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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THUNDERSTORM VS. AVIATOR

Aviators fly nowadays mostly regardless of the weather, but they do not fly into a thunderstorm if they can possibly avoid it. The thunderstorm is harbored in dark clouds, those clouds on the outer margins of the storm that twist and turn, boil upward or downward, and fly hither and yon. Round the base of an active storm is gusty, dusty wind, and under its peculiar, pocky, high-overhanging cloud shelf is at times an even worse barrage of hailstones. All these are forbidding enough, but in spite of them, some aviators have somehow got inside the main cloud. There violent whirls, some up and some down, have been met close together, while lightning, thunder, water, and sometimes hail seemed to be everywhere. So violent were the diverse winds that the airplanes have been considerably damaged. Few indeed have ever survived such an excursion into a thunderstorm.

Balloonists with control only of vertical motion, and that of not great speed, have found themselves hopelessly beset in thunderstorms. Aeronauts not killed by the ignition of the gas in the bag, or by being dashed to the ground, or into a lake, have told wierd tales of being tossed about inside the cloud, with basket whirling on a level with the balloon, and some of vain attempts to sail out of the clutches of the storm, only to run the gauntlet again. Thunderstorms are as bad or worse inside than one might judge from the forbidding exterior, ominous lightning and thunder.

(Tomorrow: Fog Distribution)

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