

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
June 26, 1931

? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed June 19, 1931

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman,
Authority on Meteorology.

CHARTING UPPER-AIR WINDS OVER OCEANS

The great task of charting the prevailing winds over the oceans, begun under the direction of Maury in the middle of the last century, has proceeded apace, but until very recently it has been limited to the winds at sea level. Now, in response to the needs of aeronautics, a beginning has been made in charting the winds at flying levels over the oceans.

The data required for the charts are obtained from observations of pilot balloons sent up from ships. In England, for example, the Meteorological Office is now receiving records of about 1,500 pilot-balloon observations a year from 40 ships of the Royal Navy equipped for taking such observations in various parts of the world. Of the balloons sent up from these vessels 20 per cent. have reached heights of 10,000 feet or more, with a maximum height of 49,000 feet reached in Australian waters. The Office is charting statistics for each 10-degree square of the oceans, showing percentage frequencies of the winds at the surface and at 1,500, 3,000, 6,000 and 10,000 feet.

Similar observations are taken by a few vessels of the United States Navy and by some German transatlantic liners.

(All rights reserved by Science Service, Inc.)

SCIENCE SERVICE
21st and Constitution Ave.
Washington, D. C.