

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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SHIPBOARD WEATHER MAPS

Suppose you are crossing the Atlantic on board the "Duchess of York," one of the big liners of the Canadian Pacific. The wind freshens to a gale. You note its force and direction, but you tell yourself that, being in midocean and hence far away from weather maps, you have no means of finding out "whence it cometh and whither it goeth." If, however, you should be permitted access to the chart room, you would discover posted on the wall a big map of the meteorological conditions then prevailing over the whole North Atlantic Ocean and the shores on either side. With the aid of this chart you would quickly ascertain the source and destination of the local wind, besides getting much more important information about the kind of weather the ship was running into.

Lieut. D. Parsons, R.N.R., principal observing officer of the ship in question, has kindly sent me a photograph of one of these daily charts. They are, of course, prepared from radio weather reports, and are a striking example of the service such reports now render to the mariner.

While the maps mentioned are of unusually large size, the preparation of smaller weather maps is now a routine operation on board a great number of vessels. The reports entered on such maps come from both ships and shore stations and are centralized and broadcast at fixed hours every day by the big meteorological offices of both the Old World and the New.

The next step will be to broadcast the map itself instead of merely the data for drawing it. This has been done experimentally for several years. A weather map of the North Atlantic and large areas of the adjacent continents is now prepared every noon at the U.S. Weather Bureau office in New York City and transmitted by facsimile radio to the S.S. "President Harding" by the Radio Corporation of America.

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