

ing conversion of heat into latent heat, is a continuous process. The phenomenon is a variable one, however, for while at high temperature, both because of the greater supply of heat and because of the greater amount of water vapor that the air can hold, the process is very important and active, at low temperature it is far less considerable. This in itself is no doubt a benefit because it tends especially to restrict the upward march of temperature when the temperature is high, but is of minor importance when the temperature is low.

In view of the other favorable qualities of water it is perhaps not surprising to find that its latent heat of evaporation is by far the highest known. So great, in truth, is this quantity and so important the process that the latent heat of evaporation is one of the most important regulatory factors at present known to meteorologists.

When the sun shines upon a body of water, only a small part of the energy which the water receives contributes to the elevation of its temperature. Thus Fitzgerald has concluded from his studies of Lough Derg in Ireland during clear hot summer weather¹

¹ See Hann, "Handbook of Climatology," translated by Ward, p. 131.