

No. 702

A Science Service Feature

Aug. 11

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

By Dr. Charles F. Brooks
of Clark University.

THE STORM HALO

The old sailor on the "Hesperus" who feared a hurricane because

"Last night the moon had a golden ring
And tonight no moon we see!"

knew what he was talking about. Large rings or halos around the moon occur when the moonlight is bent from its straight path by passing through a veil of ice crystals. These ice particles form the high wispy cirrus clouds which occur from five to eight miles above sea level. Such clouds, when followed by denser ones, are frequently good indicators of an approaching storm, for they are formed by the outspreading upward currents which rise to great heights in the forward part of a cyclone or "low". The extreme cold there causes the water vapor to condense into ice crystals, thereby forming the halo clouds. The rapidly-moving winds at that height sweep them forward so much in advance of the storm that they first appear moving across the blue sky 12 to 36 hours before the stormy part of the cyclone itself arrives.

(Tomorrow: Insides of a Cyclone)

All rights reserved by Science Service

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