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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LIGHTNING SUPERSTITIONS

Of weather superstitions the name is legion. One that seems to be rather unfamiliar nowadays, though it has survived from the folklore of the ancient Greeks, is the belief that fire of any sort attracts lightning. Mark Twain introduces this notion in his tale entitled "Mrs. McWilliams and the Lightning." When her husband disregards the traditional precautions against inviting the thunderbolt his wife's temper breaks forth:

"What are you doing? Lighting a match at such a time as this! Are you stark mad?"

"Hang it, woman, where's the harm? The place is as dark as the inside of an infidel, and --"

"Put it out! Put it out instantly! Are you determined to sacrifice us all? You know there is nothing attracts lightning like a light." (Fzt!-- crash! boom -- boloom -- boom -- boom!) "Oh, just hear it! Now you see what you have done."

Another out-of-the-way notion about lightning is recorded in a recent novel, "Black April," by Mrs. Julia Peterkin, in the following passage:

"A crowd of people were around the burning tree and others were coming. All were talking excitedly. God must have his eye on April to aim a thunderbolt so close to his house. He had a narrow escape. His house might catch fire yet, for pieces of burning limbs were falling, and water could not put out fire started by lightning."

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