

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
August 7, 1929.

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed July 31, 1929.

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

"SUNSHINE AND SHOWERS "

There are many old proverbs and sayings about the phenomenon of rain falling during sunshine. Thus:

"A sunshiny shower
Never lasts an hour."

"Sunshiny rain
Will soon go again."

"Sunshine and shower, rain again tomorrow."

We are told that if it rains while the sun is shining, the devil is beating his grandmother; he is laughing and she is crying. An American variant is that the devil is beating his wife with a codfish.

According to Fanny Bergen ("Current Superstitions"), the Vey people of West Africa say that such a shower is a sign that a leopardess has just given birth to young. In Japan the occurrence is said to indicate that a wedding procession of foxes is passing near by, and the children have a pretty custom of running to the supporting pillars of the house to place the ear against them and listen for the foxes' footfalls. The little people also interlace their fingers a certain way; then, peeping through the chinks between the fingers, they say they can see the wedding train.

Dr. Humphreys, in his "Weather Proverbs", says: "Obviously 'sunshine and shower' generally implies rain from a cloud of very limited extent, and rain from so small a cloud implies, in turn, quite humid air and a distribution of temperature favorable to local ascensions and overturns. Hence, as such conditions commonly persist from one to several days, sunshine and shower on one day may well be followed by showers the next day."

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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