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## THE WEATHER PROPHET

Professor Williams of U. S. Bureau Tells About Him in Practical Way



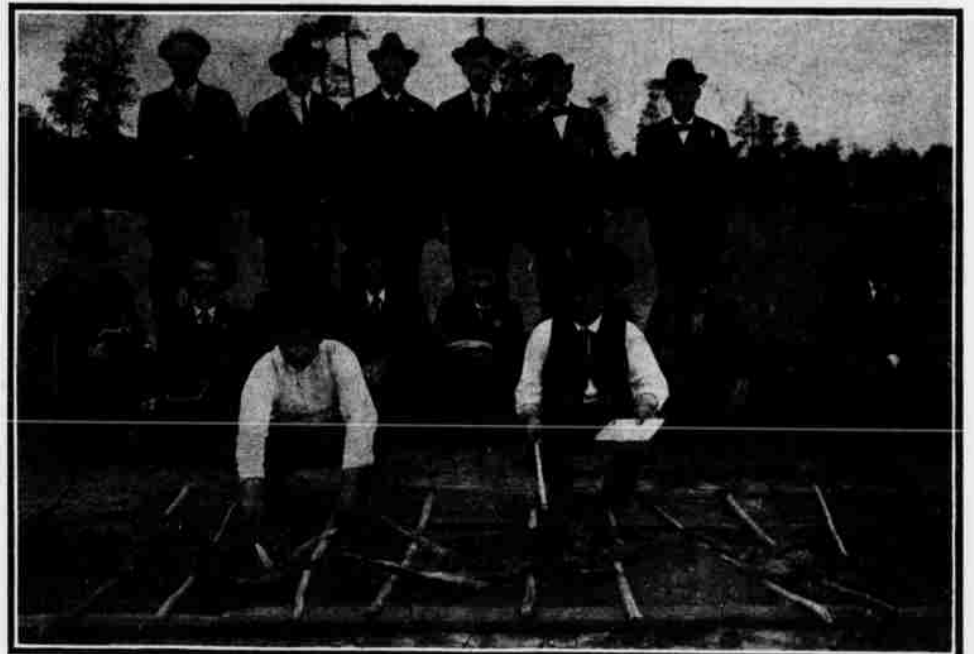
"THERE'S no secret in weather forecasting," declares Professor Henry E. Williams of the U. S. Bureau, "and as a matter of fact, a field of weather wisdom may be acquired by those who are observing, and

this wisdom needs only to be properly correlated in order to be entirely practical. The information of the experts in the Weather Bureau is obtained after long years of study and observation. Certain meteorological conditions indicate certain changes in the weather, but these signs are not infallible, for other conditions may arise. One can readily see, then, that long distance forecasting—that is, for an extended period of time—is not only impractical but impossible with our present knowledge of the

floats away in the wind. Now, if you are weatherwise and are on the leeward side of this mountain you will know that a warm, moist current of air, indicating rain or snow, is approaching. To be sure, a cloud cap on the top of a mountain is not always an indication of a rain or snow storm, but in nearly all cases it may be safely taken as a sign of falling weather.

In the majority of instances the formation of clouds after a clear period presages rain, but we have no means, at present of determining definitely the exact time in which the rain will fall. The rain may come within two or three hours after the clouds appear or it may arrive in two or three days. It is on these little points of distinction that the United States forecasters seek to base their prognostications.

In noting the rise or fall of temperature one, who is experienced in these matters, can use his own judgment as to



"ALL PROPHETS"—NATIVES AT A TYPICAL SOUTHERN BARBECUE

science. A good many laugh at certain signs of our forefathers, but where they watched meteorological conditions, perhaps they were not so far out of the way. Of course, there were many signs that simply meant nothing but they were apart from the natural science of men. It is said that the first weather chief in this country used to predict bad weather whenever his rheumatism became rampant, and it may be that that was a very sure indication to him of storms. But there are enough natural resources at hand to tell us at short range what the weather is likely to be.

One of the most infallible indicators of the weather are the clouds. They are formed from the moisture that is always in the air. This moisture, like the air, is invisible so long as it remains in the form of gas, but when the air is cooled a portion of its water vapor is condensed and a mist or cloud is formed, which is visible. The formation of a cloud may be shown by a familiar illustration. A current of warm, moist air strikes a cold mountain and some of the moisture is condensed, thus forming a cloud which

the probable outcome as to such conditions. He does not require a thermometer to tell him that the atmosphere is oppressively warm, nor a hygrometer to indicate that there is an unusual amount of moisture. As for that matter a pitcher of ice water on a hot day serves very well as a hygrometer, for the water vapor in the air is condensed and collects on the outside of the pitcher which is cooler than the surrounding air. Now, this principle which you may see illustrated by the pitcher of ice water is repeated by nature on a large scale every time there is a fall of rain or snow. First of all there is the cooling of the air and the formation of clouds which are composed of minute particles of water; then there is a further cooling of the cloud mass, so that the particles unite and form small rain drops which fall to the earth by their own weight. If the atmosphere be sufficiently cold these raindrops are congealed as they fall and becomes snow drops. A sudden change in the temperature of the atmosphere in the summer during such a rain fall results in a hail storm.

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