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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BEES AND RAIN

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There is a popular belief to the effect that a bee is never caught in a shower. This implies that bees sense the approach of a rainstorm with unfailing accuracy, so that they always get back to the hive from their honey-gathering flights before the rain begins. It is true that, as a rule, few bees leave the hive when rain is at hand and that the majority who have previously left it return in time to escape a wetting. Researches conducted by the U. S. Bureau of Entomology indicate that they are warned by the increasing darkness of the coming storm. Thus in many cases they remain in the hive when the sky darkens but no rain falls. The entomologists tell us, however, that after a rainstorm a few of the returning bees show by the matted-down appearance of the hairs on their bodies that they have been caught in the storm and, after drying, have flown back.

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