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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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OCEAN BATHING

The popular bathing resort must afford both a good beach and reasonably warm water. Enterprising advertisers occasionally claim that the Gulf Stream favors their beaches with its high temperatures. As a matter of fact, the Gulf Stream steers clear of the United States shore and keeps 200 or 300 miles out to sea, after leaving the latitude of Cape Hatteras. So does the cold Labrador current beyond the Grand Banks. On the Pacific Coast, however, the cool California current moves south along the shore making water temperatures on southern California beaches in summer only 60 degrees to 70 degrees Fahrenheit, a low figure for the latitude.

At Atlantic Coast beaches water temperatures depend mostly on latitude, on wind direction and upon the slope of the ocean bottom. Persistent offshore winds are generally followed by unusually cold water along shore, a temperature as low as 56 having been experienced in August at Atlantic City under such conditions. Seventy or 80 degrees is normal there. Apparently the warmed surface water is blown out to sea and replaced by colder water welling up from below. Colder water, 60 or lower, is found off steep rocky coasts, Maine and the maritime Provinces, for example, where the ocean becomes deep a short distance from shore than along gently shelving beaches. At Provincetown, the water has a good chance to warm in passing over wide sand flats before reaching shore, and in mid summer may even reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

(Tomorrow: Rain Coming)

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