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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

DUST CARRIED BY THE WINDS

The movement of soil material by the winds from place to place over the surface of the earth is a geological process quite comparable in importance to the transport of such material by flowing water. Prof. J. A. Udden, from his studies of dust storms in the United States west of the Mississippi, estimates that on the average about 850,000,000 tons of dust are carried in that region by the winds 1,440 miles each year, so that the total dust transport for the region amounts to 1,225,000,000,000 "mile tons". Udden also estimates that in general, over this region, there is an average annual deposit of dust amounting to not less than 0.01 inch, or an increase of 1 inch a century in the elevation of the surface, resulting from deposits of dust. This statement does not apply to deserts and certain other areas of prevailing bare soil, as the dust comes mainly from such areas and the surface in general is lowered rather than raised by wind action.

For the amount of solid material suspended in the air during sand storms and dust storms Udden gets figures ranging all the way from 160 to 126,000 tons per cubic mile of air. According to Andrew Noble, drifts of sand 12 feet deep have been produced in three months in the deserts of Australia.

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21st and B Sts.,
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