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CLOUD PROGNOSTICS OF RAIN OR SNOW

It is generally recognized that chances of rain or snow are greater when the sky is cloudy, especially when cloudiness is increasing, than when it is clear. Cloud indications are best interpreted in connection with the behavior of the barometer. With a given type of cloud cover, when the pressure is falling, rain within 12 hours is almost twice as likely to occur as when the pressure is rising. For indications of rain within 24 hours, the trend of the barometer makes somewhat less difference. In the colder months, the probability is greatest with dense fog or with low sheet clouds.

When the pressure is falling, cirro-cumulus, alto-cumulus or strato-cumulus clouds are not infrequently followed by rain. Cirro-cumulus and alto-cumulus clouds are the fleecy clouds of small or medium-sized, more or less rounded component units which at times make the "mackerel sky", strato-cumulus clouds are larger rounded or rolled masses, much lower and more or less joined in a sheet.

Cumulus clouds, the ordinary low, rounded topped, white clouds of a bright morning, are good prognostics of fair weather, if accompanied by rising pressure. T. A. Blair's compilation of 33 years' statistics at Dubuque, Iowa, showed that it never once rained within 12 hours when cumulus clouds and rising pressure were observed at 7 in the morning.

When the pressure is rising, the chances of rain are greatest when alto-cumulus clouds are present - a form intermediate in height between cirro-cumulus and cumulus.

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