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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks  
of Clark University

RAIN OR SNOW CURTAINS

When a shower is passing at a distance, festoons of rain may sometimes be seen falling from the cloud and trailing out behind. Sometimes these rainstreaks fail to reach the ground; if the air is too dry all the drops may evaporate during their slow fall to earth. In the case of a shower moving towards the observer, them, the extent of the rain streaks gives some idea of the chances of rain.

Occasionally when a thick fairly high cloud is overhead, an hour or two's warning of the arrival of snow or rain from melted flakes may be obtained by watching the appearance of the sky. When the snow begins its downward journey from the cloud, the details of the cloud base soon become blurred and confused, the outlines are no longer clearly visible, there is merely a dark indeterminate mass. If rain begins to fall from the cloud, the warning may be given only 10 or 20 minutes in advance. The indication is longer in advance for snow than for rain because snow falls more slowly, and a rain curtain has to be thicker to blot out the details of the cloud.

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(Tomorrow: Insolation: Heat from the Sun)

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B and E1st Sts.,  
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