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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LOCAL WIND NAMES

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The march of human knowledge is from the particular to the general, and the nomenclature of science moves in the same direction. The individual manifestations of a natural law are first observed, and separately named; the law itself comes to light later, through the process of induction, and science then finds itself burdened with a multitude of names for one and the same phenomenon.

This fact is well illustrated in the history of wind nomenclature. In the modern scientific classification of winds, a score of names suffice for them all; in an earlier generation, Aeolus ruled over a populous kingdom, and his subjects possessed, for our forefathers, an individuality that was expressed in a nomenclature of bewildering magnitude. The "wind called Euroclydon" was, to St. Paul and his contemporaries, an isolated and distinct entity that no one thought of linking up with the general atmospheric circulation of the Mediterranean. On the same sea we hear today of a "levanter" in one place, a "meltem" at another, a "labetch" at still another, and so on.

Throughout the world probably as many as five hundred local names of winds are now in use.

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