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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER CYCLES

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

Does weather run through definite cycles, apart from the two universally recognized; viz., the yearly cycle and the daily cycle? Mathematical analysis of weather records has revealed evidence of the existence of dozens of others, with periods ranging from a few months to several centuries, yet they all remain elusive when one attempts to utilize them in predicting weather. As Prof. T.A. Blair, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, puts it:

"We know by practical experience as well as by statistical analysis that phases of wetness and dryness, heat and cold, do recur, with resulting economic, social and health cycles. The economists have shown that there are cycles of good and bad times, high and low prices of staple crops, and that these are related to the weather. In the plains of western Kansas, western Nebraska, and eastern Colorado, for example, there have been series of wet years with accompanying good crops and 'booms,' and series of dry years, causing depression and abandonment of land.

"There can be no doubt that such climatic fluctuations do occur, but they do not occur with sufficient regularity to be useful in forecasting the future. The weather oscillates back and forth like a pendulum, and yet very unlike. A pendulum keeps exact time in its oscillations; the weather does not. All the ingenuity so far applied to the problem has not worked out a time schedule to which the weather will adhere, but on the contrary tends to show that its motions are so erratic, as the result of so many influences at work upon it at the same time, that its future behavior will probably remain unpredictable by this means."

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