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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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RIVERS OF FOG

In September the observer looking down from a height in the early morning is likely to see streaks of fog flowing down small valleys and occupying rivers downstream. During September, nights are long enough to allow considerable chilling of the moist air, while waters still retain their summer warmth. Thus in valleys of the Appalachian region mid-September is the foggiest period of the year. In gulleys or over wet meadows, damp air cooled by nocturnal radiation will cause little streams of fog moving downward with the air drainage. Over rivers, steaming from the warm water surface may increase the effect. A striking case of river fog was recently reported from Green Bay, Wisconsin. A dense white fog 200 or 300 feet high hung over the Fox River, following every bend and flowing gently downstream at a rate of 3 or 4 miles an hour. The fog was sharply limited, the margins extending but a few blocks in from the river on either side. Locally, the prow of a ship would stick out of the fog, yet the rest would be barely distinguishable. Now and then there were small breaks, allowing a view across a bridge.

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(Tomorrow: Oil Versus Fog)

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