

A Science Service Feature

Released on receipt
but intended for use
April 17, 1929

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed April 10, 1929

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology

FLEXIBLE SAILING ROUTES

If plans formulated last May at international conferences held in Paris and London are carried out, an efficient system of frequent radio weather reports (twice to four times a day) will soon be available from 1,000 selected steamships throughout their voyages on the various oceans. It will thus be possible to draw regular weather charts of the oceans not only at meteorological offices but also on board the ships themselves. Of course many ships already render weather reports by radio, and ocean weather is charted to a considerable extent, but the new arrangements will be much more efficient, and the information to be thus assembled and disseminated will probably have far-reaching effects on navigation.

The undertaking above mentioned was stimulated by the urgent demand for weather information required in connection with trans-ocean flying, but it should prove quite as valuable to mariners as to aeronauts. Navigators by sea or air, if kept constantly informed of current conditions of wind and weather, should be able to utilize such data as a means of saving time and fuel, as well as promoting safety. Aircraft flying over the oceans (and to a certain extent in overland flights) will probably, at least for many years to come, not attempt to adhere to fixed routes, but will adapt their routes to meteorological conditions prevailing at the time of the flight. The course will be laid out on a weather map rather than on a mariner's chart. The aeronaut will avoid storms and head winds as the mariner now avoids reefs and shoals.

Will it not be advantageous for steamships to follow the same plan to some extent? It would seem that even a fast liner plying between American and European ports might be justified in varying its course from voyage to voyage in order to take advantage of favorable, coal-saving winds, if information concerning such winds were constantly at its disposal.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and B Sts.,
Washington, D. C.