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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SNOW FROM TROPICAL MOISTURE

It is generally appreciated that the moisture involved in our winter storms comes usually from somewhere farther south, but rarely have we had such a fine demonstration as that at the end of January, 1925. The great cold wave that covered most of the eastern two-thirds of our continent from January 25 to 28 marked the front of a very large outpouring of polar air. The warmer air in front, especially that in the American tropics, had to get out of the way. Much went east, some went west, but a great deal of it came north. At first its only opportunity to get out of the way was by riding up over the advancing wedge of cold air, but as the middle portion of the cold front weakened a more formidable northward pouring began, marked by a well-defined storm center. On came the storm, its rapidly growing intensity favored by the contrast of some 80 degrees Fahrenheit in 600 miles north and south, and by an abundance of moisture from the Gulf Stream. In the path of the center of the storm, snow, then sleet, then freezing rain, and finally a warm downpour and gale marked its approach. Fifty to two hundred miles west of the path the temperatures did not get so high, and snow from the rapidly cooling moist air aloft suddenly buried central and eastern New York, northwestern New England and adjacent Quebec to an unprecedented single storm depth of one to over three feet. In many respects this storm of January 28-30, 1925, was very much like the extraordinary tropical rainstorm that afflicted this region at the end of September, 1924. Tropical moisture riding at high speed over the hills and mountains was dumped unceremoniously in the interior.

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(Tomorrow: American Cold Waves Unique)

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