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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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A NEW CLOUD WORLD

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For ages mankind has observed with interest the various shapes of the clouds, and since the beginning of the nineteenth century their typical shapes have borne scientific names. Many of these shapes figure in proverbial weather lore. Pictures of them -- not always true to life -- have been published in a host of textbooks and reference books. Painters innumerable have depicted them -- sometimes accurately but often fantastically -- on canvas. The forms of the clouds are, in short, an old, old story.

But the aspects of the clouds with which humanity is so familiar are those seen from below -- the appearances presented by their lower surfaces and their more or less foreshortened vertical profiles. Quite different are the aspects of the clouds as seen from above. A generation ago only mountaineers and a handful of balloonists ever looked down on the clouds. Today it is a common experience to travel above all but the loftiest varieties. Thus a new cloud world is becoming familiar.

The complete edition of the great International Atlas of Clouds and of States of the Sky recently published in Paris includes a large number of photographs of clouds taken from aircraft, showing them, in general, below the observer, and the text contains extensive instructions for observing and recording their appearances as thus viewed.

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