A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed December 12, 1928

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Authority on Meteorology

CLIMATIC CALENDAR DIVISION

In his learned work "Primitive Time-Reckoning", Prof. M.P. Nilsson, of the University of Lund, cites a great number of examples from different parts of the world of the division of the year into periods distinguished by the recurrence of climatic phenomena or, in some cases, of rural events and occupations dependent upon such phenomena. While some climatic calendars of this sort recognize only two or three large divisions of the year, others are much more elaborate.

Thus in China, side by side with the calendar of lunisolar months, there exists a division of the year into 24 parts, the names of which correspond to atmospheric conditions together with other recurrent phenomena of nature. These are: "Rain water," 15 days; "moving of snakes," 15 days; "spring equinox," 15 days; "pure brightness," 15 days; "sowing-rain" and "dawn of summer," together 31 days; "little fruitfulness" (or "little rainy season") and "corn in the beard," together 31 days; "summer solstice," 16 days; "beginning of heat," 16 days; "great heat," and "signs of autumn," together 31 days; "end of heat" and "white dew," together 31 days; "cold dew," 15 days; "autumn equinox," 15 days; "hoarfrost," 15 days; "signs of winter," 15 days; "beginning of snow" and "great snows," together 29 days; "winter solstice," 15 days; "little cold," 15 days; "great cold," 15 days; "dawn of spring," 15 days.

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