

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed July 7, 1931

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FOG AT NEW YORK

There are fully a dozen different contrivances of modern origin that reduce in some degree the handicap that fog imposes upon travel and transport by land, sea and air, yet the handicap is still very serious. Figures concerning the prevalence of fog at a great seaport are, therefore, of much practical interest. J. H. Scarr, in charge of the U. S. Weather Bureau station at New York City, has compiled for that place statistics for a period of five years, which show 97 cases of dense fog during that time, with a total duration of 79 hours. Dense fogs therefore averaged upwards of 19 a year, and the average duration of each was 49 minutes.

"Dense fogs," says Mr. Scarr, "are most prevalent in the forenoon; an unfortunate circumstance, since normally harbor traffic is very active then, and usually several incoming ships, which have arrived off quarantine during the night, are waiting for daylight to come up to the piers. Outbound shipping is not so seriously hampered by these fogs since the sailing time is usually about midday. Harbor traffic goes on except in fogs of extraordinary density, though progress is slowed down.

"The fog obstacle here cannot be properly evaluated without regard to the tremendous urge placed on harbor traffic by the vital necessities of some million people. To stop only the incoming fuel supply for so short a period as 24 hours would result in actual suffering. So harbor traffic goes on almost regardless of the handicap."

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