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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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AUTUMN LOWS

Highs and lows tend to get into ruts and so to bring a place a monotonous sequence of the weather. It may be rainless for some time, with south to west winds and clear or partly cloudy skies by day and calms and lowland fogs by night. Then suddenly new tracks may become established and, especially in autumn, perhaps an increase in the speed of weather changes. The weather now swings through larger changes - from muggy, cloudy, and rainy to clear and cool. This is the kind the local forecaster likes. No longer do all his "signs fail in dry weather". Spikey cirrus clouds pointing across the sky from the west-northwest are followed shortly by falling barometer, southerly wind, rising temperature, more clouds, and rain. And, as promptly, the rain is followed by clearing and cooler. The whole cycle of changes is complete in only three days, and twice in six days or a week.

Though with some oncoming lows the cirrus clouds may appear before the white cloud bank of the retreating storm has disappeared in the southeast, such speed is unusual, and after a short period of rapid changes slower ones again occur. This keeps the forecaster busy. Sometimes he has no sooner got his stride with one set than the circumstances change and he must make another adjustment to a different wavelength in the weather.

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