

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
April 28, 1931

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed April 21, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

METEOROLOGICAL MUSIC

A good many musical themes have been borrowed from the repertory of weather. One well-known example in classical music is the "Hailstorm Chorus" in Handel's "Israel in Egypt." In Beethoven's "Pastoral Symphony," according to D. F. Tovey, "at least four different incidents faithfully portray not only the first drops of rain and the distant thunder, but all the feelings of depression and apprehension they inspire."

An English writer, Cicely M. Botley, says: "Beethoven employs the piccolo in order to depict the whistling of the wind. This instrument is used for the same purpose by Wagner in 'The Flying Dutchman.' One of the finest storms in music is that depicted in the prelude to Wagner's 'Valkyrie.' The staccato scale played in the bass by the strings gives the dull monotony of the pouring rain; the other instruments join in as the storm rises to its climax with a long roll of thunder on the kettledrums. Both Chopin and Debussy have recorded their impressions of a rainy day in pianoforte music; the former in the 'Raindrop' Prelude, the later in 'Un jardin sous la pluie.'"

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and Constitution Ave.
Washington, D. C.