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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed June 16, 1931

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INDIA'S RAINY MONSOON

In the month of June, when people in our country normally still have the hottest period of the year ahead of them, India's hot season comes to an end, being succeeded by the season when the southwest monsoon blows over the land, bringing, as a rule, about 85 per cent. of the total annual rainfall. It is upon the summer rains that the prosperity of the country depends; when they are much lighter than the average, there is widespread distress. The arrival of the rain-bearing winds is generally attended by a period of stormy weather, called the "burst" of the monsoon.

A. Austin Miller writes of this event:

"Although there may be a few days of light rain preceding the burst of the monsoon, this is usually in the form of an intense cyclonic storm, with thunder and lightning and torrential rain, arriving with dramatic suddenness to relieve the parched and thirsty earth. At sea the winds attain great violence, native shipping does not venture out, while larger ships experience some very rough passages. All the west coast harbors, poor and few as they are, are closed, with the exception of Bombay; sea-level rises all along the coast, the water is driven up the flat shores of Cutch and Cambay and the Ranns of Cutch are flooded. The opening storm passes away and may be followed by longer or shorter periods of fine weather, to be followed in turn by further cyclonic storms.

"The average date of the burst of the monsoon in Malabar is June 3, at Bombay the 5th, in the Central Provinces the 10th, in Bengal the 15th, in the eastern United Provinces the 20th, and at Delhi about the 30th; but its arrival may be delayed as much as three weeks. By the end of the month the rains are well established everywhere, maximum falls are generally recorded in July and August, and by the first week in September the rains begin to diminish."

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