

No. 602

A Science Service Feature

April 16

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks
of Clark University

DAILY WEATHER AS CLIMATE UNIT

The climate of a place is nothing but all the weather of the individual days. The elements such as sunshine, temperature, moisture and wind cannot well be considered separately. From each of these we gain some idea of a climate, but to get a correct picture we must see how they are all combined into weather types. Are cold days always dry? If not, what proportion are wet? Cold is much more biting on cloudy, wet, windy days than on clear, quiet ones. With a given set of temperatures and winds, a climate would be much severer if all the cold days were quiet and all the warm ones windy.

One way to describe climate is in terms of frequencies of different types of weather. For instance, the most favorable kind of winter day is the moderate, fair and quiet type, and perhaps the worst is the cold, snowy and windy day. Southern California and western Arizona afford the greatest number of days of the pleasant type, with California as a whole and the south Atlantic States ranking second and third. On the other hand, eastern Canada, New England and the Lake region lead in cold, snowy, windy days - but even in these turbulent parts, cold, fair, quiet days are three times as frequent.

(Tomorrow: How Fast Do Raindrops Fall?)

All rights reserved by Science Service

SCIENCE SERVICE,
B and 21st Sts.,
Washington, D.C.