

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
January 9, 1930.

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed January 2, 1930.

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,  
Authority on Meteorology.

BREAKING A DROUGHT IN SALVADOR

The following story may or may not be true. It was published many years ago in a leading American newspaper, and appeared in a report of the Smithsonian Institution.

In a certain department of Salvador there had been no rain for nearly a year and the people were brought to such a pass that they were actually dying of thirst, to say nothing of the total destruction of their crops and a general paralysis of industry. Finally the principal alcade of the department issued this decree:

"Considering that the Supreme Creator has not behaved well in this province, as in the whole of last year only one shower of rain fell; that in this summer, notwithstanding all the processions, prayers and praises, it has not rained at all, and consequently the crops on which depend the prosperity of the whole department are entirely ruined, it is decreed:

"Article 1. If within the peremptory period of eight days from the date of this decree rain does not fall abundantly, no one will go to mass or say prayers.

"Article 2. If the drought continues eight days more, the churches and chapels shall be burned and missals, rosaries and other objects of devotion shall be destroyed.

"Article 3. If, finally, in a third period of eight days it does not rain, all the priests, friars, and nuns shall be beheaded. And for the present permission is given for the commission of all sorts of sin, in order that the Supreme Creator may understand with whom he has to deal."

The most remarkable feature of this affair, adds the narrator, is the known fact that four days after these resolutions were promulgated the heaviest rainfall / for years drenched the parching community.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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