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but intended for use
October 10, 1934

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed October 3, 1934

VINTAGE DATES

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Regular observations of weather recorded from day to day are of comparatively recent origin, but there are several sources from which we can obtain indirect information about the weather prevailing in various parts of the world before such observations were begun. One of these is the record of vintage dates year by year, which, in France, extends back into the fourteenth century.

Some years ago a French meteorologist, the late Alfred Angot, made a thorough study of such records, which he found to give no support to the view, held by many persons, that there has been a progressive change of the French climate for the worse. The dates of the vintages seem, however, to indicate a number of small oscillations of climate. During the period 1775-1875, the average date of the grape harvest at Aubonne was 10 days earlier than the average date in the preceding century, and only three days later than that recorded two centuries before.

At the present time, the date of the grape harvest in Aubonne is again exactly the same as at the close of the 16th century.

The average date of the vintage at Dijon shows the following secular variations: 14th century (mean of 13 years only), October 25; 15th century (6 decades), October 25; 16th century, October 28; 17th century, October 24.5; 18th century, October 28.8; 19th century (8 decades) October 30.

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