

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
May 11, 1931

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed May 4, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

A CONNECTICUT HAILSTORM

"There have been several very destructive hailstorms in New England," writes Sidney Perley in his "Historic Storms of New England," published in 1891, "but the most disastrous of them all was that which occurred in Connecticut on the afternoon of Monday, July 15, 1799." Perley devotes a chapter to the description of this storm, but whoever reads for the pleasure of reading will turn to the quaint pamphlet on the subject by Sherman Dewey, published at Walpole, N. H., in 1799. The author was an eye-witness of this hailstorm, which, he says, was "perhaps never equaled since that in Egypt, according to the Mosaic account."

"The heavens," we are told, "seemed clad in sackcloth and shrouded with darkness, whilst lightning and thunder witnessed the war of the elements. ... A few minutes before seven the clouds exhibited a brassy appearance in the west. This was immediately followed by the rain, which poured down as if fed by a waterspout and lasted three or four minutes, when hail began to fall, larger than any I had ever seen. They were as large as a turkey's egg, in vast numbers, and many were larger."

Concerning some of the effects of the storm he says:

"The day following was calm and pleasant, but nothing appeared beautiful. No tuneful bird was left to usher in the cheerless day. The inhabitants of the airy regions fell the first victims to the relentless hand of disordered elements, and were found in the fields and woods, some dead, others with their wings broken, and not one was to be seen or heard unhurt. The small animals of all kinds who had no shelter shared the same fate; among which were fowls, pigs, etc. In many instances sheep were killed."

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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