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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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HALF A YEAR'S RAINFALL IN 5 DAYS

A river in southern California is usually a broad expanse of sand and gravel. The water, if any, is mostly out of sight. Then why the river bed and the widely separated banks? Because the climate is semi-arid, and because it sometimes really rains. In the five days from April 5 to 9, 1926, southern California received half the usual amount of rainfall for a whole year with damaging winds. Seven and a half inches fell at Los Angeles and five at San Diego. The prospect of another deficiency of water was quickly removed. Unfortunately, coming so late in the cool season the delivery to the mountains was more than usual in the liquid state - quick to run away or evaporate where reservoir capacity is built to supplement the snow-fall reservoirs, rather than to hold the entire summer's water supply.

March was extraordinarily dry for a winter month. In conjunction with December, January and February it closed the warmest cool season on record at San Diego. October had been wet in San Diego, and there had been moderate rains since, but Los Angeles was about four inches behind its normal supply up to the end of March. Now it is three inches ahead, and if it rains not another drop the total for the so-called wet season will exceed the normal. San Diego is almost five inches ahead of the normal total for a year, or half again as much as its average of about ten inches.

These heavy rains of early April extended up the coast to San Francisco and up the Valley to Red Bluff. A tornado and damaging hail, phenomena all but unknown there, occurred in central California. Cloudbursts, with three to five and a half inches of rain in forty-five minutes to less than two hours were reported. Two intense general storms from the Pacific Ocean were responsible for the excessive rains. They were unusually far south, for some unknown reason.

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