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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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OUR RAINY SEASONS

Those who live in the East expect rainfall in some form at any time of the year. The occasional drouths or wet spells do not occur on schedule. On the Pacific coast, summers are dry and winter is the wet season. Indeed, in the central and southernportions of the Pacific coast region less than 20 per cent of the annual rainfall occurs during the warm half year and in some localities but 10 per cent. Thus California depends on the water stored in its winter rains and snows for general water supply and for irrigation and power.

Though Seattle, with 37 inches average rainfall has less total precipitation per year than New York or Boston, it seems a very rainy place to the winter visitor, for at that season it often rains every day for long periods at a time.

In the Great Plains region, on the other hand, though the total rainfall is small, 70 to 80 percent of it falls between April 1 and September 30, - the crop growing season. In some parts of Montana and the Dakotas, the winters are extremely dry and cold, and less than the equivalent of one inch of precipitation occurs on the average during each of the three winter months.

Eastern rainfall differs both from the Pacific and Plains types in seasonal distribution. In most places east of the Mississippi there is no distinct rainy season, but precipitation is distributed rather uniformly throughout the year. However, it may be noted that rainfall during the autumn months is usually lighter than during any other season. Last fall was no exception.

(Tomorrow: Cumulative Storm Indications.)

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