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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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MEASURING RAIN SLANT

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Everybody has noticed that rain sometimes descends obliquely instead of vertically. How would you measure its angle of slant? This problem was solved more than a century ago by a Frenchman named Flaugergues, who invented for the purpose of making such measurements an instrument that he named the "cliseometer." It was shaped something like a toadstool: i.e., it consisted of a horizontal round metal plate supported in the middle on a slender vertical wooden rod. The latter was dyed red with a coloring matter that assumed a darker tint when wet. The whole was exposed in an open place. When rain fell, the greater its slant, the higher the rod was wet. From the length of the dry part of the rod and the radius of the plate it was easy to figure out the angle at which the rain came down.

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