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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BLOWING DUST

When the snow melts, it often leaves a collection of winter's dust and dirt behind it, making plenty of work for the street department, if the force can get to it before we breathe it all in. Good citizens are at this time likely to ascribe the catarrhal ailments of spring to the germs supposed to be carried in the quantities of dust whirled about by vigorous March winds. This menace is largely ended, however, when spring downpours begin their occasional flushing of the pavements.

On the Great Plains and the drier Southwest this spring dustiness assumes enormous proportions. The high winds of March sweep across bare fields protected neither by snow-cover nor vegetation, and literally blow away the top soil. Some of this fine dust reaches the upper air currents and may be carried a thousand miles before it is brought down to earth by rain or snow. In February this year a little red-tinted snow fell in Minneapolis. At other times in March of recent years widespread falls of colored snow or muddy rain have occurred, involving over a million tons of dust. Dust apparently from the southern plains once fell as far east as Vermont.

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