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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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UNUSUAL WEATHER

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New Englanders take a certain pride in the endless eccentricities of their weather, and therefore are not prone to apologize for it to visitors. New England is one of those rare regions where you are not told that the weather prevailing during your visit is "unusual." Such, at least, is the implication of the following story, told by T.E. Reed, of the U.S. Weather Bureau:

"Recently, I met a prominent New England industrialist who had just returned from a trip of several months through the States.

"He spent some time in Detroit and Chicago. The weather was terrible. The natives said it was unusual. In due time he landed in Seattle and Portland. The weather was terrible. The natives said it was very unusual. His journeys carried him through California. The weather was terrible. The natives all said it was extremely unusual. He took ship for Florida, via the Panama Canal. The weather in Florida was terrible. The natives said that they had never known it to be such before.

"He came back home. The weather was as usual. Everybody talked about it but nobody lied about it."

Perhaps "lied" is too strong a word. Fallacies concerning the unusualness of weather are very prevalent. There is an amusing jingle on this subject by Wallace Irwin, beginning:

"It's always unusual weather,
Whatever the climate may be;
When Florida's chilly the papers get silly
And ask what the reason may be."

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