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Released upon receipt
but intended for use
July 31, 1935

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed July 24, 1935

THE "DEW-MAKING" MOON

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Authority on Meteorology

There is an ancient belief that dew is most abundant on moonlight nights --
so ancient that it is embodied in the phrase of a Latin poet, "rorifera luna" --
the "dew-making moon," or, literally, "dew-bringing moon."

Moonlight has, of course, no effect on the condensation of moisture from
the atmosphere that produces dew, but it is easy to see how the notion above men-
tioned originated. The condensation depends upon the cooling of the objects upon
which dew is deposited. This cooling, in turn, depends upon the radiation of heat
from terrestrial objects to the sky, and this is, in general, most active on clear
nights. Of course, clear nights are also moonlight nights, if the moon is above the
horizon.

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