

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
June 22, 1931

A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed June 15, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

A "SHOWER" OF STONES

As the immortal Buttercup remarks, "things are not always what they seem," especially when viewed by the sensation-seeking eye of the newspaper reporter. From Ohio comes the tale of a mysterious "shower," which will undoubtedly figure in Charles Fort's next book as a supernatural event, beyond the power of any mere scientific man to explain. I have before me a picture from one of the local papers, showing a man's hand filled with pebbles, and bearing the following legend:

"Geologists and meteorologists are puzzled by these hard, stony pellets, several hundred of which fell in suburbs of Cincinnati during a night hailstorm. They are almost round, the size of marbles and smooth. Some appear to be of hard opaque stone and others are like frosted crystal, so hard that they will cut glass like a diamond and scratch knife steel."

One meteorologist was not puzzled. Mr. Devereaux, in charge of the Weather Bureau station at Cincinnati, investigated the objects in question, and he reports: "They did not fall from the sky. The stones are the kind that are used in the manufacture of ink, and the boys in the neighborhood have used them to throw at dogs and to play with in other ways."

Which prompts us to head off, while we think of it, another possible Fortean fable. During the great hailstorm of August 1, 1929, at Hartford, Connecticut chunks of ice bigger than any hailstone on record were seen to fall in a street. But they did not come from the clouds. Only from a water-cooler on the top story of an adjoining office building.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

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