

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed August 12, 1932

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FLYING WEATHER OBSERVERS

In many parts of the world airplanes have recently <sup>replaced</sup> kites as a means of obtaining records of weather conditions in the atmosphere at high levels, more comprehensive than the wind records obtained with pilot balloons, and much more promptly available than the records of barometric pressure, temperature and humidity obtained with sounding-balloons. In the United States, planes carrying self-registering weather instruments make daily flights at Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Omaha and Atlanta early each morning--before daylight during most of the year--in order that the results may be reported by telegraph in time to aid in making the morning weather forecasts at Washington and other forecast centers.

"The superiority of airplanes over kites," says J.A. Riley, of the U.S. Weather Bureau, "is their regularity. They are not dependent on the vagaries of the wind, nor are they stopped by unfavorable weather. After more than nine months of operation not one daily flight has been missed at Dallas, and almost equally complete records have been obtained at the other stations. The flights are made on schedule, and nearly the same altitude is reached day after day, instead of the widely varying altitudes reached with kites. The average altitude by airplane is about twice that formerly reached by kites."

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