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A Science Service Feature

Nov. 10

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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NORMAL TEMPERATURES

If you make records of daily temperature, you must have noticed that the thermometer fluctuates most irregularly. Temperatures do not march downward in an orderly fashion as fall approaches, and then rise steadily in the spring. On the other hand, not only days but whole months may straggle out of place, so that occasionally you find November colder than December, or April lagging behind March in warmth. Nice orderly weather can be found only in tables of averages covering long periods.

A recent publication of the U. S. Weather Bureau shows the course of normal daily mean temperatures at many stations. The temperature of a day is considered as half way between the lowest and highest temperatures recorded. Suppose Boston was experiencing average weather instead of real weather. November 10 would have a mean temperature of 44 degrees Fahrenheit, with perhaps a maximum of 54 and a minimum of 34. On the 11th the temperature for the day would be 43.6, on the 12th it would have fallen to 43.2, on the 13th to 42.8, and so on. By the end of November the rate of fall would be somewhat less. November 29 we should expect 37 as the mean temperature, november 30, 36.7. In fall and spring temperatures are changing most rapidly, 10 degrees or more during a month. Theoretically, the colder, colder, colder continues until about January 21, when the coldest is reached. The lowest daily mean, 27.4 at Boston, lasts from January 21 to February 1, when the normal temperatures start slowly to rise again. It's a long way to February 1!

(Tomorrow: Speedy Weather)

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