A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed November 2,1926

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THOSE TEXAS STORMS

If you want a lot of rain and quite a blow just order one of those Texas storms ! A low starting or at least first appearing on our weather maps in Texas or northern Mexico has a great advantage over northern lows. It is right where it can get the "eats" necessary for a powerful development. The "eats" are primarily the large supply of warm muggy air available over the Gulf of Mexico and Gulf Stream.

With a low in Texas warm southerly winds set in over Eastern Texas, while a cold draft counters from the north over west Texas. The contrast helps to condense the water vapor, while the liberation of latent heat supplies abundant fuel. The northeastward progress of the low is attended by a general southerly current that includes as part of its make-up an enormous quantity of water vapor. Long before the center of the storm passes this tropical and sub-tropical vapor is streaming northward overhead. This vapor cooled by ascent yields heavy rains over large areas.

An enterprising student of the weather maps of the Texas storm of late October, 1926, figured that heavy rainfall, amounting to half an inch to over 2 inches in twenty-four hours, over the United States from Ohio and Kentucky eastward and the Carolinas northward, weighed some 30 to 40 billion tons!

Since these storms occasionally develop very low pressures, it is not surprising that damaging gales attend them as colder air pushes in violently from neighboring regions of higher pressure.

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