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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A LAUNDRY WEATHER PROBLEM

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Two Canadian chemists, Messrs. O.M. Morgan and B.J. Kenalty, have been making a laboratory investigation of so-called "winter damage" to laundered fabrics; a somewhat obscure kind of deterioration that has also been studied at the U.S. Bureau of Standards. This condition first attracted attention in New England and appears to occur in fabrics that have been repeatedly dried, particularly during the winter, in the atmosphere of industrial towns, especially those located near the coast.

"Winter damage" is found only in wet-wash fabrics, returned from the laundry to the customer in a damp condition and hung outdoors to dry. It very seldom occurs in fabrics that are completely finished and returned dry to the customer. It has been supposed that the agent responsible for such damage is atmospheric sulphur dioxide, which is absorbed by the fabric chiefly in winter, when the concentration of this substance is generally higher than at other seasons.

Experimental laundering of cotton fabrics, using a variety of washing materials, failed in these investigations to indicate any damaging effect due to even a higher concentration of sulphur dioxide than is generally found in the air of industrial towns, so that the cause of "winter damage" remains to be discovered.

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