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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 5, 1935

DESERT WIND BATHS

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Authority on Meteorology

An interesting function performed by the sand-laden winds of the desert is mentioned by Prof. E. F. Gautier in his recent book on the Sahara. He writes:

"The Tuaregs, good Moslems though they claim to be, have a horror of ab-lutions; it is like a taboo, an unavowed survival of animalism. The scarcity of water is partly responsible; perhaps also the fear, verified by experience, of over-exciting or slackening the action of the sweat glands. But it can be readily per-ceived that for a human body, exposed almost naked to the desert wind for an entire lifetime, the rites of cleanliness are superfluous; the eternal wind, charged with sand, scours the human skin and keeps it as clean as it does the slabs of naked rock on the tops of the plateaus."

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