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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,
tells why:

COLD RAIN LEAVES SIDEWALKS DRY

Surface temperatures of the ground and objects on it cause several interesting phenomena in connection with falling rain and snow, apart from the ice storm. Just as warm rain falling on a sidewalk may leave its surface dry, so, too, chilled rain may fall on brick or asphalt without wetting it. In the one case the hot surface evaporates the raindrops as fast as they strike it. In the other, rain, cooled below its freezing point striking a surface equally cold, is instantly converted into ice.

Some snowstorms, especially those of the late fall and early winter, leave trees and shrubbery and tall grasses white with crystals, while the ground shows no trace of snow. The reason is that in the radiation of heat the ground has so much to give up that its temperature remains above freezing, while limbs, twigs and grass blades, dead leaves and the needles of the evergreens have been exhausted of much of their heat. The snow falling upon them remains unmelted, while that which reaches the bare ground is quickly converted into water.

(Tomorrow: December Weather)

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