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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LONG-RANGE WEATHER FORECASTS

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Considerably less than a century has passed since Arago, the famous director of the Paris observatory, declared that scientific men who valued their reputations would never attempt to predict the weather. Not many years after this assertion was made, daily weather forecasting became a routine task of science.

In the early years of the present century no scientific authority was quite so dogmatic about the eternal impossibility of making successful long-range weather forecasts, but most authorities were rather pessimistic on the subject. A common saying in those days was that the thing would not come to pass except as the result of some revolutionary scientific discovery, or, as one writer put it, it would be the achievement of some still unborn Kepler or Newton.

Today the outlook seems rather hopeful for the attainment of this great desideratum through the gradual improvement of methods already initiated rather than through some sudden apocalypse. Several lines of attack upon the problem now occupy the attention of meteorologists. Without passing judgment upon their relative merits, one may safely say that the favorite plan, at present, is that of seeking definite relation between weather conditions prevailing at a certain time in particular parts of the world and those of subsequent seasons in other parts.

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