

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
November 30, 1933

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed November 23, 1933

NEW WEATHER PROVERBS

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

Says C.D. Reed, in charge of the climatological service of the U.S. Weather Bureau in Iowa: "A fallacy is best extirpated by substituting a more acceptable truth. Weather folklore and proverbs are shot through with fallacies. In Iowa we are trying to reduce our climatological relationships to exact statements that will bear the searchlight of mathematical analysis, and then to state them in the form of jingles or proverbs."

Mr. Reed finds from an examination of weather records for Iowa that whether the average temperature of June is above or below 67 degrees Fahrenheit largely determines the extent of autumn frost damage to corn in that state. When June is warmer than this average, it gives the crop a good start, and it is, moreover, generally followed by weather warmer than the normal during the next three months, so that the corn is harvested before it can be much damaged by frost. With a view to making this relationship familiar he has manufactured the following new weather "proverb":

"Fear not of frosted corn in fall  
If June before is warm at all."

Dr. W.J. Humphreys, in his book "Weather Proverbs," set the example of putting facts about weather into the form of pithy and easily remembered jingles of his own invention; such as

"When fog goes up the rain is o'er;  
When fog comes down 'twill rain some more."

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