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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 7, 1930

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A CROWN IN THE SKY

Now that the long nights of winter are at hand dwellers in the northern United States and in Canada may hope to see, when neither clouds nor moonlight prevent, displays of that weirdly beautiful phenomenon of the earth's upper atmosphere the aurora. If they are exceptionally lucky they will witness the relatively rare phase of this spectacle known as the "corona," or auroral crown; formed when the luminous beams converge toward a point south of the zenith in a gorgeous circle of flame. Here is the way a distinguished student of the aurora, Sophus Tromholt, reports one of these displays:

"In every direction the whole sky is covered with bunches of streamers, all of which point to the magnetic zenith and transform the vault of heaven into one gigantic, lustrous canopy, the beauty of which no pen can describe, no brush depict. All marvelous nuances of color of the rainbow contribute to ornament the vault. Here is the tender green of the emerald, the grand purple of the ruby and the charming blue of the sapphire, all blended together in a thousand shades. Here gambol a flock of yellow-green flames, and there mighty pillars rise as if to support the luminous dome, while yonder the sky is covered with a transparent drapery shot with red, behind which dazzling white streamers stand forth. It is the auroral corona. For a moment the glorious, luminous vault remains thus in majestic beauty. Then the supporting arches tremble and fall, the faint light-clouds remaining in the southern sky vanish, and the aurora recedes into the northern sky."

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