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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LOOKING OUT FOR SQUALLS

One of the hardest problems of applied meteorology is that of giving prompt warning to aeronauts of the imminence of squalls and thunderstorms. These disturbances generally cover such limited areas and are so sudden in their onset that they cannot be definitely predicted from the ordinary weather map. They often assume the charactor of a "line-squall", which moves over the country as a narrow strip of squally weather, with or without thunder and lightning. The strip may advance along a front hundreds of miles long. It travels at a moderate speed, and if its existence is once known its progress can be predicted with reasonable accuracy.

During the International Aeronautical Exposition held at Frankfort-on-the-Main in the summer of 1909 Dr. Franz Linke organized a special storm-warning service for the protection of the aircraft that made flights in connection with the show. He engaged the services of 55 observers, constituting a picket-line of 150 kilometers radius around Frankfort. These persons were requested to send an "urgent" telegram to headquarters whenever a squall or thunderstorm appeared in their vicinity during the daytime hours. The only compensation paid for this service was a free entrance ticket to the exposition. The result of the arrangement was most gratifying, as, with one or two exceptions, all the storms, 37 in number, that reached Frankfort during the three months of the exposition were duly heralded an hour or more before their arrival.

Similar intensive systems of reports and observations were organized during the world war for the protection of military aircraft.

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