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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed July 14, 1933

THE COOL TROPICS

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People who never travel far from their own homes usually cherish quite erroneous ideas regarding the climates of distant lands. It is hard for most people in our country to realize, for example, that the Isthmus of Panama, in the heart of the tropics, never experiences temperatures nearly so high as those which occur every summer in the United States and southern Canada. A citizen of South Dakota, where the mercury, in the shade, frequently rises above 100 degrees Fahrenheit, and has been known to reach 115 degrees, will be inclined to revise his definition of the term "tropical" when he learns that at Colon, the Atlantic terminus of the Canal, a temperature as high as 90 degrees is decidedly exceptional, and that the maximum reading during a period of six years was only 92 degrees.

In thirteen years Canal Zone vital statistics showed only two deaths from sun-stroke and twenty-one non-fatal cases of heat prostration among a population of 120,000.

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