

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt  
but intended for use  
August 13, 1932

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed August 6, 1932

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OFFICIAL LONG-RANGE FORECASTS

Official long-range weather forecasting has "arrived" to the extent that a certain number of establishments of an official and scientific character are now issuing, more or less experimentally, predictions of weather for longer periods in advance than the canonical thirty-six or forty-eight hours. The oldest example is found in British India, where the character of the monsoon rainfall has been predicted months in advance annually for many years on the basis of antecedent meteorological conditions in both near and distant parts of the world, while the newest is found in Germany, where an establishment for the study of long-range weather forecasting is attached to the Prussian Ministry of Agriculture. The German institution, which was founded in 1929, is located at Frankfort-on-the-Main, and is directed by Dr. Franz Baur, a professor at Frankfort University.

During the present summer Dr. Baur has been issuing regularly weather forecasts for western Germany covering periods of ten days each. They are deduced from statistics of weather sequences for corresponding dates during the past thirty-eight years over an area including Europe, northern Africa, Greenland, the north Atlantic Ocean and eastern North America. Dr. Baur claims a high percentage of success in these predictions -- but success in weather forecasting is a somewhat elastic conception and it remains to be seen whether the scientific world will accept this verdict.

The German ten-day forecasts are issued twice a week and are widely distributed through the newspapers and through radio broadcasts.

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