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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

METEOROLOGIST KILLED IN RESEARCH

Finding out the why of the weather is at times very costly, involving even the loss of the investigators' lives. Such was the case when on the night of June 2, 1924, Dr. C. LeRoy Meisinger and Lieut. James T. Neely were caught in a thunderstorm. Dr. Meisinger, a young man of 29, had risen to international fame in the meteorological world by his upper air maps. By means of these, wind directions and velocity, up to heights of two, three, or more miles could be computed with the immediate use of surface observations only. Furthermore, years of experience and close contact with the weather problems of balloonists and aviators had placed him at the head of American aeronautical meteorologists.

Lack of observations of the winds of "lows", above the dense blanket of lower clouds led Dr. Meisinger to investigate these unknown portions of storms. To find out, particularly, where the air went, he planned, in a free balloon, to become part of the air and go along with it in its travels. Owing to his enthusiasm, Dr. Meisinger's balloon project became a reality through the cooperation of the U. S. Weather Bureau and the Air Service of the Army. In nine flights from Scott Field, Belleville, Ill., in April and May he had gathered a store of valuable information, had a great variety of experiences in storms, once travelling to South Carolina and again to Ontario. On the tenth flight, intended to have been the last and longest, the investigators started off in a "low". Within a few hours thunderstorms developed and these men were sacrificed. They risked their lives for the increase of knowledge.

(Tomorrow: Endless Thunder Weather)
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