



Britain's Libelled Weather
A DOCTOR'S DEFENCE OF OUR CHANGING CLIMATE.

We hear a great deal of the wretched climate of this country, and of the wonderfully fine weather conditions which prevail in what are described as the more favoured regions of the world. These glorious climates of other lands must be taken with the proverbial grain of salt, since they are often productive of anything but good for those whose lot it is to live in them.

The climate of Britain comes nearer to the ideal than that of almost any other country. For most people the really essential thing in life is the ordinary work of every day; and the climate that is best for work may surely in the long run claim to be the best nearly ideal.

There are four chief portions of the globe where the winter temperature averages not far from 53 degrees, and that of the summer not far from 60 degrees. They are Britain; the Pacific coast of the northern United States and southern British Columbia; New Zealand; and southern Chile and parts of Patagonia.

Of these four regions Britain is the most favoured. The climate is stimulating at all times, both by reason of abundant storms and because of a moderate seasonal range. It never, however, reaches such extremes as to induce the nervous tension which prevails so largely in the United States. The mean temperature of the season and the degree of storminess are both highly favourable, and enable Britain to take its place in any estimate of the relative stimulating power of the various climates of the world.

These admirable qualities of climate are at their best in and around London. But, of course, relative dampness must be taken into account. New Zealand, the Central Pacific coast, and sometimes Britain herself are unduly damp for long periods.

Our climate owes much to the warm sub-tropical ocean currents from the West Coast of Africa. On the Continent of Europe, where people go for the "season," the seasonal variation is greater than in Britain, and therefore less favourable.

Germany, for example, has a climate that in spring and autumn spurs the people to an astonishing degree of effort. But the summer and winter are very debilitating, as in the eastern and central United States, and

therefore the people draw largely on their nervous energy and exhaust themselves.

The effect of the seasons, and of dampness and temperature, upon workers in mills and factories comes home to us very closely as an industrial nation as well as a "nation of shopkeepers"; for it has been shown that the output of manual labour varies with the seasons, and that therefore it is a mistake to be "speeding up" all the time.

Regulating Energy by Machinery.

It is a fact that in many factories the same amount of work is expected each month. Hence at certain seasons many operatives work harder than they ought, while at others they do not work so hard as they could without special effort.

If factories were run in accordance with a well established seasonal curve of energy, we should find the machinery running slowly in winter, faster in the spring, and in May perhaps ten or fifteen per cent faster than in January. Then in the summer it would run more slowly than in May, but no so slowly as in winter. Finally, in the autumn it would run at greater speed than at any other time of the year. The operatives would scarcely be conscious of the difference, and they would probably do more work and preserve their health better than under the present system.

Fish and Chip' Fortunes

Of the extent of that often-decried trade, the selling of "fish and chips," few people have even a hazy idea. Yet figures compiled recently show that every week 50,000,000 fish and chip meals are served in this country.

Nearly 100,000 people are engaged in the industry, which calls for 1,000,000 tons of fish and 550,000 tons of potatoes annually.

The Medical Officer of Health for Friers in that city serve 600,000 meals weekly, there being in Bradford alone 300 shops exclusively engaged in the business.

So highly esteemed is this form of food that several countries have lately sent representatives to England to learn the best methods of preparing it. Last year a number of skilled English friers made a tour of various French towns, by invitation of the French Chamber of Commerce, to demonstrate their craft.

Special machinery is now being devised to meet the requirements of the industry, which has a turnover of nearly £50,000,000 a year.

Fish Farming

At Bibury, in the Cotswolds, there is a farm where every year trout are bred in hundreds of thousands for the stocking of rivers and lakes all over the country. The eggs are collected in the autumn and winter and after being allowed to rest for some weeks, are washed in a current of pure water and placed in glass hatching boxes.

From the time they are a week old the young fish are fed continuously on finely-minced raw meat. The water in which they live is made to run for some distance through watercress beds and other forms of aquatic vegetation before entering the ponds. In this way a supply of natural food, such as flies and small snails, is assured. After every artificial meal the water is carefully changed, as dirt almost infallibly spells disease.

In a short while the young fish learn to keep their quarters clean, sweeping all impurities away with their tails.

The greatest care has to be taken to ensure that the water is not only clean, but of the right temperature. It must also contain the requisite amount of iron and lime.

TROUBLED WITH ECZEMA YEARS

In Pimples Between Knee and Ankle. Itched Badly. Cuticura Healed.

"I was troubled with eczema for three or four years. It broke out in pimples between my knee and ankle and itched badly, especially at night. The irritation caused me to scratch and the scratching caused eruptions. I sent for a free sample of Cuticura Soap and Ointment and it helped me. I purchased more, and after using one cake of Cuticura Soap and three boxes of Cuticura Ointment I was healed." (Signed) Miss Alice Clark, Marshfield, Vt., July 16, 1923.

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Sample Book Free by Mail. Address: Cuticura, Dept. 100, P.O. Box 100, Lowell, Mass. U.S.A. Write for new shaving stick.

Playing Tricks With Time

Travellers Who Lose and Gain Days. A few weeks ago the American aviator, Lieut. Russell Maughan, created a record by flying from New York to San Francisco in one day—that is, between dawn and darkness. He left New York at 3.59 a.m. and reached San Francisco at 9.44 in the evening.

The distance is 2,870 miles, and on the face of it the aviator covered the distance in 17½ hours. If we allow only 24 hours for stops, this means he was travelling at something like 180 miles an hour.

Actually the case is quite different, for the pilot was flying with the sun. He thus gained six hours of daylight, so that his flying time was not 17½ hours, but a little over 22 hours.

If he had travelled in the opposite direction—from East to West—he would have lost 6 hours of daylight, and so cut his flying time to just over 10 hours.

Day That Went Astray.

For convenience sake the degree of latitude that cuts through Greenwich is counted as the first degree. Since there are in all 360 degrees, the 180th is exactly opposite Greenwich on the other side of the earth, and the result is that a vessel crossing the Pacific gains a day if going eastwards, but drops one if going in the other direction.

A year or two ago passengers on the steamship *Dacota*, en route from Seattle to Yokohama, lost December 25th, Christmas Day. If the ship had been travelling in the other direction they would have had two Christmas Days.

To put the matter as plainly as possible, if you travel around the world in a westerly direction you are constantly chasing the sun, so that sunrises come at longer intervals than if you are staying in one place. By the time you have circled the planet you have had one sunrise less than the stationary observer. On the other hand, if you have travelled eastwards, you have had one more.

THE WINDFALL

I ushered in the glad new year by paying up my income tax, then drank a stein of kickless beer, and let my jaded nerves relax; "O ur government," I said, "I fear, will make us mortgage all our shacks. I paid my tax for '23, I paid in full, at one fell swoop, that I from worry may be free, and rest unharried in my coop; but all worn voters must agree such taxes put us in the soup. Our government's a great expense, a luxury that leaves us broke; the tax collector journeys hence with all the kopecks in my poke; there doesn't seem to be much sense in those exalted statesmen folk." To-day I yodel in my shack, my once sad heart expands with glee; a quarter of my tax came back, without a hint or hunch from me; there's an addition to my stack and my bank roll is good to see. "Our government," I say, "is great. Its bulwarks all unblemished stand, and he's a cheap and tawdry skate who'd criticize our statesmen grand; and I am surely proud to state this is my own, my native land. What other government on earth refunds a tax that once is paid? The others find what one is worth, then on his bundle make a raid; now I indulge in harmless mirth, and my old grouch has been mislaid."

WALT MASON.

A person who saw a 5,000 ton ship sailing apparently straight through a meadow twenty or thirty miles inland would probably rub his eyes in amazement. Yet this is a common sight near the Manchester Ship Canal. A jasper cove can be seen working in his galley while a few yards away, on the bank, a farmer is ploughing. Sailors of all nationalities lean over the ship's side and stare at the heart of the countryside. The Ship Canal is a narrow lane of water from the mouth of the Mersey to Manchester, a distance of thirty-five miles. As it is cut through a plain, the Manchester end is only seventy feet above the level at its mouth.

Ships That go Upstairs

As a constant depth of water must be maintained, the canal is divided by locks into five sections, like the steps of a stairs. Going inland, the level of each section is from fourteen to sixteen feet higher than the previous one.

If the water were allowed to run

straight through without these interruptions, it would soon drain away and the canal would be too shallow. Hence the locks. At each of the locks a ship is lifted up from fourteen to sixteen feet. The locks are long chambers, at each end of which is a heavy wooden gate with double doors.

A ship coming up the canal is faced at each lock with a wall of water, which is kept back by the upper gates of the lock. The lower gates will be open and the ship passes through into the narrow chamber of the lock.

The lower gates of the lock are closed behind her by machinery. She is now in a watertight compartment. If the water from the higher level in front of her is let into the compartment, the ship will be raised up and able to continue her journey on the higher level when the gate in front of her is opened.

When the ship entered the lock her decks were well below the level of the lock walls. As the water comes in, the ship rises rapidly, until the men on deck are looking down on the lock attendants. The gates are opened in front, and the boat passes on her way.

Large ships are usually accompanied by two tugs, which creep into the lock with their charge. One goes in

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