

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed March 7, 1932

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

ARTIFICIAL CLIMATES

The new art of air-conditioning bids fair to produce, in time, indoor atmospheric conditions as good as the best obtainable anywhere out of doors, but it is a mistake to assume that this feat has already been accomplished. Prof. C. P. Yaglou, of the Harvard School of Public Health, says:

"In spite of rapid advances in air-conditioning during the past few years, the secrets of reproducing indoors the natural climatic elements as they exist in open country under ideal weather conditions have not yet been fully ascertained. Extensive studies have failed to reveal the stimulating quality in open country air that is apparently lost when the air is brought indoors, and particularly when it is treated mechanically."

Failure to supply the right amount and quality of ultraviolet radiation, such as is received in favored locations outdoors, has been suggested as the reason why indoor climates are not wholly satisfactory; despite the fact that types of electric lamp specially designed for producing ultraviolet in addition to visible light are now available. In other words, artificial sunshine is not yet a perfect substitute for natural sunshine, though eventually it may perhaps be made even better than natural sunshine.

Prof. Yaglou himself is the exponent of the idea that the quality of air in relation to health and comfort may depend in part upon a process of ionization. He finds that in occupied rooms there is a marked decrease in the number of both positive and negative small ions, and he is experimenting with apparatus designed for supplying this loss of ions. This idea is, however, of recent origin and is still largely speculative.

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