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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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IS WEATHER RESPONSIBLE?

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

An Englishman, W.F. Tyler, who spent many years at Shanghai, mentions in a recent paper a curious phenomenon that he often observed there. At intervals of from a fortnight to a month the Chinese behaved strangely in the fast and heavy traffic of the Nanking Road. In some of these cases they displayed abnormal lethargy; in other, abnormal excitement. When the former state prevailed, men, women and children sauntered slowly across the street, looking neither to the right nor to the left, with a complete disregard of motorcars. In the other cases, "small boys dashed in and out of traffic and doubled back like rabbits, old women put down their heads and fluttered across like hens, and rickshaw men bounded along at extra speed, swerving to the right and left in a sort of ecstasy of life and vigor."

Mr. Tyler and the late Father Froc, then director of Zikawei Observatory, near Shanghai, sought in vain to correlate these manifestations with various weather conditions, including the electrical state of the atmosphere. The conclusion was reached that they were "due to some unknown stimulus in climate; something of the sort that causes excitement among the dragon-flies when a typhoon is approaching."

Mr. Tyler notes that in Paris the taxi drivers, on occasions, engage collectively in wild orgies of reckless driving; possibly under some similar stimulus.

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