

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE LINE STORM

Any storm anywhere this week is likely to be called "The Line Storm", for this is the time when the sun crosses the Line. So important an astronomical event as the sun's crossing the equator, or Line, thereby marking the astronomical beginning of another season, has quite naturally been looked upon by mariners as having an immediate meteorological significance as well. When a ship crosses the Line quite an affair is sometimes made of the event; why shouldn't there be a much greater disturbance when the sun crosses over?

While it must be conceded that a storm occurring at about this time may fittingly carry the title "Line Storm" or "Equinoctial Storm," such a concession does not carry with it a recognition beyond mere coincidence. This particular period has a bad reputation for storminess, but nobody has yet shown that the five days or week about the equinox is any more stormy on the average than a similar interval not long before or after. This is the height of the hurricane season, to be sure, and storms not of tropical origin are beginning to appear in strength.

Ere now several severe storms, any one of which would have made a fine "Line Storm" have passed without comment in astronomical terms. But now that we are awake to the imminent crossing of the sun and are looking for a storm, our next, since we usually find what we seek, will be the "Line Storm."

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