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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed October 17, 1933

THE INDIAN SUMMER TRADITION

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The conception of Indian summer as a single and definite event of the autumnal weather program appears to be firmly rooted today in the minds of most people living in the northern United States and southern Canada, but it is not very old. Albert Matthews, of Boston, who has devoted more than thirty years to the quest, has been able to trace the name "Indian summer" back only to the year 1790, and the conception embodied in the name apparently did not originate very long before that date. Earlier literature, though it contains many descriptions of the American autumn, does not indicate a belief on the part of the writers that the finest weather of that season was normally concentrated in a single period of a few or several days.

Weather records fail to support this traditional idea. Indian summer weather is a delightful reality, but it usually occurs intermittently in the autumn and some years bring much more of it than others. Occasionally an autumn fails to produce any weather of the balmy, tranquil, hazy type that we associate with Indian summer.

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