process. A tin roof gives more shade than a canopy of leaves but does not afford a comfortable retreat beneath it from the heat of the sun. The roof grows hot and heats the underlying air, but the leaves remain cool on account of the active evaporation of water from their surfaces. At night evaporation from the leaves is checked, and is often replaced by the reverse process - the condensation of moisture from the air in the form of dew - which tends to keep the leaves warm. At the same time they serve as a screen, which prevents the earth and the air beneath them from radiating their heat to the sky.

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