

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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FUTURE ATLANTIC FLIGHTS

A few years hence aviators flying over the Atlantic will be provided , as a matter of course, with many safeguards against unfavorable weather that were not enjoyed by Byrd and his companions in their recent venture.

In the first place there will be a comprehensive system of radio weather reports from ships widely scattered over the ocean. These will be sent several times a day. The possibility of collecting such reports in midocean and transmitting them to the land has been demonstrated by French meteorologists, who have for some years maintained an intermittent service of this kind on the Steamship "Jacques Cartier". This vessel, during her occasional voyages across the Atlantic, gathers weather reports by radio from all vessels within range and forwards them to meteorological establishments on shore. She also charts these vessel reports, together with land reports received by radio broadcast from both sides of the Atlantic, and broadcasts weather bulletins and forecasts for different parts of the ocean. As soon as air traffic justifies the undertaking there will be several floating weather bureaux of this kind instead of one, including, perhaps, the artificial islands that have been so much talked of recently.

Then there will be better arrangements than now prevail for utilizing radio reports of European weather. The Eiffel Tower, for example, now broadcasts five times a day weather reports for all parts of Europe. These should be made available to an aviator taking off from the American side.

During the flight weather maps of the Atlantic will probably be received on board the plane at intervals of a few hours by a telephotographic process. Lastly an efficient system of radio beacons and directional wireless ought to solve the fog problem.

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