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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed June 23, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

"JOCKY AND JENNY"

Everybody is familiar with the toy "weather house," in which dwell the little man and the little woman whose preferences in the matter of weather differ as radically as did those of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sprat with regard to meat. Theoretically, the man comes forth before a shower, while his fair companion's appearance betokens fine weather. Actually, the device is merely a hygroscope, which if it happens to be correctly adjusted and in good order, indicates whether the air is relatively moist or dry.

The figures stand at opposite ends of a little wooden platform suspended in the middle by a string of twisted catgut. This substance absorbs moisture readily from the atmosphere. In doing so, the string is shortened. When the air grows dry, the string lengthens. These changes in length involve twisting and untwisting movements, which cause the platform to swing and bring one figure or the other out of the house. In England the two little prophets are known as Jocky and Jenny.

A hygrometer, with a scale, operating on the same principle as the weather house was devised by William Molyneux, in Ireland, in 1685, but the toy in the form now familiar seems to have been invented by Jacob Leupold, of Leipzig, about 1720.

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