

No. 329

A Science Service Feature

May 31

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
of Clark University

Discusses

RAIN FROM A CLEAR SKY

As it takes an appreciable time for raindrops to fall, occasionally we get the curious effect of rain with a clear sky overhead. While the drops are falling, delayed by friction with the air, or held up by rising air currents, the cloud from which they started may have had time to evaporate, or if it is a small shower cloud, may have been blown aside. Summer convectional clouds are so high that at a rate of 10 miles an hour, the speed of medium sized drops, it takes 20 minutes to half an hour for the drops to reach the ground. In the case of the formation of snow high in a convectional cloud, the time is still longer before rain from the melted flakes will reach the ground. For such snow flakes fall at a speed of only a few miles an hour and may descend for two miles or so before melting and dropping two or three miles more at the faster rate of rain. Hence the total time taken in the fall to the ground may be well over an hour.

All rights reserved by Science Service.

SCIENCE SERVICE,
E and 21 Sts.,
Washington, D.C.
