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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THUNDERSTORMS DECREASING

From September to October there is a marked falling off in the usual number of thunderstorms. For instance, a September average of 10 in northern Florida drops to 2 in October. Farther north, the Atlantic coast has about one day with thunderstorms in October, instead of 2 or 3 in September, while in New England the average drops from about 2 to less than 1. Similarly, on the central plains, the number is about halved, the September $2\frac{1}{2}$ in the north and 5 farther south changing to 1 and 2 in October. On the Pacific coast, also, the decrease is apparent, though thunderstorms are infrequent there in either month. In Canada the decrease is, in general, as striking as in the United States. The Maritime Provinces and Newfoundland decrease from an average of about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ of a thunderstorm day; southern Quebec and Ontario come down from 3 or 2 generally to 1 or $\frac{1}{2}$; and the prairie provinces fall from 2 or 1 to $\frac{1}{2}$ or 0.

In October, convection is weakening. As the lower levels of the atmosphere are cooling more rapidly than those above, there is no longer the strong unstable contrast between a hot surface and cooler air aloft. Nights are longer and the sun's heat has a shorter period in which to work. Then, too, the lower air is less humid than in September, and hence cannot so frequently furnish the large amount of moisture needed to build up thunderstorms.

(Tomorrow: Is the Rain Over?)

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