

WEATHER PROPHESYING.

That science will yet ascertain a way of foretelling storms, we firmly believe. Indeed, the telegraph is even now usefully employed for this purpose, and its agency, we hope, will at some not distant date serve to warn our coast dwellers and coastwise crafts of an approaching storm in time to enable the one to prepare to assist the other. Since the publication of Professor Espy's Theory of Storms, much attention has been devoted to this subject, and although a system which is entirely reliable and generally applicable, has not yet been perfected, it is to be hoped that the progress of scientific investigation will yet evolve such a system.

The weather prophesying, however, of experts, who calculate by the phases of the moon, by the comparison of one season with another, by cycles of storms, by the variations of the barometer, and the fluctuations of the thermometer, we deem of no value whatever. Nothing has ever yet been adduced to prove that the moon has any appreciable influence over the climate of this planet, or the temporary changes in the climate of localities. The comparison of former years with the present afford no criterion. The changes on the surface of the inhabited earth, by the destruction of forests and the multiplication of civilized habitations have much to do with alterations of climate. The theories of storm cycles are yet in embryo. Sudden fluctuations from causes beyond our knowledge are not taken into account by storm theorists; or if so, these fluctuations upset all their calculations, and they are left in the dark. The variations, neither of the barometer or the thermometer, are to be confided in. They are unreliable.

The astronomer, who from the top of his tower, or from a mountain summit; or the sailor, who has a more extended field of vision, may, from the appearance of the clouds and the condition of the atmosphere, prognosticate the advent of a storm and its direction. So, also the farmer and the hunter, by long experience, necessitated by their pursuits, learn to read the heavens, or, rather, the atmosphere, to some benefit; but when our weather prophets presume to foretell a dry summer, a lean harvest, a cold winter, from their yearly observations, based only on observation, and not on a thorough knowledge of natural laws, we choose to place but little reliance on their prognostications.—*Scientific American.*

The Four Seasons.

Spring begins 1869, March 20, 8h. 16m. morn. and lasts 92d. 20h. 34m.
Summer begins, 1869, June 21, 4h. 50m. morn. and lasts 93d. 14h. 22m.
Autumn begins, 1869, Sept. 22, 7h. 12m. even. and lasts 89d. 17h. 56m.
Winter begins, 1869, Dec. 21, 1h. 8m. even.—trop. year, 365d. 5h. 48m.

Saturn's Rings.

These rings will be visible all this year, the visual line making an angle of little more than 26 deg. with the plane of the rings. Their northern surface is visible, the Sun and Earth being elevated above that side. They appear elliptical, and this year rather more than twice as long as wide.