A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
December 9, 1931

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed December 2, 1931

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## ALMANAC WEATHER PREDICTIONS

The delusive daily weather predictions found in a good many modern almanacs--especially those of the "medical" variety--are no modern invention, as they figured in similar publications as far back as the eighteenth century. Many interesting examples occur in old English almanacs. Thus in John Tanner's Almanac for 1689 we find such predictions curiously combined with a list of historic events, the anniversaries of which fell on corresponding dates. For example:

Jan. 4. King Charles crown'd at Schoon in Scotland--blustering extreme.
Jan. 9. King Charles the First left London--clouds threaten.
May 8. Last long parliament began--thunder-like.
May 20. Oxford treaty began--windy.

These early predictions were-- as the weather prognostications of the almanacs have nearly always been--entirely indefinite as to the place or region to which they were supposed to apply. Hence, even in so small a country as Great Britain, they were pretty sure to come true somewhere. Many were also quite flexible as to date, and thus almost infallible.

The absurdity of such prognostications must have always been recognized by intelligent people, and in fact, as long ago as the year 1664, we find them burlesqued in "Poor Robin," the first of the comic almanacs, with such announcements as these:

January: There will be much frost and cold weather--in Greenland.
February: We may expect some showers of rain this month or the next, or the next after that, or else we shall have a very dry spring.

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