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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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GULF STREAM AND THE WEATHER.

It is the common impression along the Atlantic seaboard that the Gulf Stream has important effects on the weather. When the wind blows on-shore from an easterly to southerly direction for some time, balmy air, of soft springlike quality, usually reaches the shores. A number of such occurrences in a season suggest that the Gulf Stream is nearer or warmer than usual.

But there is another side to the matter. Winds are prevailingly off-shore in the colder months, so the character of these land winds will dominate the season. Winds from the west or northwest are generally cool and dry on the Atlantic slope, and the stronger they are the more pronounced are these characteristics. More northerly winds now and then attend much snowfall.

Now, how can the Gulf Stream have anything to do with these winds blowing toward it?? Through storms, is the answer. We know that whatever the wind is it is blowing in accordance with the particular distribution of pressure at the time. To provide a maximum of westerly to northerly winds, therefore, we should have a frequent occurrence of low pressure areas centered off the coast. And this will occur most readily when the "makin's" of storms are most abundant there. It is generally agreed that the sources of energy for oceanic storms are (1) abundant heat energy latent in water vapor, and (2) marked contrasts in temperature. The Gulf Stream supplies much water vapor, and its warmth is in great contrast to the coolness of the neighboring continent. Therefore, the Gulf Stream favors the very winds and snows that make our eastern climates cooler than the averages for their latitudes.

by
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