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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

RECENT FLOOD RAINS IN MEXICO AND PANAMA

Early reports from Mexico indicate that during September, October and November rains of "unprecedented" volume fell more or less continuously for days and days during the prevalence of the unusual gales of cold air from North America into the tropics. Innumerable washouts and landslides over much of the country rendered railroad travel dangerous and almost impossible.

Similar conditions probably prevailed throughout Central America, for great floods occurred in Panama, especially during the latter part of October. Autumn rains in Panama are always heavy, as at this season large masses of very humid air are being forced upward by the invading colder air from the north. October normally gives Panama from 10 to 17 inches of rain but the great rainfall recently experienced far surpasses these amounts. Panama in such wet times may receive in one month about as much rain as the average for the United States for a year.

How hard it can rain in Panama is shown in the records of Porto Bello on the Atlantic Coast of the Canal Zone. Forty-eight inches is the average rainfall there in October and November together. Rains of five inches or more in a day are not infrequent, while on November 29, 1911, 6.31 inches was recorded in two hours, and 2.47 inches of this amount in only three minutes.

(Tomorrow: Why Thermometers Disagree)

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Science Service,
1115 Conn. Ave.,
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