

RAIN MAKING NOT FEASIBLE IS CLAIMED

Small Amount of Moisture Can Be Precipitated; Not Large Enough to Aid the Land Owners.

Rain-making is a futile undertaking, according to the Weather Bureau, United States Department of Agriculture. To produce one inch of rainfall over an area of an acre, approximately 114 tons of moisture would have to be drawn up into the air and then precipitated. There are 440 acres in a square mile, for which 50,820 tons of moisture would be required. A square mile, however, would be scarcely a dot in the center of any section where drought prevails, as in Arizona or parts of Texas. It would be less than one-twentieth of the area of the District of Columbia.

Enormous forces are required in nature to elevate moisture above the earth before it can be precipitated. Billions of horsepower are represented in the cloud that spreads over the house-tops, and even if some artificial means were found to cause the aggregation and fall as rain of the infinitesimal drops of which it is made up, calculation shows that only a trifling amount of precipitation would result. There must be some way by which the moisture laden atmosphere can be lifted to a considerably higher altitude, to lower its temperature and thus precipitate a considerable part of its moisture content.

Plan Not Feasible.

It is quite true that in the laboratory a small amount of moisture can be precipitated by the use of special equipment. Meteorologists of the Weather Bureau of the United States Department of Agriculture say that they do not know of any scheme for the artificial production of rain on a scale of practical magnitude, nor for otherwise affecting atmospheric behavior. Widespread drought is due to lack of sufficient moisture in the atmosphere and the absence of other conditions essential to the formation of rain. If there is little moisture to bring down, obviously no device for causing rain artificially has any value because of the absurdity of supposing that human agencies can supply adequate amounts of water for extended areas when the atmosphere itself is practically dry.

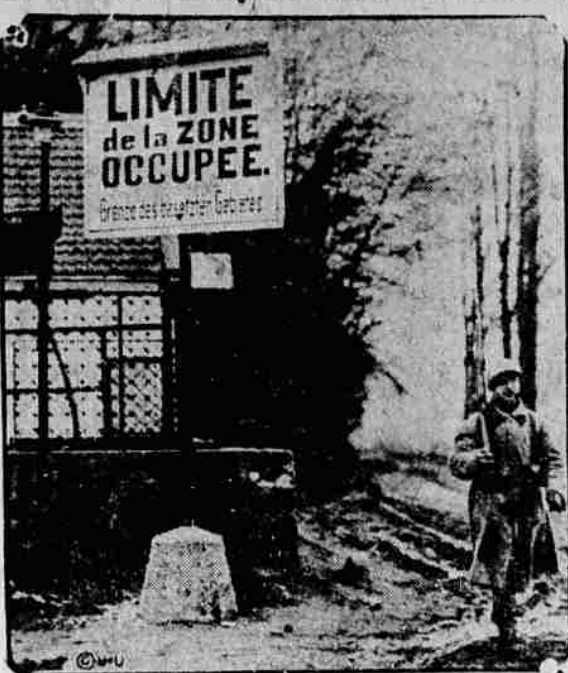
In spite of these facts, statements appear at intervals in the press heralding new ways of making rain, preventing rain, fog, or forestalling the disastrous effects of storms. These ideas are not new. Ten years or more ago, certain newspapers in Europe were thrown into disrepute, reflected in their newspapers over the possibility of a scheme called "hail shooting." It was believed that by shooting bombs into the air before an oncoming storm it could be dissipated, thus averting consequent destruction to crops from hail or rain. Contrary to the opinions of the best meteorologists a good deal of money was spent in experimenting with "hail shooting," but little is ever heard of it now.

More recently, in our own country, a man achieved prominence by advertising a contrivance, which he proposed to build at various points where more rain would be welcome. This scheme was entirely different from proposals to shoot bombs, sprinkle hygroscopic or nonhygroscopic dust particles in the air, or electrified sand, to induce precipitation. It consisted of powerful fans at the base of high towers for forcing upward great quantities of air and thus stimulating the conditions which occur in storms and cyclones when rain is produced. This plan also is futile and economically impossible.

The case of the man who contracted with farmers in drought-stricken regions to produce an inch or more of rainfall within a period of two or three months for a consideration of \$1,000 per inch is well-known. This man claimed to be able to cause rain by a secret process with the use of chemicals. If the rain came the man collected his fee; if the rain failed he lost nothing. Now the average amount of rain for each region is accurately recorded, and after a long drought and within the limits of the record a shrewd operator is quite safe in promising precipitation and collecting \$1,000 per inch from desperate farmers.

A recent proposal is to cause precipitation by sprinkling dust particles in the air by means of apparatus carried on airplanes, on the theory that these will aid condensation. Cloudiness due to dust particles, however, takes place long before precipitation occurs, and frequently continues after the rain is over, indicating that the moles and dust particles do not necessarily cause the precipitation. If clear weather follows rainfall, it may be because new dry air has moved in from other localities.

Presence or absence of dust particles in the atmosphere does not, in the opinion of meteorologists, have anything to do with the distribution of rainfall. As a rule, far more dust particles are present in the atmosphere everywhere than would be desirable, were the dust hypothesis correct to bring about abundance of precipitation. On the other hand, enormous quantities of rainfall occur over the oceans where there is least dust. Some places in the



Is this a permanent or temporary boundary of the French penetration to the Ruhr? Here is the end of the territory under French sway at the present time.

Hawaiian Islands have an annual rainfall exceeding 500 inches, and yet the air is nearly dust free. The most dust in the atmosphere, except near industrial cities, occurs over dry and semi-arid regions.

Quicklime Suggested.

The suggestion has also been made the powdered quicklime be employed to precipitate moisture. On this point the Weather Bureau says that dry, powdered quicklime, exposed to the moisture absorbs a certain quantity of moisture—that is, it dries the air. Dry quicklime is used in many industrial operations for drying gases. The moisture absorbed in these cases completely disappears as available water and forms a new chemical compound commonly called air-slaked lime. Unless exceedingly fine, this sprinkled quicklime, after absorbing about one-third of its weight of water, would fall to earth leaving the air drier than before. Any exceedingly fine particles remaining in the air would very slowly absorb cotton dioxide, also present in the air in very small quantities and form a substance chemically the same as limestone or marble. If the plan to sprinkle dust of some sort into the air were feasible at all, it would therefore appear to be better to sprinkle finely powdered marble in the air in the first place, because this would not rob the atmosphere of any of the moisture present.

All of these schemes, however, are, in the opinion of the Weather Bureau, entirely futile.

OUTBIDS CROWD WHILE IN JAIL

Prisoner in Utah County Jail Makes \$10.50 in Ten Minutes; Is New Barrel King.

(By Associated Press)
OGDEN, Utah, Mar. 24.—While a crowd stood silent at the county building, a prisoner at the county jail showed that he had "an eye for business" which, within ten minutes, netted him \$10.50.

An office deputy was auctioning off a large assortment of stuff seized by officers in recent liquor raids. Among the articles to go under the hammer were twenty-one empty barrels of fifty-gallon capacity.

The deputy yelled, "Come on boys, let's go. How much am I offered for the fifty-gallon barrels?"

"Ten cents each," came a voice from the crowd.
A voice boomed forth from the jail kitchen. It came from a trusty who was serving a sentence. "Fifty cents apiece," he yelled.
"Sold," yelled the officer, and he snatched the hammer down.
The trusty used the telephone. He called a number. "Hello, is this Mr. Blank. What will you give me for twenty-one barrels, fifty-gallon capacity? One dollar apiece? Send up a truck and bring the cash. Good-bye."

SPRINGS SET VOLCANO GOING

(By Associated Press)
RENO, Nev., Mar. 24.—Steamboat Springs, famous half century ago among the natural wonders of the west, is back on the job again between here and Carson City, "setting the desert afire." Columns of steam are issuing from a score of hissing vents in the arid earth, with jets of boiling sulphur spraying the surrounding hills.

The cause of the eruptions is said to be the recent activity of Lassen Peak, California volcano, the springs being the boiler and the peak the furnace of this geological steam engine.

Hundreds of sightseers have flocked to the scene and a careful study of the geysers and medicinal waters is being made by scientists of the University of Nevada and other institutions.

Mr. Edison says the newspapers are not printing the right kind of stuff. Well, praising Mr. Edison all

CONDITIONS IN MOUNTAIN AREA LISTED

Babson Believes That 1923 Will Go Down in History As a Year of Big Improvement.

WELLESLEY HILLS, Mass., Mar. 24.—Today Roger W. Babson issued his report on conditions in that section of the country which extends from the agricultural states through to the Pacific coast states. This group consists of Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona and a part of Texas and Oklahoma.

"I am very fond of this mountain section," says Mr. Babson. "It is the section which develops those manly and robust qualities which are the backbone of American civilization. This is the West, which developed Roosevelt spiritually, mentally and physically. Rugged character of both country and people, freedom from artificial conventionalities and the custom of judging men solely by what they are; characterize these Mountain States. This was very forcibly brought to my mind last month when on my way south, I stopped in Philadelphia to call upon George Horace Lorimer, editor of the Saturday Evening Post, a man who it is said has the greatest potential influence of any man in America. When urging Mr. Lorimer to visit me in the South he replied: 'Babson the South is all right for those who want to live in big hotels and play golf—but give me the Grand Canyon of Colorado where I can ride up and down the trails. There is something about that mountainous country that inspires me as well as rests me.' Similar statements have been made to me by many of America's greatest captains of industry. They may go to other sections of the country for amusement and diversion but when they desire real recreation, to be rebuilt and re-created, they go out to the Rocky mountains."

"Yes," continues Mr. Babson, "this mountain section has its struggles. The same difficulties, which meet the traveler when climbing the hills and crossing the deserts, seem to confront those who have settled down to develop the country. Not only has this section suffered more than any other, but its problems are more difficult of solution. The chief industries are cattle and sheep raising, mining, lumbering and a certain amount of agriculture including the raising of very fine fruit in certain irrigated sections. All of these lines have suffered during the past few years and are only now beginning to look better."

Readjustment in this section has been severe and prolonged, but I believe that 1923 will go down in history as a year of local improvement. Although no sharp upturn is likely, those doing business in these states will note a gradual broadening of purchasing activities and a diminishing volume of overdue accounts. From a mining standpoint 1922 was one of the worst years on record. Poor market conditions and the unusually low prices for copper, lead and zinc resulted in the closing of many mines. The value of the leading mineral products taken out of the ground in Montana in 1921 was only \$16,212,000 compared with \$65,573,000 in 1920. Greatest activity was noted in the mining of silver and silver-lead ores. The market for all of the non-ferrous metals is quiet, but the fundamental tendency is toward a better demand and strengthening prices. Already a number of the larger mines and refining plants have resumed operations. Progress along these lines may be slow for a few months, but it will be in the right direction. Personally I am distinctly bullish on the copper situation and believe that Montana and the other copper districts will show the greatest percent

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