

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 16, 1932

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

A SEPTEMBER DRY FOG

The state of atmospheric obscurity known as "dry fog" is sometimes a purely optical effect, due to the bending of light rays "every which way" by a multitude of little air currents, such as may prevail on hot, calm, sunny days, but the more conspicuous examples are due to the presence in the atmosphere of fine dust or smoke. Greely, in his "American Weather," tells of a remarkable case experienced in the United States and Canada between meridians 67 and 85 west and the 40th and 45th parallels during the first ten days of September, 1881.

"Prairie and forest fires," he says, "had raged with very destructive violence throughout northern Michigan and portions of Canada, from which the smoke drifted slowly eastward. The intensity of these conditions was greatest on September 6th, at which time, over the Atlantic States from New Hampshire southward to North Carolina the sun was very largely or entirely obscured by the haze in the atmosphere. In Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont the absence of light was such that business was largely interfered with, and artificial light, even at midday, was rendered necessary in public and private places of business. Many people were much alarmed by the peculiar atmospheric conditions. At Salem, Mass., the day was the most remarkable one since the famous dark day of May 19th, 1780."

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