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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
of Clark University.OUR FAVORED ATMOSPHERE

People are always inclined to like their own habitations best, so it is no wonder that we should be pretty well satisfied with our atmospheric surroundings. However, as there are those who complain; so a little comparison of our favored atmosphere with those of our nearest celestial neighbors is helpful at times. The moon has so little atmosphere that it has not been detected by direct observations. With practically no atmosphere the moon has no clouds and no rain; it has no protecting blanket to temper the sun's rays or to prevent rapid loss of heat by radiation. In consequence, during the daytime on the moon the temperature rises to 200 degrees Fahrenheit, or above, and at night it falls to a hundred or more degrees below zero. Venus may be better off; at any rate, being about the size of the earth, it has sufficient gravity to hold an atmosphere comparable to ours. The greater heat from the sun, however, seems to make such convection that it is doubtful if we ever see the solid surface of that planet through the brightly reflecting clouds. What heat comes to us from Venus seems to be radiated from high in the atmosphere, for the radiative temperature is about 250 degrees absolute temperature, or about/nine degrees Fahrenheit. Existence in a hot and possibly steamy atmosphere under a continuous canopy of clouds may be the lot of any life on Venus. Mars has an atmosphere, but it is much thinner than that of the earth, and clouds seem to be few. The supposed vast expanses of desert are thought to be responsible for the redness of Mars' light.

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