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A Science Service Feature

? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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"STRATOSPHERE"

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The existence of a lofty region of the atmosphere in which an ascending thermometer ceases to register the more or less steady fall in temperature shown with ascent at lower altitudes was independently discovered by Teisserenc de Bort in France and Assmann in Germany and was made known to the scientific world in 1902. For some years after its discovery this region was generally called the "isothermal layer," though it was sometimes given other names. In 1903 its French discoverer named it the "stratosphere," and he called the part of the atmosphere lying below it the "troposphere."

Until a few years ago meteorologists thought of the stratosphere as extending indefinitely upward. At present, however, there is a tendency to subdivide the high regions of the atmosphere into several "spheres," on the basis of new ideas concerning conditions prevailing at various heights, and a rather moderate altitude is now often assigned to the upper boundary of the stratosphere.

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