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December 30, 1926

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed December 23, 1926

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WINTER VS CONSTRUCTION

A few years ago some of the city fathers of Portland, Oregon, complained that the mildness of the "Rose City's winter climate was not half appreciated by eastern builders who had settled there. They had come with their habit of knocking off building operations during the hard winters of the Northeast and did likewise in the Northwest. Uninterrupted building was urged. Nevertheless, the easterners had something on their side, for, even at Portland, ice-storms and snow storms not to mention heavy rainstorms can at times make outdoor construction work difficult and uncomfortable, in fact, even dangerous.

There has been a change, however, in a tendency to continue outdoor construction right through the winter, even in climates as severe as those of the Lake Region, New York and New England. This may be ascribed in part to more effective disposal of snow, permitting the continued operation of trucks, and, to some extent, to the efforts of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Weather Bureau can also share some of the credit for its wintertime minimum temperature and other special weather forecasts. Concrete may be poured safely in mid-winter by choosing the proper days. What if the ground does freeze? Excavators know how to handle rock or very tough earth.

A large increase in contracts awarded in 36 eastern states was noted last winter. For November, December, and January, the increase amounted to over 40 per cent. from the year before. Undoubtedly, the general mildness and freedom from snow at this period a year ago were large factors.

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