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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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

AUTUMN GALES ON THE GREAT LAKES

In November, when the lands surrounding the Great Lakes get their first snowfall and the Lake waters are still relatively warm, the temperature contrasts which are produced tend actively to attract and intensify the passing storms. When the air to the northward is abnormally cold, as the wind sweeps down from that quarter, a storm may assume a menacing severity, with a heavy gale, extreme cold and snow, the worst kind of a combination for the seaman. Lake shipping suffers.

Storms of the great inland seas are more disastrous than those of the open ocean, because there is less space for drifting and because of powerful lake currents during gales which take the ship out of control. Also, the fresh lake water is lighter than the salt water of the ocean and is therefore more easily heaped up into great waves by a strong wind. When the December gales arrive and the snowstorms which continue till spring, shipping remains safe in port for ice closes the lakes to navigation.

(Tomorrow: The Pressure of Wind)

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