

only by the slowness with which the snow melted in those cold, ice-bound Marches, but also by the frost in the ground under the snow tending to delay growth.

It is not to be expected that two springs so unusually early, two Marches of so remarkably high a temperature, will be followed by a similar one. One of the conditions that make for the early growth of plants is certainly present. I have found, by digging down through the three feet of closely packed snow and ice in the woods, that the ground there is not frozen though it is in the open field. Therefore, when the snow disappears, or, indeed, before that, plant-growth will be possible in the woods. But the snow this year is of unusual depth,\* and will be longer in melting, not only because there is more to go, but because the very presence of such a mass of frozen matter makes for lower temperatures. It is probable, however, that when spring does come it will come in with a rush and be a rapid season. For with temperature, as with other things, there is always a tendency to rhythm, to wave-motion; so that, as we are having temperatures so constantly, so phenomenally low this winter, we may expect unusually high temperatures later on. Although a cold winter does not always presage a warm spring (it did not in 1875, the coldest winter on record, nor in 1883, nor in 1885), yet it is not usual, Mr. Stupart informs me, to have more than three consecutive months below normal. In dealing with the weather, however, it is certainly easier to be wise after the event. Long forecasts regarding the weather, indeed, partake rather of the nature of guess work than of true prophesy. The conditions affecting weather are so numerous, complex and remote, as to make meteorology the most difficult and the most backward of all sciences, not even excepting physiology.

Finally, comparing the spring drouth of 1903 with previous drouths at that season, we see how phenomenal it was. Mr.

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\* As this article is being printed, I have ascertained the snowfall of the past winter to be 105.7 inches, which is 8.8 inches above the average for thirty years. Even this heavy snowfall did not everywhere protect the ground in the open during the past severe winter. The snowfall of the previous winter was unusually light, being but 72.9 inches.