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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

LEGAL METEOROLOGY

Though weather reports are extensively used as evidence in courts of law and meteorologists frequently appear in legal cases to furnish information pertaining to their science, there is only one book that deals at length with what might be called "meteorological jurisprudence." It is in German and was written by Dr. Carl Kassner. The most interesting section of this book contains a list of 438 questions relating to weather that have come up in the German courts and the information furnished by meteorologists or by meteorological records in connection with each. Here are some samples:

An automobile collided with a milk wagon which carried no lights at 9:45 p.m. The driver of the wagon maintained that it was still so light that no lights were necessary.

Reply: Twilight ended at nine o'clock; the moon was not shining; there were a few clouds. A burning lantern was, therefore, quite necessary.

A woman was arrested by the police in a market for having sold spoiled goose meat. She maintained that excessive heat was responsible.

Reply: Highest temperature was only 68 degrees Fahrenheit.

In a railroad shipment of filled flasks a part of the flasks were found cracked and empty. The railroad company maintained that it was the result of severe frost.

Reply: No; for only one day was light frost (28° F.).

A man in running from a large dog fell and broke his leg. The owner of the dog maintained that rain had made the sidewalk so smooth that the man had slipped and thus injured himself.
Reply: No rain, but clear sky instead.
Lightning struck a tavern and it burned. In opposition to the guests, whose effects were destroyed, the landlord maintained the misfortune was an "act of God."
Reply: There was a thunderstorm.

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21st and Constitution Ave.
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