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WEATHER SIGNALS FOR AIRCRAFT

There is an interesting parallel between the methods employed to convey weather information to vessels at sea and those used to furnish similar information to aircraft during flights. In both cases a dual system exists. Mariners nowadays get most of their knowledge of current weather over the ocean and their warnings of coming storms by means of radio, but they have not ceased to utilize the visible storm signals displayed for their benefit along coasts. Radio is generally recognized to be the ideal means of communicating weather reports to menⁱⁿ/the air, but in America the equipment of aeroplanes with radio receivers is still exceptional, while even on the main flying routes of the Old World, where passenger planes are generally thus equipped, it is found advantageous to supplement radio reports by the display of "ground signals", of which several kinds have been employed.

The experimental meteorological service recently established by the Daniel Guggenheim Fund on the airway between San Francisco and Los Angeles displays ground signals at Bakersfield, Calif., on days of unfavorable or changeable weather to advise pilots flying south of the weather conditions prevailing south of the Tehachapi Mountains. The signals are made by means of groups of panels, each of which is an oblong strip of white cloth about six feet wide by 25 feet long. These are stretched out on the ground by means of stakes and are arranged in various positions relative to each other to convey different items of information. The signals can be read from any angle. They can be lighted for night flying.

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