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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

HOW TO MEASURE SNOW

The measurement of snowfall, especially in terms of rainfall, is of enormous importance in some regions of America where much of the winter's precipitation is held fast till spring. Everywhere snowfall is of considerable interest. Its measurement is one of the most difficult of the usual meteorological observations, and great care is required for reasonably satisfactory results. Instructions for the nearly 6000 observers of the United States and Canadian weather services include three measurements in connection with snowfall: depth of each snowfall, water content of each snowfall, and total depth of snow on the ground.

In level regions where the snow is not much disturbed by the wind the observer has a relatively easy time, for he has but to use his measuring stick in a dozen or more places, or observe the scale reading of a previously carefully placed snow-stake. R. E. Horton, of Albany, N.Y., has devised a snowboard for ready measurements of each snowfall. This is merely a thin board covered with white cloth, which he lays on top of the old snow. The rain equivalent is readily obtained after snows with which there has been no wind merely by measuring or weighing and computing the water in the snow that fell into the rain or snow gauge. If wind has swirled snow out of the gauge several vertical sections of the new snow may be cut from places where the depth is average, and carefully weighed. Where the snow is very deep, as in the western mountains, small, tubular snow-samplers are commonly used.

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(Tomorrow: The Weather's Habit)

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