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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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AERONAUTICAL WEATHER SERVICES

The plan of providing reports of wind and weather for the special benefit of aeronauts began with some small-scale enterprises in Germany about 1909. In the summer of that year Dr. Franz Linke organized a storm-warning service in connection with the balloon races and exhibits of the International Aeronautical Exposition at Frankfort, and at the beginning of 1911 an aeronautical weather bureau for the whole of Germany was established, with headquarters at the Observatory of Lindenberg, a famous center of upper-air research. Shortly before the war a similar undertaking was launched in Italy. This service was the first in the world to publish daily charts, based on telegraphic reports, of the winds at various levels over an entire country.

During the war the regular meteorological services of the belligerent countries and the meteorological units attached to the armies and navies maintained an almost continuous service of weather information for the great fleets of fighting aircraft. Bulletins, distributed chiefly by wireless, supplied particulars of the current and prospective winds at flying levels, the prevalence of fog, the degree of visibility, etc.

Methods developed under war conditions, with some subsequent improvements, are now in operation along the principal airways of Europe to keep the pilots of aircraft constantly informed of the state of the atmosphere along their routes, and since last summer very similar arrangements have been put into effect in the United States.

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