

Oct. 17

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,
Tells of:

TRAVELS OF SMOKE

When smoke is produced in great quantities it usually travels far before it ceases to be recognizable. It is well known that the bigger the smoke the farther it may go. Many times during the year the smoke of the Pittsburg region may be seen arriving in Washington, D.C., borne by north-westerly winds. Even the smoke from the region about New York City is easily discernible after it has travelled 30 or more miles. In eastern Massachusetts a smoke pall from the industrial cities of southern New England at least 50 miles away often reduced the visibility.

But these travels of city smoke are dwarfed by the hundreds and even thousands of miles that forest fire smoke traverses. The smoke from the great forest fires in Idaho in August 1910 was so dense when it reached Minnesota, a thousand miles away that the sun was obscured by it for a week, and it was too dark at noon even to read newsprint on an open beach. In Minneapolis the visibility was reduced to less than a quarter of a mile. This smoke spread east to the Atlantic seaboard. In October 1918 the smoke from the great forest fire near Duluth, Minnesota, spread with a front so definite that its hour of arrival was reported at station after station to the eastern seaboard and the Gulf states. Starting with strong west and northwest winds from Duluth on the evening of October 12, dense smoke reached Indianapolis by the next morning, and a line from Washington, D.C., to western New England by the evening of the 13th. It covered 1000 miles in 24 hours. The spread was slower southward with weaker winds, the smoke not being reported in Georgia and South Carolina till the 14th and in Texas till the morning of the 15th. The smell of the smoke was very evident in Texas, more than 1100 miles from the source.

(Tomorrow: Rain before seven, shine before eleven.)

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