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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A YEAR OF SNOW, A YEAR OF PLENTY

To city dwellers such a statement seems paradoxical, for to them snow means a continuous expenditure of money and energy to keep streets open for traffic. Nor do those interested in railroad operations regard copious snowfall with a favorable eye. But to the man who raises grain or tree fruit, heavy or late snowfall often does mean a year of plenty. During the winter a snow blanket keeps the ground warm, for snow is a good insulator. Not only does it hinder the escape of heat from the ground, but when it melts it affords a plenteous water supply. If the snow cover has been deep for some weeks the ground is likely to be unfrozen and ready to receive a maximum amount of water from the melting of the snow. Furthermore, by stabilizing the temperature the snow cover prevents the alternate freezing and thawing of the ground which invariably proves so disastrous to winter wheat and other grains. Though a late snow cover may hold back winter grains, it is valuable in keeping the air temperature from soaring, thus checking the budding of fruit trees until danger from a killing frost is past.

Nowhere in the United States or Canada is the winter snowfall more important than in California. Truly, a year of snow is there a year of plenty. For without much snowfall in winter the supply of water for irrigating crops in summer is inadequate. This year the Southwest has been without much snow, and the outlook for a good supply for the coming summer is unpromising.

(Tomorrow: Hearing Better Than Seeing in Fogs)

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