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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,
tells of:

OCTOBER SNOWS IN THE EAST

The first snows in the east this autumn came, paradoxically, as a result of tropical cyclones or storms that grew out of them, for these were the only storms with sufficient intensity on their cold side to draw down air from the far north and cause precipitation at a temperature low enough for snow. There were three types of snows last month that well illustrate the usual October snowfalls in the regions where they occurred.

Flurries were reported in Maine on October 1, and in Massachusetts on the 18th but such light snows along the coast cannot equal those of a previous October when the feathery flakes fell as far south as southeastern Virginia and eastern North Carolina.

The second type of snowfall, that of heavy snow on the leeward shores of the Great Lakes, was typified by the reported fall of two feet in the region north of Lake Huron which blocked the trains in this region on October 20. While the average October snowfalls in the parts of the lake region where moisture laden air from the lakes may be forced upwards with large masses of cold air and condensed is only from one to three inches, these averages are usually the result of the rare heavy falls that contribute a foot or two at a time.

Finally, the mountain type of snowfall was represented in the fall of a foot or less reported October 24 in the mountain and highland region where Tennessee, Virginia, and North Carolina meet. Only in the lee of the Great Lakes and on the highlands of northern New England and New York and regions northward do average October snowfalls equal those of the southern Appalachians, favored as these are by exposure to the strong winds of coastal cyclones.

(Tomorrow: Why Meteoros Shine)
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