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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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COLLECTING DEW

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The suggestion has often been made that when rain is scarce means might be found of collecting enough dew to be of appreciable value in eking out a scanty water supply. Experiments to test this idea have lately been carried out in England. A section of a corrugated iron roof, 18 feet 7 inches long by 11 feet wide and having a pitch of 7 1/2 degrees, was provided with a drain for collecting any water deposited on it. The roof was insulated underneath with two sheets of aluminum-faced asbestos paper spaced one inch apart. The temperature of the roof was recorded by means of a thermocouple. On nights suitable for a large loss of heat by radiation this roof became several degrees colder than the air, as measured with a minimum thermometer in a standard screen, yet at best only about a quart of dew was collected during the night. This is a mere dribble compared with the 10 gallons of water collected by the same roof during a light rainfall of one-tenth of an inch. The experimenters concluded, therefore, that "storage for rain water is more economical to install, more reliable and altogether more practicable."

In the course of the same experiments a shallow iron tank filled with water to a depth of one inch was also exposed at night. It remained warmer than an insulated sheet of iron without water, and presumably even less dew was collected on the water surface, thus confirming the belief of meteorologists that so-called "dew ponds" are not replenished by dew.

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