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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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AIR-SOUNDINGS BY RAILROAD

By Charles Fitzhugh Talman  
Authority on Meteorology.

Nowadays it is a common practice throughout the world for weathermen to send aloft unmanned balloons with automatic instruments attached for registering conditions in the air overhead. Kites are employed for the same purpose, though not so frequently as formerly, but on the other hand the weather-observing airplane is rapidly becoming one of the routine adjuncts of meteorology.

There is only one place in the world where similar records are obtained by means of instruments attached to the car of a mountain railroad. The mountain in question is the Zugspitze, the highest peak in Germany, and the car, suspended from an overhead cable, travels a vertical distance of nearly a mile in 16 minutes; several trips being made between the summit and the base of the mountain every day. A set of instruments that make continuous records of barometric pressure, air temperature and humidity is fastened above the roof of the car.

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SCIENCE SERVICE  
21st and Constitution Ave.  
Washington, D.C.