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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

WEATHER PROVERBS

Some proverbial rules for predicting weather are fairly sound and are as valid in one part of the world as another. Some are useful in the regions where they originated but are misfits in other regions to which they have been transplanted. Many were never good anywhere. It would be a mistake, however, to describe these worthless weather rules as "unfounded." They are, for the most part, quite logically founded on various other fallacies and superstitions that once passed current as wisdom, even among learned men. Very many of them are connected with the pretentious folly of astrology, which in bygone ages was in exactly as good standing among educated and intelligent people as astronomy is today.

Moreover, popular methods of weather prediction date from a time when it was customary to seek "signs" of all kinds of events affecting the welfare of mankind. As a rule these signs were not supposed to have any physical connection with the events they foreshadowed. They were thought to be placed before the eyes of humanity through divine dispensation rather than through the working of natural law.

In accordance with this order of ideas many notions grew up concerning "key days," the weather of which was supposed to furnish a clue to the weather of subsequent periods, sometimes quite remote. The Groundhog Day superstition is an example, and the St. Swithin's Day superstition is another. Several others, rarely heard of in America, are still familiar in the Old World. One that has been popular for ages in continental Europe is to the effect that the weather of the twelve days beginning with Christmas indicates the general character of the weather for each of the twelve succeeding months.

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