

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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"FAIR AND COLDER"

"Sixty-four below zero in Alaska," a recent report, brings up visions of fair and colder in our region to leeward. However, it is a long way from Alaska and there are devious routes and various speeds by which air from there may travel - if it travels at all.

When our forecaster says "fair and colder" he is not thinking of Alaska but of the weather nearby which is already in motion toward us. Usually it has just been getting warmer with a south wind. It is cloudy and perhaps raining or snowing and the barometer has been falling. Soon the "low" responsible for this weather will pass and then we shall get the fair and colder with the dry, descending, boisterous northwest winds that are pushing the storm on eastward.

In winter, dryness and coldness go hand in hand just as do raininess and warmth. This is because when it is clear in winter the loss of heat in the long night is generally greater than the gain by day. The farther north the longer is the night and the lower the temperature. Thus it is no wonder that a shift of wind readily substitutes for a suggestion of the warmth and moisture of southern climes the harder reality of the coldness and dryness of northern ones.

(Tomorrow: Temperatures of the Free Air)

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