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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:

PACIFIC RAINY SEASON WELL BEGUN

The rainy season of the Pacific Coast is now well under way. Storms are increasing, especially in the north; in southern Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and northern California, there are stronger winds onshore, warm and moist from the southwest. They are meeting the high mountains and masses of cold air, great obstructions over which they ride, chilling by expansion as they ascend to condense their moisture as rain or snow. In the autumn this results in rain near sea-level but snow on the mountains. As the season progresses the storms become larger and reach farther south, bringing the beginning of the rainy season later and later southward. Normal autumn rainfall ranges from over 30 inches at Sitka to 20 inches in northern California. The rainfall of September and October on the north Pacific coast of the United States was slightly below normal.

In this connection it is interesting and important to note that Dr. G. F. McEwen, oceanographer of the Scripps Institution for Biological Research at La Jolla California, expects only two-thirds of the normal rainfall in southern California this winter, because previous experience has shown that dry seasons follow late summer and early autumn ocean temperatures above the normal. The Pacific at La Jolla was warmer in this period this year than in any of the preceding seven.

(Tomorrow: The Ice Storm)

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