

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed September 11, 1929

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WEATHER REPORTS FROM SHIPS

Recent international meetings of meteorologists have made much progress towards systematizing the organization of radio weather reports from ships at sea, so that, on the one hand, oceanic areas may be better represented on daily weather maps than they have been in the past, and, on the other, there may be less unnecessary duplication of effort on the part of marine observers in congested regions of the ocean and less confusion in transmissions. The plan that will probably be put into effect in the near future calls for regular reports from a total of 1,000 selected ships, whenever these vessels are at sea. Each maritime nation will be represented by a number of ships in proportion to the total merchant tonnage under its flag. On this basis, the British Empire will furnish 350 ships and the United States 221. Vessels other than those selected will not make regular radio weather reports, but all vessels observing the formation of a tropical hurricane not previously reported will be expected to broadcast the information. Only a certain proportion of the selected ships will be at sea at any one time, but it is estimated that 35 per cent. of the total number will generally be in favorable positions for making weather reports. In other words, there will generally be about 350 ships making useful reports from all oceans.

The hours of observation will be 1 and 7 a.m. and 1 and 7 p.m., Greenwich time, and the reports will be transmitted soon after these hours. In case it is not practicable to make four observations and reports a day, a ship will be expected to make two, selecting from the four hours above mentioned the two that fall within the daylight period in the region where she is navigating.

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