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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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METEORIC DUST IN THE AIR

Of the vast volume of dust always present in the air a certain portion comes from meteorites, which are partially or completely disintegrated in the course of their flight through the air. The visible trails left by some of these bodies are often several miles long and of a sufficient diameter and density to be visible from distances of from 50 to 150 miles. According to an estimate of H.H. Nininger, the meteorites that are big enough to be seen by the naked eye when they light up supply something like 50,000 tons of meteoric dust to the atmosphere every day. This dust is exceedingly fine and settles very slowly to the earth, doubtless taking years to sink to a level from which it can be washed down rapidly by rain.

"Even greater," says Mr. Nininger in a recent book, "than the accessions by masses sufficiently large to produce visible meteors may be those of smaller size which are burning themselves out at invisible altitudes. Telescopic study of meteors gives ample proof of the abundance of these small meteors in the upper atmosphere and it seems only logical to assume that the smaller masses would be proportionately more abundant."

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