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October 23, 1934

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed October 16, 1934

RAIN-MAKING SCHEMES

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During the drought of last summer the United States Weather Bureau received hundreds of letters suggesting ways of producing rain. But these letters did not contain hundreds of ideas. Far from it. The same recipes cropped up again and again.

The favorite cure for drought nowadays appears to be to stop radio broadcasting. The use of explosives still, as of old, has many advocates. Sprinkling dust or hygroscopic chemicals from airplanes is another popular suggestion. Some of the proposals recently received were not quite so stereotyped, though they were similar in principle to notions often put forth before. One man suggested installing enormous deflecting planes along the crest of the Rocky Mountains to alter the course of the transcontinental air currents. Another advocated drawing down cool air from aloft through tubes a mile long attached to balloons, thus cooling the air at low levels and causing condensation of its moisture. He did not explain how the descending air was to be kept from being heated by compression. Still another genius proposed to discharge steam into the upper air through towers built up to cloud level.

Other correspondents who claimed to know how to produce rain applied for government jobs as rain-makers but did not divulge their methods, and others, equally reticent, offered to sell their secrets to Uncle Sam at various prices ranging up to \$25,000,000.

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