

No. 541

A Science Service Feature

Feb. 3

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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ARE THE SEASONS CHANGING?

We frequently hear a man say "The seasons are changing. We do not have the cold weather we did when I was a boy." Such a statement may be literally true for the particular years referred to, but not as a 100-year proposition. A few places in the eastern United States have continuous records over a hundred years long. One study of seasons has been based on the New Haven temperature records which have been maintained almost without a break since February, 1780. When the temperatures were averaged by decades, a variation from 47.5 degrees Fahrenheit to 50.5 was found. The three warmest periods were those ending in 1800, 1810, and 1920, the coldest was that ending in 1820. Considering the individual months it was found that the coldest January occurred as late as 1857. The coldest February occurred 8 years after the warmest one. Two Marches tie for coldest, those of 1870 and 1885. The warmest Junes were those of 1779, 1790, 1803, and 1876. The coldest August occurred 61 years after the warmest. Indeed for nine months of the year the coldest one on record happens to have occurred after the warmest one. In the 109 year Williamstown record the first and the last 23 year periods averaged the same within 0.1 degree Fahrenheit. "These figures seem to indicate very clearly that since the Revolutionary War, at least, there has been no permanent change in temperature." The much older record of ancient big tree rings in the West confirms the view that there have been no recent noticeable changes of climate.

(Tomorrow: Dull Days)

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