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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,
discusses:

THUNDERSTORM'S SQUALLCLOUD

One of the awesome phenomena of the thunderstorm is the squall-cloud, showing as an onrushing, dark gray arch, spanning the western or northwestern sky against a blue-black background of falling rain. Sometimes it is called the "storm collar" It is the forward projection of the lower portion of the thunderstorm cloud, and is overshadowed by the forward-spreading, dense cloud sheet above.

As it approaches, the raggedness of its lower edge becomes noticeable, and at once a rapid upward motion of flecks of dark cloud joining the body of the cloud is evident. Wisps suddenly appear and rush into the low cloud. Now the arch has reached the zenith and spans the sky in both directions; at once the dead calm is broken by a swirl of dust as the front of the cool squall arrives. The trees, looking vividly green against the dark blue background, bend away from the approaching darkness and the growl of the thunder. Scattering raindrops begin to fall. Overhead the sky is like a boiling cauldron. Great rounded masses of cloud are descending. Now and then a ghost cloud slips by with a passing gust. The darkness gathers. Soon vivid lightning and the almost immediate crashes announce the main front of the storm. The rain begins to fall in torrents and the squall cloud is lost to view.

(Tomorrow: A Useful Barometer Law)

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