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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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WEATHER-WISE CHINESE FISHERMEN

It behooves the fisherman to be weather-wise. Because of the small size of the vessels in which he goes to sea he is more exposed to storm dangers than the average sailor. His life often depends upon his skill in reading the signs of the sky, so it is not strange that fishermen, as a class, are good weather prophets.

Describing experiences in China, H.P. Kinghorn says in the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society:

"During the Typhoon season we often got our warnings of an approaching typhoon from the Chinese fishing junks scudding for shelter hours before our barometer began to fall. Some disturbance in the water, visible only to the fishermen themselves, and certain fish that came to their nets only at that particular time were signs that they always obeyed, and I never knew their judgment to be faulty.

"It is understood, of course, that disaster frequently overtakes whole fishing fleets, but we white seafaring men had a wholesome respect for the Chinese mariner's wisdom. I have entered a landlocked bay near Hongkong and found an area of probably half a square mile of water packed so close with native craft, lashed together bow, stern and sides, that you could easily walk over the whole mass, waiting for the typhoon to break. But there were always some still on the way that did not arrive at all."

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