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March 26, 1935

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed March 19, 1935

ICE AGE CAUSES

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman  
Authority on Meteorology

The earth is believed to have passed through at least four tremendous ice ages, besides some of minor importance. What caused them?

There are fully a dozen different answers to this question, each supported by able champions and a fund of sound science; besides a host of others less well accredited. Some of the more familiar hypotheses ascribe these events to variations in the earth's orbit, variations in the sun's output of energy, the passage of the solar system through cold regions of space, variations in the composition of the earth's atmosphere, temporary veils of volcanic dust, and changes in the elevation of the lands, with resultant dislocations of wind systems and ocean currents. The formation of an ice sheet apparently depends rather upon a long-continued cause rather than one of great magnitude. Perhaps several of the suggested causes have acted in combination.

The late Dr. Alfred Wegener, in Germany, reviving and elaborating an idea suggested as long ago as 1909 by F. B. Taylor, in America, believed that there has been a widespread "drifting" of continents over the earth's surface, together with a wandering of the earth's poles, so that different lands have been brought successively within the polar regions and subjected to refrigeration, though the distribution of climates over the globe as a whole was always about the same as it is at present. No adequate cause for these alleged migrations of land has, however, been suggested, and Wegener's views have not found many converts among geologists.

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