

A Science Service Feature

Released upon receipt
but intended for use
April 4, 1934

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Mailed March 28, 1934

DUST TRAVELS!

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Recent studies of the great dust-storm that occurred over the eastern half of the United States and Canada the middle of last November indicate that some of the dust traveled fully 2,000 miles from its source, and this distance is by no means unprecedented. In March, 1901, a series of dust-storms occurred in the northern Sahara. The dust, after being whirled upward by cyclonic winds, was eventually deposited over most of western Europe, and some of it fell 2,500 miles from the place of origin.

Volcanic dust veils have sometimes spread entirely around the globe; but that is another story. The dust in such cases is spouted twenty or thirty miles above the earth; far above the levels of rain, snow and strong vertical winds. Thus it may drift for months or years before it settles down.

The amount of solid material that the winds are capable of lifting and transporting far and wide over the earth is illustrated by the history of the great dust-storm of April 25-26, 1928, in east-central Europe. In this case it was estimated, on the basis of a painstaking investigation by Russian meteorologists, that more than 15,000,000,000 tons of earth were blown up from the dry steppes of southern Ukraine. The majority of this was subsequently deposited in the Ukraine, but about 2,000,000 tons fell over an area of 28,500 square miles in Rumania and 1,500,000 tons over an area of 42,500 square miles in Poland.

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