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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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MOUNTAIN SHOWER CLOUDS

The changing aspect of the sky as clouds come and go gives a variety to any view, but in a mountain region the effect is particularly beautiful. On a clear day distant mountains loom sharply against a simple sky background, but on a day with fleeting clouds or passing showers the illumination of the hills is continually changing, their visibility varies and the background is now light and now dark. Above or on the mountains themselves there are imposing cloud additions of extra peaks, sometimes simulating great snow-capped domes.

The mountain shower and its secondary features are most interesting. A great cloud, often with a smooth cap or scarf casts a dark shadow on one mountain and hangs a veil of rain in front of another. Then the cool rain so chills the air that wisps of ragged cloud form on the mountain slope. These are pressed upward or hang in the deep valleys, later to gleam in the returning sunshine.

Sometimes after a shower the cooled and humidified air flowing over a mountain range becomes cloudy and pours in visible cascades down the leeward slope till compressional heating and attendant evaporation disposes of it. If the mountain rises just above the height at which new clouds are forming, the tops of the clouds move on while the bases frayed and detached by the peak linger on the slopes. Through gaps in a range a great flood of cloud may pour.

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