

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BRIGHTER METEOROLOGY

According to V.A. Lowinger, of the Malayan Meteorological Service, a temporary employee of that organization was recently found to be writing up the daily weather record in the following fashion:

"May 14th, 1932. The day unveiled a bright sky with the sun in the lifeless East amidst the white clouds like speckled beads in a bride's veil."

It appeared, on inquiry, that he had been drawing his weather descriptions from the novels of Edgar Wallace. Which reminds us of a newspaper item, perhaps apocryphal, of some seven years ago, concerning the bulletins issued by Miss E.W. Pilkington, described as the local representative of the Meteorological Office at Buxton, England. Here are some samples:

"Temperature: There is an acute shortage of therms in the district. Winds: Still of an oriental character. Pressure: A steady, reliable worker. Local trend: Overflows with happiness. Inference: We are qualifying for the final of the weather championship."

"Temperature: Every day in every way it grows warmer and warmer. Inference: All the weather factors are decked out in their finest garb. The specter at the feast is too shadowy to worry us."

It was the Saturday Evening Post that once urged that official weather forecasts be patterned after "movie" subtitles. Thus in place of the prosaic announcement, "Fair, warmer, southerly winds," we should read: "Comes an ardent sun through a turquoise dawn, bringing to men the scented airs of the languorous South." And as an agreeable substitute for "Local showers, light variable winds" we should feast our poetic souls on the following:

"As a maid, in the first flush of her fickleness, scatters a largess of smile-flecked tears, so doth the morrow its coy uncertainty promise."

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