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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 24, 1933

THE ALPINE WINTER

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In comparatively recent times the Alps have become one of the world's favorite winter playgrounds, and -- incredible as the fact would have seemed to our grandfathers -- a great winter health resort. The characteristics of the Alpine winter are briefly described as follows in a current number of Nature:

The permanent snow cover at heights of a few thousand feet above sea level usually forms about the middle of November, though above 7,000 feet snow lies most years in October. This marks the beginning of the famous Alpine winter. The weather map shows at this season a long tongue of high barometric pressure extending from the great Siberian anticyclone across Russia to Switzerland. The sky is generally clear, while such clouds as do form are at a low level. The higher resorts are above the clouds and are bathed in sunshine throughout the day.

Owing to the relatively small mass of atmosphere overhead and the dryness of the air the intensity of the sun's rays is very great, and their power is increased by reflection from the dazzling snow surface. The keen bracing air and bright sunshine make the climate at this season very attractive for winter sports. The snow cover begins to disappear in March at the lower levels, but at a height of 7,000 feet it lasts well into June.

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