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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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THE VARYING TRADE WINDS

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The trade winds blow from easterly quadrants, except when briefly interrupted by the passage of cyclonic disturbances, and they never subside to a calm, but on the other hand they are by no means so steady and regular in either direction or force as they are supposed to be by almost everybody except sailors who have experienced their capricious behavior. They vary considerably from hour to hour and from day to day. These variations are connected with variations in the intensity and positions of the great anticyclones, lying on their poleward borders, from which they blow.

The variations of these winds are symptomatic of far-reaching atmospheric movements, which perhaps reflect fluctuations in the amount of energy received by the earth from the sun; determined, at least in part, by variable conditions in the upper atmosphere, and perhaps also in part by variations in the sun's output of energy. It was Sir Napier Shaw who pointed out years ago that there is no more favorable place on the globe for "feeling the pulse" of the atmospheric circulation than the island of St. Helena, located far from continental disturbances in the heart of the southeast trades.

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