

Editors: Note Correction

A Science Service Feature

Released on receipt  
but intended for use  
December 17, 1928

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed December 10, 1928

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Authority on Meteorology

VISIBILITY OF DISTANT CLOUDS

An English meteorologist, C. S. Durst, has calculated the actual distances from the observer of clouds of various heights above the earth when seen on or near the horizon, and the results are rather surprising. Here are some of the facts adduced:

Cirrus, the loftiest of clouds, when about 35,000 feet above the earth and seen on the horizon may be as much as 200 miles away. When, however, the same clouds rise to 5 degrees above the horizon their distance from the observer cannot be more than 60 miles.

A towering <sup>cumulo</sup>~~cumulo~~-nimbus (thunderhead) observed in London may lie over the Bristol Channel, about 130 miles west.

The base of a line-squall cloud--at, say, a height of 2,000 feet-- may be seen on the horizon 50 miles from the point of observation.

To an aviator flying at a height of 10,000 feet these distances are extended by more than 100 miles, and the maximum distance of a visible cirrus cloud becomes 300 miles. Thus an aviator 10,000 feet above London could see cirrus clouds lying above Dublin.

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