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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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Special

WINDSHIFT LINE IS STORMY

The windshift line plays an important part in the weather. It may be defined as the line of contact where cold wind strikes a warm wind, the line usually advancing across the country in an easterly direction. Often a hot moist wind blows from the Gulf, or the Atlantic, sending up the mercury and bringing extreme humidity, while the barometer is low. Then an area of high pressure approaches from the west, accompanied by a cold wind. This cold wind strikes the warm current, wedges in under it and forces it upward. At the point of contact the hot moist air is cooled suddenly, mostly by expanding as it rises. Rain forms, accompanied sometimes by severe electrical disturbances. Or, the contrasting temperatures of the meeting winds may not be so great as to cause more than ordinary rain.

It is not difficult to visualize this line of contact, perhaps several hundred miles long, extending in a north and south direction, as it passes, perhaps rapidly, perhaps more deliberately, across the continent.

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(Tomorrow: Sun Does Not Draw Water.)

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