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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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POLYNESIAN WEATHER LORE

In a new book by Johannes C. Anderson, "Myths and Legends of the Polynesians", much information is given concerning the picturesque weather lore, mythical and otherwise, prevailing amongst the South Sea Islanders. Naturally the winds play a leading part. They were the children of Raka, and each had a hole allotted to him at the edge of the horizon through which he blew at pleasure. Raka also had a basket in which to confine the winds; which reminds us of how, in the Odyssey, Aeolus gives Ulysses the contrary winds tied up in a bag. The white clouds are said to be pieces of bark cloth, which the goddess Ina is forever stretching out to dry and bleach on the blue sky.

The Polynesians distinguish thirty-two winds of different directions, each having a more or less picturesque name. The north-northeast wind is called Maoake-ta, the "terrible northeast", on account of the great violence with which it blows in hurricanes.

Mr. Anderson says: "there was an unfailing natural indication of the approach of a cyclone, expressed in the saying, 'Twisted is the core of the banana.' This twisting takes place some weeks before the coming of a hurricane."

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