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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

STORMS SLOW TO CLEAR

When a storm passes and the wind shifts to the northwest, we usually look for clearing and colder weather. If, however, the storm is a very slow moving one, this optimism may prove unjustified. A low may travel slowly or even remain stationary at times and yet be accompanied by gales, blowing spirally inward. The speed of advance of the high, cirrus clouds before a storm will, however, indicate to some extent its rate of progress. Where the forward motion of the storm is delayed, a vigorous northwest wind behind will run into it and will pile up the air, underrunning and lifting the warm moist air in front and extending the rain-making process. Some of the moisture in this warm layer condenses and falls as rain through the ordinarily cool, dry, northwest wind below. Therefore, the general rain continues even after the surface wind has shifted.

On the other hand, the rapidly passing low may travel faster than the winds behind follow on its course. In this case a down draft is produced behind the storm, and the sky quickly clears of high clouds, though low ones, sometimes with light showers or snow flurries may form, especially on leeward coasts and windward mountain slopes. This is usually the case on the Pacific coast, the western slopes of the Rockies, the east and south shores of the Great Lakes and the western slopes of the Appalachian highlands.

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(Tomorrow: Spring Fog)

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