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SNOWY THANKSGIVINGS

"Over the river and through the wood,  
To grandfather's house we go;  
The Horse knows the way  
To carry the sleigh  
Through the white and drifted snow.

"Over the river and through the wood -  
Oh, how the wind does blow!  
It stings the toes  
And bites the nose,  
As over the ground we go."

These well known verses suggest a type of Thanksgiving weather that we are more inclined to associate with Christmas than with a day four weeks earlier. Nevertheless, the weather records of New England, where our Thanksgivings began, and those of much of our North and West justify our children in singing these lines. In Massachusetts, an especially hard winter was that of 1740-41 when, although Thanksgiving was observed as early as the thirteenth of November, it was bitterly cold, and snow fell all day. In November, 1748, one of the longest snowstorms that has ever been known in New England began on Saturday, the seventeenth, and lasted until the evening of the following Wednesday. The heavy fall of snow buried many houses so deeply that the people in them were forced to tunnel through drifts to get out, and men on horseback could not see over the snowbanks piled along the sides of the partially cleared highways. Again in 1835 sleighing had commenced by the end of November. Another heavy storm, that of November 30, 1842, covered a wide area; fifteen inches of snow are recorded as having fallen at Dover, N.H., and "much snow" fell at Baltimore,

All November snowstorms were not so long ago, however, for it was on November 27, 1898, that the steamer Portland left Boston, and sank with all on board in a terrific northeast snowstorm. Only three years ago great snow, sleet, and ice storms swept the country, practically from coast to coast, in the latter half of November. That that time four and a half feet of snow and sleet fell at The Dalles, Oregon, in one storm.

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(Tomorrow: "Distribution of Ice Storms")

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