

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER NOTIONS IN WISCONSIN

"There is," says J.O. Frank, of the Wisconsin State Teachers' College, "a great body of traditions, superstitions and half truths, which is the heritage of every child who enters the public schools," and these notions are, he thinks, a serious obstacle to the inculcation of scientific knowledge. In order to take stock of such ideas in the Fox River Valley of Wisconsin, Mr. Frank secured through the cooperation of pupils 488 separate reports on the prevalence of a total of 1,224 superstitious or semi-superstitious beliefs in that region. The following is a partial list of those relating to weather; the figure, in each case, showing the number of the above-mentioned reports in which the notion figured:

Groundhog sees his shadow on groundhog day--six weeks of cold weather.	222
Killing a toad brings rain.	123
Rain before seven quits before eleven.	94
Dogs eat grass--rain.	74
Rain in a grave--another death in the family.	50
Heavy fur on animals--long winter.	38
Thick husk on corn--long winter.	37
Killing a spider brings rain.	33
Rain falls with bubbles on water--rain three days.	33
Cats eat grass--rain.	33
Rain on first Sunday of month--rest of month rainy.	30
Snake dies on its back--rain.	26
Muskrats build thick-walled house--hard winter.	25

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