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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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GREEN LIGHTNING

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Authority on Meteorology

Three tornadoes occurring in Tennessee last spring were attended by green lightning, according to a report from F.V. Jones, of the U. S. Weather Bureau. The first storm, known as the East Nashville Tornado, occurred in the early evening of March 14. As the thundery weather of which the tornado was an episode approached Nashville, vivid red and violet streaks of lightning were observed for about half an hour. When the tornado cloud itself appeared, the funnel looked as if lighted from the interior, so continuous were the flashes within the cloud. The colors were sometimes a deep orange and sometimes a brilliant green.

In a second thunderstorm, on May 7, which developed a tornado at a point about 150 miles southwest of Nashville, three flashes of green lightning were noted after nightfall at the highest tips of the thunderclouds.

"The third storm," says Mr. Jones, "began during the late evening of May 9, and judging from the destruction it is believed that the funnel cloud began to form near the southeastern edge of the city of Nashville. The lightning flashes during this storm were the most vivid and frequent of any observed this spring. Their colors were mostly violet, with the exception of those visible slightly south of the center of the storm, where an area of green was again prevalent. The flashes in this instance were a brilliant emerald."

Most lightning is white or yellow. Some is reddened by hydrogen, resulting from the dissociation of rain water along the path of discharge. Green lightning is rare. A tornado stirs up a great deal of dust, and some of this may be of such composition that when it is volatilized by the passage of lightning through it the spectrum of the glowing gases is richest in green rays.

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