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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER AND RETAIL TRADE

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

Not all meteorologists are optimistic about the prospects of eventually finding means of predicting the weather a long time in advance, but all agree that accurate long-range weather forecasts, if they could be achieved, would be of immense value to mankind. How the weather affects retail trade and how retailers would profit by knowing the character of coming seasons formed the subject of a recent address by George Bijur, who directs the advertising of a large store in Newark, N.J. He said:

"If the weather turns chilly early in September, sales of fall apparel are likely to boom. But if the weather remains mild and warm, retailers may be unable to dispose of their stocks of fall wearables. If December is cold and blustery, overcoats and blankets will sell up to expectations, but if winter days are late in arriving, people will decide to get along with last year's fur coat. If summer sunshine arrives promptly on schedule early in June, straw hats will sell by the thousand, and many men will purchase two before the summer is over. But if summer weather is late in arriving, most men will resuscitate last year's straws or cling to their felt hats.

"Last January anyone in New Jersey who wanted to buy a snow-shovel had about as difficult a time as if he'd been shopping for an ice-cream cone in the Gobi Desert. The winter had been so unexpectedly severe and snowy, for the first time in many years, that retailers were caught unprepared. People wanted ear-muffs and had a hard time finding them this side of Montreal. If long-range weather forecasting had been perfected at this time, retail stores could have added many hundreds of thousands of dollars to their sales."

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