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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
of Clark University,
discusses

FORECASTING

The entertaining and useful practice of forecasting the weather began long before the days of weather bureaus; early rules evolved by the successful prophets have long been handed down in the form of weather proverbs. The first forecasting must have been empirical. For instance, without understanding the processes of condensation, people learned from experience to expect rain from heavy clouds. So we still say, sometimes mistakenly, "it looks like rain", while the scientific observer with instruments to aid him will feel more certain of his forecast, if in addition to noting the appearances of coming rain he can observe a falling pressure and a rising relative humidity. When to local observations we can add a weather map showing distant conditions to assist us, we have reached the modern stage of forecasts. Local observations allow us only to surmise more distant conditions, which are accurately reported and mapped for Weather Bureau use.

(TOMORROW: Storms Can Clear too Soon)

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