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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WINTER WEATHER

Did Mr. Boreas forget that last month was October and not November or December? Our climate seems out to establish a new record for variability. After a September as hot as the hottest^{of} Julys over a wide region comes an October like the coldest of Novembers. That is quite a jump, from midsummer into winter, in as many weeks as it usually takes months for the transition to take place.

The Arctic accumulator of cold air was extraordinarily active by late summer, as Commander Macmillan has told us. The cold weather in the far north was a month ahead of normal. And now we have had a lot of accumulated cold air, apparently from the Arctic, spilling southward over us in a most unseasonable fashion. "The coldest on record so early in the season" is just as tiresome reading now as was "The hottest on record so late in the season" only a short while ago.

Everybody has begun talking about a cold winter to come and has been recounting the numerous signs pointing that way and talking about sunspots and ocean temperatures. But who knows what is in store? Who knows how long the unusual invasions of cold are likely to continue? A break may well come before the winter is half over. Ofttimes early cold precedes a cold winter. Sometimes it does not. October, 1917, preceding the extraordinarily cold winter of 1917-1918, was as cold and snowy in its way as October, 1925. But the two Octobers were not enough alike to justify any prediction that this winter is sure to be a cold one. It may be cold, and, again, it may not.

(Tomorrow: Late Tornadoes)

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