

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE WASHINGTON WEATHER MAP

The United States Weather Bureau issues daily weather maps at many of its stations in different parts of the country, but the most elaborate document of this class is the large lithograph map issued at the central office in Washington. The arrangements for the publication of this map are planned for speed as well as for accurate and finished work. The Bureau has its own telegraph office, to which come weather reports from all the regular stations, and its own printing establishment.

The Washington map contains a large amount of text and tabular matter. This is all set in type in the "forecast room," where the manuscript charts are prepared. In order to expedite the work of the printers a remarkable system of "logotypes" has been devised. Each of these types is a group of figures, a word or a group of words. Besides such short and common words as "the", "and", "of", etc., there are a number of elaborate expressions that recur in the weather synopses and forecasts. Each of the following, for example, is a single type:

increasing cloudiness
variable winds
slightly colder
not much change in
followed by
the upper Mississippi Valley
Canadian maritime provinces.

There are about 1,500 of these words and groups of words.

The printers also set up the little symbols and arrows that show the state of the weather and the direction of the wind at each station. These are set in a copper bedplate perforated with holes in positions corresponding to those of the stations as seen on the face of the map. When they are all in place an impression is taken and transferred to the lithograph stone, on which are also placed by means of transfer paper the various other features of the map.

A large lithographic press is used for the printing. Two editions are issued, the second containing somewhat more comprehensive information than the first.

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