

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed January 16, 1931

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FACTS

The powerful gust of wind from an airplane propeller is used at motion picture studios to create imitation hurricanes, snowstorms, sand storms, etc. Under this formidable blast trees bend, leaves quiver and the fury of the storm is depicted with startling realism.

About 3 per cent. of the forest fires that occur in North America are due to lightning.

Raindrops are measured by permitting them to fall into a shallow tray containing dry flour or plaster of Paris. Each drop thus makes a cast of itself, which is easily measured. The largest drops are about a quarter of an inch in diameter.

The "tornadoes" of West Africa are thundersqualls, totally different from the exceedingly violent whirling storms bearing that name in America.

Wind vanes connected with a ceiling dial, so that the wind direction could be observed indoors, were known to the ancient Romans.

Salt evaporated from ocean spray and carried by the winds is deposited on the dunes of Holland to the extent of 6,600 tons a year.

The world record for frequent thunderstorms is held by Baliburg, in the former German colony of Kamerun, where these storms average 212 a year. The opposite extreme is represented by Antarctica, where no thunderstorm has yet been reported by explorers.

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