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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A RAIN-MAKING EPISODE

It is one thing for the government of an enlightened country to conduct experiments of its own in rain-making or other kinds of weather-control, as the United States government has done more than once; it is quite another and much more deplorable thing for a government to employ the services of a professional rain wizard, as the Yukon government did in the year 1905. Here is the story, as told in the Times (London):

"Owing to the scarcity of water for hydraulic mining in the Klondike district, the government of Yukon Territory and a number of the largest mine-owners and operators made a contract with C. M. Hatfield, of Los Angeles, who had made many 'rain-making' experiments in the arid parts of California. If he produced 'a sufficient rainfall to ensure, as far as an ample rainfall would, a successful and prosperous summer in the placer mining industry,' the fact to be determined by a board representing the various parties to the contract, he was to receive \$5,000 from the government and \$5,000 from the miners; otherwise he was to receive the traveling and living expenses of himself and his assistant. The commissioner administering the territory now reports that Mr. Hatfield commenced his demonstrations on June 11th, on a high eminence called the Dome, about 80 miles from Dawson. On Hunker, Sulphur, Gold Run and Dominion Creeks the rainfall for June was above the average, but on Bonanza and Eldorado it was below normal. During the early part of July there was no increase over the average of former years. Accordingly, at a meeting of the aforesaid board, held at Dawson on July 23d, it was decided that 'in the opinion of this committee the contract has not been carried out, and that Mr. Hatfield be notified that his contract is terminated.' Mr. Hatfield thereupon desisted from further experiments. The government of the Yukon Territory paid \$1,153.05 to Mr. Hatfield in full settlement of its liability under said contract."

The matter was subsequently brought up in the Dominion Parliament, at Ottawa, where this foolish performance of the Yukon authorities was very properly condemned.

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