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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A GREAT SNOWSTORM

Had the great snowstorm of January 29 and 30, 1925, concentrated its attention on New York City instead of passing farther north, it might have become famous as the "Blizzard of '25". Mr. J. Henry Weber, of Clark University, has made a special study of this remarkable storm. Over about a fifth of New York state 25 inches of snow or more fell in less than 24 hours. The rate of fall was as much as 2 inches an hour in some localities, or about twice the average for snowstorms. At Skaneateles, one of the "Finger Lakes" south of Syracuse, 38 inches of snow fell in 18 hours. That this is an extraordinary amount will be more readily appreciated if we remember that 2 or 3 feet is the figure usually given as the maximum 24-hour snowfall in the Northeast, where our heaviest snowfalls occur. Such a quantity should satisfy the old timer who complains that winters are not what they used to be. The snowfall of this one storm exceeded the annual average for New York or Chicago and nearly equalled that of Boston.

The cause of such an excessive deposit of snow was in this case much the same as in other historic snowstorms. A large mass of cold air formed a bulwark up and over which a moist blast from the ocean was forced to rise and cool rapidly. The speed of ascent of this moist air was probably rendered much greater than in an ordinary snowstorm by the development of a secondary cyclone south of the main storm center, and perhaps also by the obstruction to free circulation offered by the highlands.

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