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RAIN AND SNOW.*

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The speaker, at the outset, said that if the title upon the programme had led his hearers to imagine that his remarks were to be upon the weather, they were mistaken. There were weather-wise people, official and unofficial—the former constituted the staff of the Dominion Meteorological Service, the latter, the rest of the population. Weather prediction, according to the best authorities, must be based on data of temperatures, pressures, etc., taken over wide areas—and such data can only be obtained through the recognized, official channels. Again, safe predictions can only be made for a period of 48 hours ahead. Of course, some people may possess the gift of prophecy; one cannot deny it, but judging from results as regards weather, one is forced to the conclusion that the days when the spirit of the lying prophet entered into man are not passed.

Considering rain and snow from the utilitarian point of view, the lecturer said it was his desire to offer one or two thoughts on the rôle of these elements; in the economy of Nature, their influence upon the industries, the agriculture and the health of the world.

The first fact to be pointed out—and it is one of fundamental importance—was that there was a constant circulation (though that word scarcely describes the process) of the moisture, the water of the world. Continuously, by day and by night, summer and winter, there ascends from sea and lake and river and moist land aqueous vapour. This evaporation is, of course, due to the heat of the sun, though direct sunlight is not necessary for the operation. Water gives off vapour at all temperatures and there is the direct conversion of snow and ice into vapour.

* This is a condensed report of an address delivered before the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club in the Normal School, Ottawa, Dec. 10th, 1907.—Ed.