

No. 481

A Science Service Feature

Nov. 25

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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PACIFIC RAINY SEASON BEGINS

In the northwest corner of the United States and in British Columbia the autumn rainy season has begun early and with unusual vigor. Extraordinarily heavy rains have been falling on the Pacific slope from northern California northward. The last few days of October southwesterly gales deluged the coast and valleys just behind the coast ranges. Day after day it rained, and, at Roseburg, Oregon, as much as 6 inches fell in two days. A flood-weakened bridge gave way, precipitating a locomotive and one car into a swollen stream, drowning four men. And then it rained some more in early November. Though California's turn, for the state as a whole, generally comes later in most years, some rains have fallen over the drouth stricken center and south.

The Pacific rainy season is always looked forward to with great interest by Californians, but rarely so much so as this fall, because last year's rainy season was so disappointing. During the past year the rainfall in California was but half to two-thirds the usual amount, and last spring the water stored in the Sieras at the end of the winter was the least in many years. Not only has there been uncomfortable and expensive water shortage, but also forest fires have been unusually disastrous. Even the recent pneumonic plague epidemic in part of Los Angeles has been blamed on the drouth. May California and her juicy oranges have their full share of water this winter!

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(Tomorrow: Cold Wave Outposts)

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